

GROWING UP GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Board Meeting Date: Tuesday, August 20th, 2019

Location: Growing Up Green Elementary Charter School Long Island City

Commencement Time: 7pm

In person: Kate McGrath (General Counsel and HR Director for GUGCS), Kathryn Klingenstein (Board Trustee), Kate Hooker (Board Secretary), Laura Meyers (Board Parent Representative), Ann Levonen (Board Trustee), Nabihah Yusufali (Executive Assistant & Special Project Coordinator at GUGCS), Anita Amoh (Director of Finance at GUGCS), Matthew Greenberg (Founder & Executive Director at GUGCS), Erin Acosta (Director of Engagement at GUGCS), Nancy Wong (School Leader at GUGCS II), Aris Colgan (School Leader at GUGCS I)

Video Conference: Pastor Corwin Mason (Board Trustee in process), Marc Greenberg (Board Trustee in process), Moriska Selby (Assistant School Leader at GUGCS II)

Kate Hooker motioned to commence the Board of Trustees meeting for Growing Up Green I Charter School, Kathryn Klingenstein seconded the motion, and Anne Levonen was in agreement.

Previous Month's Board Meeting Minutes

Kate Hooker motioned to approve July's Board Minutes, Kathryn Klingenstein seconded the motion, and Ann Levonen agreed.

Financials

Anita Amoh went through the financials for Growing Up Green I. The final stages of the audit is ongoing, and all is going well so far. The projected numbers for 2018-2019 are better than anticipated, and we made an overall surplus. The SpEd per pupil funding we received was higher than anticipated, our Title 2 funding came in lower due to adjustments, IDA revenue was better than expected, and family contributions were better than expected. Benefit costs were lower than expected, and 401K costs were lower than anticipated. We were over budget on team building and professional services, classroom expenditure, facilities, technologies costs came in higher due to implementation of Power School.

The current fiscal year is the 2019 - 2020 school year. The numbers we are looking at are through July. We are projecting numbers to be on budget. We are only six weeks into the year and we haven't had too many expenses.

Kathryn Klingenstein asked about how much interest is our surplus money making and what can be done with the money.

Matthew Greenberg said that right now it is sitting in the bank and gaining very little interest. This year we can work towards having a conservative approach to investing the money. Citi is interested in working with us, but because of poor customer service, we may change our banker to JPMorgan.

New Business

Matthew Greenberg introduced Pastor Corwin Scott Mason to the Board as a potential Board Member. Pastor Mason spoke about himself: he is originally from North Carolina, he moved here in 1989, he is married and has two kids, and he is now the Senior Pastor at Community Church of Astoria. Pastor Mason was heavily involved in Youth Ministry and believes it is necessary to make sure our children to get a good education. He has been doing research on our schools and is very interested in the work we do. He is interested in doing something positive in the community. He is a friend and reference from Bishop Taylor, someone Matthew Greenberg has known and trusted for many years.

Executive Director/School Leader's Report

Aris Colgan spoke about the first week of opening meetings at GUG I starting yesterday. We are currently fully staffed in classroom teachers but are looking for one science maternity leave teacher and one ENL teacher, but we have some very positive candidates.

We started off the opening meetings with introductions, talk about benefits, talk about places and spaces. We will be giving the teachers time to design their classrooms, learn about our mission, core values, sustainability, responsive classroom role plays and content area focus groups. We have added four male staff members and have a good amount of diversity across all of our new hires.

Old Business - FPP (Financial Processes and Procedures) Manual

Kate McGrath spoke about the Financial Processes and Procedures Manual. It is a document we have elected to put in place. Per the charter we are audited every year by an outside auditor and the FPP speaks to the rules we set for ourselves and the vendors that help us with finances. There have been minor updates to the FPP. The majority of the edits were titles. We have also added in some procedures into the language.

Ann Levonen had some questions about the FPP document. She was wondering why we are not insured at a higher rate. Anita Amoh answered that the FDIC has a limit for how much can be insured in bank accounts, which is 250K. Kate McGrath mentioned that we have, however, increased our overall insurance for the school through private insurance.

Ann Levonen was also wondering about reviewing the bank statements that are mentioned in the FPP. Currently, the Board Finance Committee (Jeff Mueller and Reid Chase) reviews them every month, but in the future, Nabiha Yusufali will send them to the whole Board via email before Board Meetings.

Motion to approve FPP was set forth by Kate Hooker, Kathryn Klingenstein seconded the motion, all other voting Board Members members in attendance approved the motion.

Fundraising Report

Erin Acosta went through our Fundraising Report. We are asking for a contribution from our families. Last year 46% of our students families made a contribution. 56% of families are on free and reduced lunch. We raised in total \$94,000 in family contributions. Some families were able to get their contribution matched from their employers. In January we had a Read-a-thon, it raised \$25,000. We also had a few grants, and overall fundraised \$120,000.

This year we are asking our Board once again for a \$2,000 give/get. Erin would like to know how she can support the Board with their fundraising. We would like to build a community of friends and supporters. Incredible things happen in the classrooms and we would like people to know about it.

We are fundraising as Friends of Growing Up Green, which is our umbrella account. As a Board, we can then decide how the money is shared.

We are planning a Board Cocktail party in October, an event where the Board can invite anyone they think that can donate to our cause.

Erin Acosta would like to know what is it about our school that the Board feels really resonates with them, and Erin will help them build a campaign around it. It can be around sustainability, and what are we doing with the kids now so that we can have a better tomorrow

Kathryn Klingenstein said that she appreciates how we educate students and give them the tools they need to be leaders of a sustainable future, and she appreciates our social justice based education. Laura Meyers mentioned how we are engaging, empowering and energizing in the most diverse borough and students students put their work into the context of the world.

Erin took the Board's ideas and will put together an online page for donations and put a campaign together. Erin can have a campaign together for them by September 3rd, 2019 and put information about the cocktail party together in more detail for October. This will roll into our giving Tuesday campaign, and then the last Saturday in April is Sustainability Day

Laura Meyers spoke about having a PTO representative to join board meetings in future. Erin Acosta agreed and suggested that once the school year gets going, we reach out to the PTO & remind them of future board meetings.

Board Member Bios

Kate McGrath spoke to the Board about how we would like to have very simple and short bios about them for our website. This will be a mechanism for the Board to have more visibility within the community it serves, and for our families to get to know our Board Members better. We can circulate the information to the Board via email after our meeting, and the Board agreed that they can send their updated bios to Nabiha Yusufali before the next Board Meeting.

Laura Myers wanted to touch on a few items. She wanted to advocate for crossing guards. She is worried about the corner of 40th Ave. She mentioned that they have not replaced the crossed guard on 39th ave and she was wondering if we have considered parent volunteers. The Board felt parent volunteers were not the solution. Erin Acosta mentioned that the NYPD is currently hiring for the positions, and that we should encourage parents who are interested to apply for the position. Erin Acosta will share the information with Laura about the job application process.

Laura was also wondering on how we can increase in school leader visibility, advocating coffee with Aris Colgan, different type of event with Leaders, as well as a clear mechanism for understanding the structure of the school.

Erin Acosta told Laura that we are going to be having coffees with school leaders, and Kate McGrath said that we will be happy to post a org chart on our website to help families understand our structures.

Erin Acosta is also going to share with the Board a calendar of events for families for events the whole year. It is almost complete. Board Members can pick a couple events throughout the year to attend, and a few of the events are right before Board Meetings to make it more convenient for Board Members to attend.

Kate Hooker made a motion to adjourn the Growing Up Green I Board Meeting, Kathryn Kliengenstein seconded the motion and Anne Levonen was also in agreement.