



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
January 9, 2019

The meeting was brought to order by Vice Chair Laura Blankfein at 6:15 and a quorum was found present.

Board Members Present: Laura Blankfein, Jose DeJesus, Mathias Ederer, Adam Faulkner, Randall Iserman

Present by Video Conference: Laurence Heilbronn

Absent: Danal Abrams, Ben Gliklich

- Chair requested approval of minutes from December 2018 meeting. Minutes approved unanimously by voice vote.

- CSA Families Association representatives CaSandra Sulaiman, Maria Ortiz, and Max Osse joined the meeting to express concerns coming from parents
 - Attendance at parent events rises and falls with age of child, events, and time of year.
 - Co-chairs of parent body suggested the lack of school-based events (showcases, etc) has reduced parent activity overall
 - Recent disciplinary letter sent to 7th grade families reinforced current feeling that school was not communicating well or making parents feel part of the school's decision process. This led to some concern that all students were facing consequences for the poor choices of a few. Parents were concerned about fairness
 - Parents point to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in school leadership and on the board as a problem for families of a school with a majority of students of color, pointing to the perception that poor communication is a reflection of administration's attitude toward students

The board thanked the parent representatives for their thoughtful and frank explanation of concerns.

- The board will consider how to support school leadership in more frequent, clearer communication, especially regarding discipline or sensitive issues on a grade- or school-wide basis
- The board shares parents' concern with the lack of racial diversity and is actively searching for new members with more varied backgrounds and for members of color
- Principal mentioned improved tracking, increased effort to hold students accountable, and acknowledged poor and ambiguous wording in letter to 7th grade families created confusion
- The board encouraged parents to make recommendations of potential new board members and a protocol for some kind of parent participation in the board was placed into consideration



Proposed solutions include a parent “town hall” with board, more regular schoolwide communication, return to some of the events held in year 1, board attendance at more parent events, an open letter from board to families.

Parent representatives also suggested some advisory role for families in hiring decisions, especially those for leadership roles.

- In response to previous meeting with SUNY, principal proposed further examination of the work of Ellen Winner – the Eight Studio Habits of Mind – as a possible framework for additional metrics to gauge success apart from test scores. Further research is required, including the possibility of a grant search for funding to commission a study of ways to measure the impact of studio art on students’ social-emotional, critical thinking, persistence, and social/emotional development.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:30 by unanimous voice vote