BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING 5/12/2020

Board of Trustees in attendance:

Joseph Sciame:

Patricia Bramwell

Victor Rivera

Doris Givens

Kevin Nesbitt

Cecelia Russo

Neil Samen

Tyler McConnell

Tamkika Pate

School Management Team:

Nicholas Tishuk

Patience Brown

Lisa-Renee Brown

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING BEGINS 6:04 PM

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Joe we're now recording

Joseph Sciame: Ok, good evening everyone just some preliminary remarks. It's just a little bit after 6:00 pm. We'll start momentarily. Is Doris on the phone?

*No response

Joseph Sciame: Okay. So, so far Doris, Tamikka and Tish are not on the phone. Okay. Or Victor.

Patricia Bramwell: What about Victor?

Victor Rivera: Victor is on the phone

Patricia Bramwell: Ok

Joseph Sciame: Alright, so we're going to open the meeting and now it's, I have 6:04. We have a full meeting to conduct and again for the record we have just several people not on yet; Tamikka, Doris and Tish. All members as announced are off the phone. You have before you a copy of the minutes of our last meeting of April 21. Seems like that was just yesterday, but I supposed it was weeks ago. Corrections, deletions, additions to the minutes?

Kevin Nesbitt: Were the minutes in Board of Track, or were they sent to us electronically?

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Both

Kevin Nesbitt: Alright, I'll log in.

Victor Rivera: This is Victor. With respect to the finance portion. I would suggest that the second paragraph just have the first line and that the first line be amended to say "several very preliminary budget review scenarios for FY 21 were reviewed" and just leave it at that one sentence.

Joseph Sciame: Okay.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Can you send that in the writing at the end of the meeting? I'm trying to take the minutes and I can't note everything at the same time.

Victor Rivera: Sure, not a problem.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Thank you

Joseph Sciame: Is there any other additions, deletions or corrections? If not, we'll accept a motion made by...

Patricia Bramwell: Patricia Bramwell

Victor Rivera: Victor makes a motion.

Joseph Sciame: Okay. And seconded by?

Tyler McConnell: I will second it. Tyler.

Joseph Sciame: Okay, Tyler seconded the motion. All those in favor?

*All respond 'Aye'.

Joseph Sciame: All right, anyone opposed? any abstentions? Thank you. Okay at this point, we are going to go into executive sessions.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: We need a vote

Joseph Sciame: Yes. I am inviting someone to make that motion.

Kevin Nesbitt: Yeah, I make that motion. This is Kevin.

Joseph Sciame: Ok, Kevin.

Kevin Nesbitt: I make the motion to go into Executive Session.

Joseph Sciame: Okay

Cecelia Russo: I'll second.

Joseph Sciame: Cecelia?

Cecelia Russo: Yes, I'll second it.

Joseph Sciame: Okay. All those in favor?

*All respond 'Aye'.

Joseph Sciame: Okay. We will continue shortly, you guys.

Patricia Bramwell: Okay.

[Executive Session]

Joseph Sciame: Okay

Victor Rivera: I move that we return to regular session.

Patricia Bramwell: Second it.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: What was that?

Joseph Sciame: Victor made the motion. All those in favor?

*All respond 'Aye'

Joseph Sciame: At this point for the general meeting., we have just returned from executive session and I'm going to ask Mr. Rivera to summarize the proceedings at the meeting.

Victor Rivera: During the executive session were discussed real estate and Personnel matters.

Joseph Sciame: Okay. And now into the regular meeting we're now back to finance where we're going to be addressing the topic of the budget and I believe that Mr. Rivera and Mr. Tishuk will conduct that part of it.

Victor Rivera: Yes. So, presented to the board at the moment I say a budget document displays two different budget scenarios. It's got a conservative scenario and an aggressive one. The conservative scenario estimate at 690 full time enrollment; the aggressive one deals with the 710 full-time enrollment. The 690 is conservative because those are the numbers generally that we have used in the past. The aggressive scenario deals with 20 additional Scholars then for our traditional budget practice in the past. We also have in this document the approved budget from last year for comparison purposes. And as Mr. Tishuk can explain a little more, you can see that the conservative and the aggressive budget scenarios both came out with net operating losses for the forthcoming year in the event that the PPP funds are not received.

So, the board has had an opportunity, I think, to review this document. It was circulated last week. So I leave it to Mr. Tishuk to have, if he has anything that he wants to point out in particular and then I think the board should raise any questions that they have about any of the items on the budget itself.

Nicholas Tishuk: Sounds great. Thank you, Victor. So I'll just start for the income side doing them by sections and then we'll pause for questions and then we'll roll into the expenses side as well. So, right now we're forecasting \$10,717,000 per pupil revenue. This is based off of 690 full time equivalent students at \$16,112. That's the number we've got currently from FTP as expected per-pupil number. There is a possibility that number will go down and if that number goes down, in order to keep the \$10,772,000 need to have the per-pupil go up. So, if it goes down, you know say a hundred dollars then we're going to have to make up \$69,000 in revenue with additional students that it additional five students or six students.

That's pretty straightforward. You know we'll work really hard to continue to keep our enrollment high. We have the ability under the charter to go up to 729 students. But obviously in this, you know, challenging environment, it's hard to predict what that would be. So, we'll really focus on keeping historically average enrollment. For special education. We have it at \$1,750,000. That's the same as last year. I do insist that it could be higher than that, based off of this year's income though. Again. All these numbers are subject to factors the beyond our control.

I am worried about migration out of York City, you know people leaving Brooklyn for other boroughs or leaving for downstate or Upstate New York. That is a big worry not that New Beginnings will see a targeted loss in students because of our perceived quality, but rather Brooklyn is bleeding students, bleeding families. And that's why those numbers are not higher. I think we'll know a lot more by say November once we've had a chance to get our enrollment really settled in but right now I feel pretty comfortable with those conservative numbers. The textbook aid, the software aid - those are flat DYCD after-school Grant. This is a question that came up last week from some trustees. It is possible that the city will start cutting budget lines beyond what they have right now. So that money could go away, the after-school grant. The one you know; slight benefit is that that's reimbursable. So, we only spend that money. We all get that money when we spend it. So, if we spend less money on after school because of whatever cuts they may give us, then it will not be a net loss on the balance books, simply something be a decrease in programming.

We do want to keep programming pretty solid though, especially with the lower school, which is not covered here. This is the after-school program for middle grade 6 through 8, but I think after school will be an important portion of keeping our enrollment strong. So, our spending should be about flat or maybe slightly higher and then the real hurt this year besides the drop in per-pupil funding is the bullet aid will not be there next year. So we do not expect the 131. So we're going to see we anticipate about a 4.6 percent decrease year over a year in revenue. That's really driving the challenges that we're seeing on revenue. Any questions on that before I move on?

Okay, great Federal it a little more straightforward IDEA was actually \$119,000 this year. So it's been increased slightly. I say it held flat there, but it's up a tiny bit. Title I should be around that same number. Though, again, these big state aid packages may change that. Title IIA for roughly the same. E-rate also roughly the same, though we may see e-rate jump. A number that's not on there, which on a more aggressive budget may be included as this COVID Title I money that has been discussed. We have heard there are some you know budget scenarios that have been heard that there may be up to \$170 per student and federal monies; Unfortunately have not been confirmed on any of those numbers. So what seemed like it was definitely happening before has just not been confirmed. So if it comes through the next week to three weeks, obviously 120 K helps out a lot and gives some more federal funding coming through. So we are seeing a slight increase of about 1.6 percent in federal grants any questions on Federal?

Great, the next two lines you guys know contributions and miscellaneous are smaller. We're not seeing any major changes in there. So just for a conservative sake they've been held flat across the board. Assuming the school continues to do its gala in the fall, our ten year gala, we're still in year 10 right now, we may see that bump a little bit with individual donations, but for the sake of this budget we want to keep it relatively flat. There may be other restricted contributions are unrestricted contributions available and other format and Vicky and I have been working on some grants. There may be some additional city money available, which should go up to the first line the first section through the Borough president, but right now it looks like we're seeing about a 4.4 percent decrease year-over-year to \$14,166,000 total income. Any questions on the income side?

Great. So expenses what we're seeing is about 3% increase in staffing computation and about a two percent increase from 24% to 26% of benefits. Again, we think they're going to see higher Insurance costs due to the great destabilization of the hospital and the health insurance industry due to COVID and also we want to make sure we have a very competitive staffing environment. If we need new staff make sure it's very competitive. We also want to retain our current staff.

Talking to the team, it seems like they have a very high retention sentiment. Obviously will see in the fall what happens but what we want to be able to do is leverage our, you know, reasonable increases and expenses to ensure that we have a very high retention rate. Therefore we can keep our most effective staff and therefore have a great academic year. We'll see three percent increases in other lines like general administrative and student recruitment. We've held flat fundraising and the major increase on that section right there would be about 34 percent increase for professional services as we're anticipating seeing a higher rate of expense due to having additional facilities team or modifications to the building. We may need to bring in other staffers to fill in gaps or do additional work online or remote and we're just sort of looking at the potential expenses. Obviously if we see massive drops and per-pupil allocations, then we need to scale back those different lines appropriately, but looking at the current framework, I think we'll see it increase in professional services as opposed to a decrease in it. Curriculum classroom about 30% increase would be to move to digital and remote learning expenses associated with that. Facilities, we may see a large increase in our rent at \$471,000 and obviously technology communication; This is the infrastructure pieces the hardware in the building the server's the equipment. We're talking about non-capital expenses that allow us to continue our mission remotely and to be as we say ambidextrous between the classroom and remote instruction.

So real increases look about 9% year over year and this model \$16,031,000 and we're seeing about a net deficit of \$1,864,000. Again to remember we have applied for PPA loan. And if that is given to us that should cover this deficit in terms of the actual cash flow, even though we'll have to spend it in the next 6 or so weeks. So, we think that the expenses the next couple weeks covered by that cash flow allows us to run very efficiently effectively next year and you know, if need be we need to dip into our reserves we'll do that that way as well.

Kevin Nesbitt: I have two questions. This is Kevin. Are you done Nick?

Nicholas Tishuk: Yes, sir.

Kevin Nesbitt: So two questions. One is just concepting to understand things as not about any individual employees because I'm looking at the COLA increase on the compensation. That 3% I'm sorry to increases that 3% increase on top of cost of living or is that what you've estimated to be the cost of living increase?

Nicholas Tishuk: Yeah. It's just a net increase in salary. So, you know, if we keep the same FTE it would be an average of three percent across the board. It may not actually be that maybe less, uncertain or more in other ones. We typically do, you have different title changes and switches which may need to move one way or another. If we have some staff attrition, we may have people come in more expensive or less expensive. But yeah, the three percent would cover any COLA and any shifts and positions or you know, even potentially hiring another staff member for a specific position.

Kevin Nesbitt: In the in the potential loan that we've replied for, if we are awarded that loan is there any recommendations around increases or not giving increases at this time, or does it not give us specifics?

Nicholas Tishuk: Yeah, the loan is actually for the eight weeks following getting the loan. So, if we got that loan tomorrow...

Kevin Nesbitt: It will not impact this.

Nicholas Tishuk: Yeah, the May 15th payroll the May 30th payroll the June 15th payroll that sort of thing. So, it's meant to cover current expenses. So, what it does is we are anticipating seeing these losses therefore we want to be able to stay in business and the government is incentivizing us not to cut people right now. So, in certain circumstances there would be you cut expenses now to avoid expenses later and we're hoping to keep all of our staff now and keep all of our staff next year due to the flexibility that that cash flow allows us.

Kevin Nesbitt: Okay. I don't know if others have any questions about that. Can I turn to a question about the curriculum and classroom expenses and increases in those?

Nicholas Tishuk: Please

Kevin Nesbitt: So, I've observed that you made a 30% adjustment upwards and we, I imagine that's around and you said in some ways that's around the technology that will be necessary for us to function in a more malleable type of environment. How did you come to that figure and do and sort of what's the analysis that makes you feel comfortable that it shouldn't that is 350 rather than 500,000 for example,?

Nicholas Tishuk: it's a good question. There's a bit of art and a bit of science in this. I mean we the challenge with the situation is that we need to be 100% prepared to run a traditional day program out of our building for a hundred and you know 80 plus days a year, but we need to have the books you need to have the workbooks into the text, we have to have the materials, pencils, paper, all the stuff that we spend money on curriculum: we have to have that ready. Additionally. We need to be able to kind of effortlessly pivot to an online situation. Where you know, God forbid there's another COVID wave, which has been predicted ,in say November, be able to go 'Hey, it's Friday and you know next week, we're not having classes in the building, we're doing classes online'. And now everything that we were doing is pivoting over so we kind of have to have two sets of curriculum concepts ready. One sort of perfected and modulated for classroom instruction and the other for remote instruction.

Now the good thing is, it's not like we threw out all of our textbooks and we just do something completely different. So it's not like, you know where we were using a certain algebra curriculum or just going to flip it and get rid of it for online instruction. But there are you know, different costs associated with the online elements and components of the software. There are maybe remote costs in terms of books and things that we wouldn't normally have and the idea is just it's

going to be marginal I think 30% is kind of a little conservative; it may be more than that. But you know, the idea is we'll base it off that and then we do have a pretty astoundingly talented staff so we can, you know, source materials for free online. There's a ton of them out there and we can get best practices. We have been in touch with a lot of colleagues out there. So, while 30% is not a small increase, I think it could be much higher if we wanted to push it much higher. I think our intuition is to keep it grounded in the existing framework and add to it as opposed to completely, you know, doubling it or giving a 50% increase. Did that answer your question?

Kevin Nesbitt: Yeah, it's helpful. So you just want, there weren't any explicit direct cost that you looked at. It wasn't as though you've already made an assessment that will need to in will need to buy more of X or Y. But this is just an anticipation of the full variety of unknowns. But the one thing that is known as this will cost us more and that's what I'm learning at my day job and they were all learning. Right?

Nicholas Tishuk: That's helpful. I mean it's sort of like, you know, think about it like this: like the main resource for using for online instruction right now is Google classroom and we already have a Google platform. We already have it set up and it doesn't cost us any extra next year. So, it's sort of like the core piece of how are you getting kids active? It's free essentially compared from this year to last year next year. However, we kind of see a ballpark figure of about a 30% increase to kind of due to the dual handed, you know, multi modal framework. So, whilst maybe kindergarten will be less, it'll be ten percent, you know, maybe seventh grade will be 40%, eighth grade will be 40%. So, it just really depends on a lot of factors we haven't yet figured out and as time goes on we'll definitely have those conversations with the academic committee regarding, you know, how comfortable we feel moving things and there's certain programs, I think, translate beautifully online and other programs that are pretty difficult to replicate what we do in the building to doing it online. So that's where those cost more money.

Kevin Nesbitt: Thank you.

Cecelia Russo: Can I just jump in? This is Cecelia. I'm sorry, just for one. May, Monday May 18th at five o'clock there will be an academic committee call. And so hopefully some of these things we'll discuss on the committee to report at the board meeting and then Nick will have some also some updates, you know, whatever Friday and so forth. So again, you know, maybe we can you know, kind of answer some of these questions after you know be more prepared for the next board meeting is where what I'm saying.

Nicholas Tishuk: Absolutely. Yeah, and I'm happy to do that. And you know these again are these are ballpark estimates for big numbers and as we kind of dig into every individual one we have more so, you know, we're hopeful that these are pretty solid and they're so resilient, you know, they handle multiple situations and scenarios. This doesn't rely on a specific, you know, good book, doesn't rely on, you know, a complete reinvestment. They're sort of middle of the road ballpark figures that, you know could be adjusted up or down necessarily.

Cecelia Russo: Right.

Joseph Sciame: What I would like to invite is a motion to or resolution to adopt the budget, perhaps led by Victor Rivera. So that we might be able to vote on it. And if there are further questions after the motion, which is by the rules and obviously we would do that. So, Victor, would you please move forward with the recommendation for the budget?

Victor Rivera: Sure. The only reason that I hesitate is that there is ...

Joseph Sciame: I would have had somebody else to do it, but I think you should have the honor because you put in a lot of time with Lisa-Renee and Nick, you know in developing it. So I know customarily they would say somebody other than the treasurer but you know, I think if you put a lot of effort...

Victor Rivera: I'm fine with that. I think I do that every year anyway, but I was I was just wondering if we needed to quickly. Just check the aggressive scenario as well for the record and maybe just have made quickly tell us what the difference is. I think people can see and see that many of the line items remain exactly the same, but we have a different bottom numbers to perhaps Nick can very quickly for the record. Just tell us how the aggressive budget differs from the conservative.

Nicholas Tishuk: That sort of sky blue aggressive budget is envisioned that we're not going to see as much pain on per pupil. So, either the governor's cuts are not as expensive as they appear to be or we're going to have additional students enrolling beyond what's in the current budget. And as you know, these budgets are always conservative. Generally speaking, we've had above average enrollment. Other schools have seen drops in enrollment. So, you know, it's just a rosier situation where we're seeing fewer per-pupil cuts or higher enrollment. So it doesn't have a fundamentally different concept as the budget we're looking at but it does envision a rosier situation. And obviously if we come back in, you know in the school year and we're looking at the budget and October-November and you know, it didn't get caught as badly and we get through all the little hurdles of the guarterly cutbacks, we can kind of look at our assumptions and you go will go 'Wow. We thought were going to be 1.8 million. It was less. That's beautiful' or if it was about what we thought it would be we can kind of keep it as is. So, you know the idea of these budget frameworks is you've got to have something to start with and then it's got to be flexible. So, the blue one is harder to flex because it assumes that we have higher revenues. The red one is easier to flex, it assumes they have lower revenues, but obviously, we're really reliant on being able to, you know, access additional capital funds for next year. Is that what you wanted, Victor?

Victor Rivera: Yes. Exactly.

Nicholas Tishuk: Okay.

Victor Rivera: If there are no questions from the board with respect to the blue scenario, the more aggressive scenario, then I would move that the board adopt the conservative budget prepared by Nick for consideration of the board. That would be the pinkish scenario shown on the budget sheet that we were shown; so I would so move.

Joseph Sciame: Is there a second to that motion? Can we have a second from someone?

Doris Givens: I second this is Doris.

Joseph Sciame: Okay. Thank you, Doris. Are there any further questions on the proposed budget? Are there any further questions?

Doris Givens: No, not by me.

Joseph Sciame: Okay, three times like we're having an election. So, if there are no further questions, we will now call for the vote. And I think you probably should have it by name. So, Vicky, would you mind calling you names out again?

Nicholas Tishuk: Vicky? Okay, I'll do it.

Joseph Sciame: Okay

Nicholas Tishuk: Joe Sciame

Joseph Sciame: yes

Nicholas Tishuk: Doris

Doris Givens: Yes. I'm sorry. I was on mute.

Nicholas Tishuk: Kevin

Kevin Nesbitt: Yes

Nicholas Tishuk: Pat

Patricia Bramwell: yes

Nicholas Tishuk: Neil

Neil Samen: Yes

Nicholas Tishuk: Victor

Victor Rivera: Yes

Nicholas Tishuk: Tyler Tyler McConnell: Yes Nicholas Tishuk: Cecelia Cecelia Russo: Yes Nicholas Tishuk: I believe we lost Tish? Tish is lost? So, we have a unanimous vote Tamikka Pate: Nick, I was on Victor Rivera: You missed Tamikka Nicholas Tishuk: Tamikka, sorry, Tamikka. Kevin Nesbitt: Oh, Tamikka's there. Nice. I didn't know. Okay. Nicholas Tishuk: Tamikka, what was your vote? Tamikka Pate: Yes

Nicholas Tishuk: Thank you, Tamikka. Sorry for missing you. And this Tish, yeah, so it is unanimous.

Joseph Sciame: Vicky please make sure that the record shows that it whatever point Tamikka joined us. So, she's on the call.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Yes

Joseph Sciame: And that Tish, unfortunately left us. Okay, ladies and gentlemen there any other at this point are there any public comments?

*No response

Kevin Nesbitt: So can I, Joe, can we bring up any other business but can I just mention something related to the family life or is that going to happen another meeting? It's one minute?

Joseph Sciame: Yeah, we'd really prefer that we conduct all the other business next week unless it's something that maybe didn't

Kevin Nesbitt: I was hoping for- I was hoping for it to happen by next week. So I just wanted I don't think it needs to avoid, it'll take one minute. So unless anyone disagrees, what I had spoken to Nick about and to I think Vicky and Elisabeth was that from the Board, I thought we should send the letter to families just to remind them that we're here and that we support them and we understand the extraordinary time that they're all going through. So, I'm working with

Elizabeth. We have bullet points where we will hopefully come up with a letter that I can provide the board next week. It was something I had hoped to do earlier. But time the timing just being allowed in terms of Elizabeth and I getting together as they were prioritizing working with families, but we got together now. Elisabeth is a member of the team who works with Nick, Vicky and Patience around family engagement; in case you all haven't seen her in a while. And so, I just want to let you know that something I'm planning for us to do from Family Life on behalf of the board. You'll see whatever we whip up, but I just don't want it to be a surprise at the next

Nicholas Tishuk: And there's one other tiny item. Vicky, can you share.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Yes. Hi everyone. Can you hear me? Great. So, last week was teacher appreciation week and a number of students recorded themselves, either via audio or video to share their appreciation and there were so many but I think a lot of you know Omare, who is a senior. He's graduating this year and I will miss him dearly. And I wanted to share with you the message he has sent. So, I'm going to try to play it on my computer, so that you get all hear what he had to say. Let's try this.

Nicholas Tishuk: Nothing so far Vicky.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: Okay.

Nicholas Tishuk: Can you share it via email. I think it would be good for everyone to hear that message.

Vicky D'Anjou Pomerleau: I'll try that. Thank you. Sorry about that.

Nicholas Tishuk: I want to appreciate, just share my new appreciation to all the trustees and the staff, you know, Vicky, Patience, Lisa-Renee obviously and also the rest of the staff. They're really dealing with extraordinary circumstances. I've been doing budgets for over 10 years for charter schools in New York City. And this is definitely the strangest one I've ever created and I just appreciate the support. We will be successful this year. This budget allows us to do that and we will need to be adaptive, be smart and even better than we have been historically. So, I think we have the framework to do that. We have the governance to do that, the management to do it and I just want to thank everyone for your work on this.

Patricia Bramwell: Thank you, Nick.

Victor Rivera: Thank you.

Joseph Sciame: Thank you.

Kevin Nesbitt: Thank you everyone whoever's there Vicky, Lisa-Renee, I don't know, but all of you who are making this happen Patience in spirit.

Joseph Sciame: I think I would like to alert everybody that we do have a meeting next Tuesday. We have a very substantive agenda, and I'm going to just mention to you that we're going to spend some time next week on governance but to prepare for that, please, please do two things: go on board on track more often than you have especially since we're all homes. And number two. If you're asked to participate in any of the surveys or evaluation processes, please help us by doing it. That will help Doris get what she is going to talk to us about next week and we've got some, you know serious business to conduct but it's going to be a full meeting. I expect that it will go longer than just the one hour.

Doris Givens: Will we be able to do like something with video so that we can see each other? Is that possible?

Nicholas Tishuk: We can set it up. Yeah, if people are able to access a computer during that we have links through Google that we can use.

Doris Givens: That would be great.

Kevin Nesbitt: Yeah, everything is all of those systems. That's a great idea. Who knew I would miss seeing all of you, but I do and I thought the same thing here we're getting on the phone. Like I haven't seen their faces in so long and not seeing you makes it feel even more unreal that we're not together. So it would be great and I know that most systems also have a call-in number. So if we have members that don't have a computer, I think they can usually dial in by phone as well.

Nicholas Tishuk: Great, all right, thank you. Everybody.

Joseph Sciame: We need a motion to adjourn made by? Whose voice do I hear out there? Cecelia?

Cecelia Russo: Yes. Okay

Kevin Nesbitt: Seconded by Kevin.

Joseph Sciame: All those in favor?

All respond 'Aye'

Joseph Sciame: Okay, God Bless, and please take care everybody. We'll be together again one week from now.