



**Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation**  
**Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**August 21st, 2018, 6:00 pm**  
**410 East 100th Street, 3rd Floor New York, NY 10029**

**Minutes (Redacted)**

**1. Roll call/sign in**

Chairperson George Sarkissian, Vice Chair Sona Karia, Board Secretary Latoya Massey and Board Member Candidate, Jasmin Singleton attended the meeting in person, and trustee Jared McShall attended via video conference, constituting a quorum for the purpose of conducting business. Also present were Stephen Falla Riff (Executive Director), Terence Joseph (Principal), Ira Yasbin (Assistant Principal), Jason Forde (Associate Director of Strategic Planning & Communications), Hillary Goldstein (IEP Coordinator), and Benjamin Caraballo (Science Teacher).

**2. Filing of Notice of Meeting**

In accordance with the law, a notice of the meeting was published on the school's website, sent via email to the New York Times and posted publicly at the M99 School Building, where Innovation High School is located, at 410 East 100th Street New York, New York, 10029.

**3. Review and Approval of Prior Board Meeting Minutes (5 minutes/Chair)**

Unredacted and redacted minutes for the July Board Meeting minutes were reviewed by the Board. Mr. Sarkissian made a motion to accept the minutes and the motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

**4. Discussion of Academic Progress Dashboard (20 minutes/Chair, ED)**

Mr. Forde reviewed Summer School Data, Staff Certification and enrollment updates with the Board.

For Summer School, Mr. Forde reviewed Summer School Data provided by Summer School Coordinator, Danielle Martin. Innovation had approximately 140 students eligible for summer school, 60 of those students opted out due to either family moving or work-related reasons. Regents data will be compiled for summer school students and information will be provided during the Year In Review presentation by Principal Joseph.

Mr. Forde also gave an update regarding staff certifications provided by Associate Director of Finance and Human Resources, Debbie DaGiau. Ms. DaGiau was able to confirm that Innovation, as of 6/30, was in compliance with our staff certification thresholds due to staff achieving their certifications that were previously pending, the hiring of new teachers and attrition.

For teachers who resigned or were terminated, a challenge has been observed in getting exit interview information. Suggestion has been made to add participation in exit interview process to staff handbook.

Mr. Falla Riff spoke about enrollment projections for the upcoming school year. According to ATS, Innovation currently has 452 students enrolled to the school. To date, Innovation has approximately 60 students currently enrolled as part of the 2018 cohort which is significantly below projected Cohort numbers. Mr. Sarkissian recommended that enrollment efforts are increased to get more students officially enrolled in the school.

Ms. Massey asked what steps are being taken to ensure moving forward Innovation will have the appropriate projected numbers for enrollment.

As part of the enrollment discussion, Principal Joseph also mentioned the fact that closing middle schools as well as newly opened high schools in the area has caused issues with the size and quality of our applicant pool.

It was recommended that a multi-departmental effort be undertaken to ensure that Innovation has a robust recruiting and enrollment plan. As part of this effort, Ms. Karia suggested that we continue work on revamping the school website to attract more students and families.

## **5. Overview of SPED Department (15 minutes/SPED Dept.)**

IEP Coordinator, Hillary Goldstein, reviewed her role at Innovation with the Board. Ms. Goldstein reviewed her duties in reviewing IEPs and providing services to Innovation's Special Education students.

Ms. Goldstein discussed a new Innovation initiative to engage our Special Education students in the classroom. Staff recently participated in a full day workshop with Susan Henson on strategies in co-teaching and Specially Designed Instruction (SDI). The goal of the workshop is to increase student engagement in the classroom. The training was well received by teachers and Hillary spoke about using the strategies learned in the workshop in the classroom with students. Ms. Massey asked questions regarding the quality of the workshop and the differences between SDI versus differentiated instruction. Mr. Sarkissian requested following up with staff to ensure that new techniques are being used from the training. Ms. Massey suggested making the skills part of the evaluation rubric and inquired about visual aids used as part of the learning process. Hillary confirmed that Ms. Henson provided visuals of different teaching strategies to use amongst students.

Principal Joseph observed that the training served as a good moral-boost for the staff; empowering them with new tools and methods to engage with their students.

Ms. Karia asked how to best to use this program to engage and motivate the entire student body, and suggested promoting the program on our website to increase public visibility.

## **6. Overview of EarthWatch Partnership (10 minutes/Science Dept.)**

Mr. Caraballo presented on the summer program with Innovation Partner, EarthWatch, that went on a week long summer excursion to Costa Rica to study pollinators. Ms. Karia asked about the selection process for the trip. Mr. Caraballo explained there is an application for the course with 75 GPA minimum, an essay to express interest, and speaking to the guidance counselors. Students must take the course prior to going on the trip.

Mr. Caraballo also mentioned the following updates regarding the evolution of the Earthwatch program to date:

- New Earth Science teacher joined the trip this year - connecting earth science and biology.

- Earthwatch Board has committed to matching Innovation student fundraising for 2019 up to \$10,000.

Ms. Karia asked how to best engage the entire student body to market programs like this to motivate as well as market on the website to increase public visibility

#### **7. Board Recruitment (10 minutes/Trustees & ED)**

Mr. Forde reviewed the resumes of 2 trustee candidates with the Board: Jaynemie Angbah and Darryl Tyree. Principal Joseph recommended to bring Mr. Tyree in first based on his experience in branding and marketing and college access resources. Mr. Forde will follow up with Mr. Tyree on scheduling a time to meet with the Principal Joseph and Mr Falla Riff.

#### **8. Other New Business**

##### **Executive Session: Personnel Matter**

Motion was made to enter into Executive Session by Ms. Massey and seconded by Sona Mr. Falla Riff reviewed personnel matter.

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#### **9. Public Speaking**

None

#### **10. Adjournment**

Mr. Sarkissian made motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms Massey seconded