



DEMOCRACY PREP CHARTER SCHOOL

Work Hard. Go to College. Change the World!

Democracy Prep Charter School Board of Trustees Meeting June 6, 2016

Minutes

Present

Josh Pristaw
Ken Weiller
Lee Dunst
Dr. Robert North
Erin Fredrick
Joshua Morales
Gregory Weston

Absent

Matt Casner
CJ Kettler
Alastair Wood
Dan Rosenburg

Guests

Katie Duffy
Benjamin Feit
Natasha Trivers
Kent Anker
Greg Spreeman
Duncan Scherer
Rick Abare

Network Update:

Katie Duffy, Chief Executive Officer of DPPS, began the network update by highlighted changes to DPPS's organizational structure for next year. Ms. Duffy informed the board that Lindsay Malanga, Harlem Prep's founding principal, had recently resigned from her role as Democracy Prep's superintendent. While Ms. Duffy will be serving as both CEO and superintendent on an interim basis, she noted that the network had already strengthened its instructional support team for the 2016-17 school year by tapping Margaret Marrer and Ajaka Roth, veteran principals from Democracy Prep's two highest performing middle schools, to serve as Regional Assistant Superintendent and Assistant Director of Talent Development respectively. In addition, Lisa Friscia will be assuming the role of Vice President of Talent Development and will have a broader mandate to implement and refine targeted professional development opportunities for both teachers and aspiring leaders.

Ms. Duffy also updated the board on the recent situation involving the Harlem Prep teacher who was terminated and subsequently arrested.

Finally, Ms. Duffy briefly discussed DPBR's expansion to include a first grade, fifth grade, and seventh grade. She also mentioned the challenges surrounding the PARCC examination in non-NYC regions.

School Update:

Natasha Trivers, Principal of DPCHS, began the school update by discussing Senior Class college acceptance, noting that 90% of scholars have 100% need met in financial aid packages. The remaining 10% of scholars are working with the school's college team to secure private grants and loans to supplement the gap between their financial aid package and their Expected Family

Contribution. Ms. Trivers then read the list of colleges that DPCS seniors will attend this fall. Referencing the strong representation of top-tiered colleges—including Harvard, Brown, Emory, Stanford, and Howard, among others—she concluded that the Democracy Prep “brand” is carrying cachet on college campuses and the DPPS college team has established well-cultivated partnerships with admissions offices across the nation.

Ms. Trivers also discussed some staffing changes at DPCHS, noting that Assistant Principal John Lindquist; will be moving to a role at DPPS’s network office.

Finally, Ms. Trivers noted a goal for increased focus on corporate partnerships and other possible opportunities to support DPCHS Alumni on their journey through college.

Josh Pristaw, Board Chair, called the Democracy Prep Charter School (DPCS) board meeting to order at 6:57 p.m.

MOTION: Motion to approve the minutes from the Board’s May 4, 2016 meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 6:57 p.m.

Josh Pristaw asked a question about the student records provision in the Management Agreement that was resolved..

Josh Pristaw asked Benjamin Feit to comment on the process of creating the Student and Family handbooks. Benjamin Feit mentioned that leaders and executive directors met to review and update the handbook collaboratively, such that they capture the necessary updates while at the same time remaining as aligned as possible across DPPS charters.

Josh Pristaw raised the issue of bullying and asked for some explanation as to how new technology affects it. Mr. Feit highlightd some of the differences between types of physical incidents and how they compare to online behavior and the role of the handbook in delineating those that qualify as bullying, both inside and outside of school. Mr. Feit also commented on the differentiation necessary, specifically to middle and high school scholars.

Ken Weiller inquired as to the methodology behind benchmarking success regarding the implementation of these policies. Kent Anker highlighted that other networks are also addressing on-line bullying questions and that we have been looking to establish best practices.. Erin Fredrick supported this with an anecdote from another school about the challenge of balancing in-school and out-of-school behaviors in the age of near persistent connectivity.

MOTION: Motion to adopt a consent agenda for policy agreement. Motion passed unanimously at 7:06 p.m.

MOTION: Motion to approve all Policy Handbooks. Motion passed unanimously at 7:07 p.m.

MOTION: Motion to adopt the proposed 2016-17 Management Agreement with Democracy Prep Public Schools. Motion passed unanimously at 7:08 p.m.

Finance Update:

Greg Spreeman, Chief Financial Officer for Democracy Prep Public Schools, walked the board through the proposed 2016-2017 budget, explaining that he collaborated with Mr. Weiller, board treasurer, to create a conservative budget. Changes made from the current fiscal year's budget include increases in insurance coverage and per pupil funding. Mr. Spreeman then explained the new methodology used to calculate expected revenue from special education. The proposed budget, instead, bases projected special education revenue on the number of certified special education teachers. Lastly, Mr. Weiller pointed out that the Management Agreement contains a safety net clause in the event that the school is short on revenue.

Katie Duffy discussed the future of certification through the certification Relay program and some details of the 5-year plan.

Josh Pristaw asked about the Alumni Support budget for this year compared to last year. Ms. Duffy responded by discussing the Gala as a line item, and the success of this year's gala which had a \$340,000 gross on a \$90,000 cost.

MOTION: Motion to approve the FY17 budget as presented. Motion passed unanimously at 7:18 p.m.

Pathways Update:

Duncan Scherer, Executive Director of Democracy Prep Pathways, provided an update on the program's inaugural year. The program had a 100% scholar retention rate throughout its first year and 100% of this year's staff are returning next year. According to Mr. Scherer, the high retention rates among scholars and staff are attributable to the selective hiring of passionate and talented educators, the support and training the staff receive, and the levels of autonomy for staff to bring their unique perspectives to the programming. Mr. Scherer also cited accomplishments from the academic data, including over 56% high aggregate growth in reading and math and 70% aggregate growth in improvement for language usage.

Mr. Scherer also detailed the process for transitioning scholars who will integrate back into their home schools.. Scholars returning to DPCMS will receive support from Pathways through a liaison staff member and through use of Pathways curriculum in their home school setting. Mr. Scherer expressed hopes that this unique program model will engender a movement of similarly patterned programs to serve high need students. Several schools have already expressed interest in replicating the Pathways model and have visited the program to observe best practices.

Joshua Morales asked about IEP differentiation at Pathways. Mr. Scherer discussed the evolution beyond the typical DOE classifications and how Pathways is currently setup to handle learning related IEP most effectively, while looking to create new programming for Scholars with ASD or Behavior IEP's.

Mr. Feit noted that Mr. Scherer and the Pathways Program received the 2016 Lynn Hall Teacher Action Research Prize.

MOTION: Motion to reappoint School Leaders for 2016-17. Motion passed unanimously at 7:34 p.m.

MOTION: Motion to adopt the proposed board meeting calendar for the 2016-17 instructional year. Motion passed unanimously at 7:34 p.m.

MOTION: Motion to adopt the proposed school calendar for the 2016-17 instructional year. Motion passed unanimously at 7:35 p.m.

RESOLUTION: RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees of Democracy Prep Harlem Charter School hereby elects the following individuals for a term of two years to commence on July 1, 2016, each of whom shall serve until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and qualified or, if earlier, until such Trustee's death, resignation or removal.

Josh Pristaw
Gregory Weston
Dr. Robert North

Ms. Duffy mentioned Matt Casner's intent to resign from the Board. Erin Fredrick announced she also intended to resign due to relocation.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 7:37 p.m.



DEMOCRACY PREP CHARTER SCHOOL

Work Hard. Go to College. Change the World!

Democracy Prep Charter School Board of Trustees MINUTES

July 6th, 2016
207 West 133rd Street

Present

Ken Weiller
Dr. Robert North
Gregory Weston
Lee Dunst
Alastair Wood
Dan Rosenberg
Josh Pristaw

Absent

Joshua Morales
CJ Kettler

Guests

Katie Duffy
Greg Spreeman
Alysa Campbell
Linda Bell

Gregory Weston called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

MOTION: Motion to approve the minutes from the board's June 6, 2016 meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 6:35 p.m.

School Update

Katie Duffy, CEO of Democracy Prep Public Schools, began the school update with a recap of the high school's recent graduation ceremony. The event took place at Harlem's Apollo Theater and was a wonderful display of the seniors' accomplishments and fittingly honored the school staff that helped them throughout their journey. Ms. Duffy also updated the board on changes to leadership at the middle school and high school. The high school's two assistant principals will both be assuming network-level positions in 2016-17, with John Lindquist transitioning into an alumni support position and Brian Martin moving to the CMO to scale school data systems. Kimberly Sekel and Elisa DiMauro, two long-time DPCHS teachers, will be moving into administrative positions to support Natasha Trivers, who will be returning as principal. At the middle school, *Leader U* fellow and 6th grade team leader, Brian Serzan, will move into the role of Assistant Principal as Ajaka Roth transitions from school co-principal to Assistant Director of Talent Development for DPPS.

Network Update

Ms. Duffy also provided an update of happenings across the Democracy Prep community. Leaders from all Democracy Prep schools recently completed a week of collective professional development. Concurrently, schools' operations staffs also had professional development sessions. These sessions allowed leaders and operation teams to collaborate on best practice and begin meaningful planning for next school year.

Prompted by a board question regarding teacher certification, Ms. Duffy explained two new initiatives designed to bolster certification rates among instructional staff. First, Democracy Prep will reimburse staff up to \$15,000 for certification-related coursework with the reimbursements staggered over a five-year period in order to incentivize longevity. Second, any staff member who

remains uncertified past the end of this school year will not be eligible for any stipends, and their eligibility for a salary raise will be capped at 2%.

Committee Updates

Finance & Audit. Greg Spreeman, CFO of Democracy Prep Public Schools, requested that the board authorize Fruchter Rosen to serve as auditors for the upcoming school year. Ms. Duffy remarked that the firm does an exemplar job and has practices particularized to charter school auditing. Still, she advised that, as a matter of good business practice, the board solicits bids from accounting firm every 3 years.

MOTION: Motion to approve Fruchter Rosen & Company, P.C. as auditors for the 2016-2017 school year. Motion passed unanimously at 7:07 p.m.

Governance. Linda Bell introduced herself to the board and expressed interest in becoming a trustee. Ms. Duffy provided her a high-level overview of Democracy Prep and its network of 17 schools and 1 program.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 7:17 p.m.



DEMOCRACY PREP CHARTER SCHOOL

Work Hard. Go to College. Change the World!

**DEMOCRACY PREP CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES**

SEPTEMBER 7, 2016
207 WEST 133RD STREET

Present

Gregory Weston
Lee Dunst
Josh Morales
Alastair Wood
Josh Pristaw
Dr. Robert North

Absent

Ken Weiller
Dan Rosenberg
CJ Kettler

Guests

Katie Duffy
Greg Spreeman
Kent Anker
Rick Abare
Seun Shokunbi
Benjamin Feit
Claire Libert

School Update

Rick Abare, Special Advisor to the CEO at Democracy Prep Public Schools (DPPS), walked the board through DPCS state assessment data while providing context for how the board should interpret the school's results. Mr. Abare emphasized the school's median growth percentiles in both math and English Language Arts (ELA), as well as the percentage of DPCS scholars performing above the 50th percentile on each exam. Mr. Abare also highlighted that DPCS 7th and 8th grade scholars outperformed the city and state averages in ELA, while scholars at all grade levels outperformed the city and state in math. Discussion ensued on comparisons to prior administrations of the assessment, zoned schools in the community school districts in which DPPS campuses are located, top independent schools, and other high-performing New York charter networks.

Mr. Abare noted that 8th grade math proficiency numbers appear artificially depressed on account of the scholars who sat for the Algebra Regents exam in lieu of the NYS exam having been excluded from the state's dataset. Further discussion ensued on Regents exam performance, including how many DPCS scholars sat for each exam, overall pass rates, and the requirements for obtaining an Advanced Regents diploma.

Josh Pristaw, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:19 pm.

MOTION: Motion to approve the minutes from the board's July 6, 2016 meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 7:20 pm.

Network Update

Katie Duffy, Chief Executive Officer of Democracy Prep Public Schools (DPPS), appealed to the Board to help the DPPS community in Baton Rouge (DPBR), where 50 percent of families suffered significant loss due to flooding. Suggested ways to help included making donations for replacement uniforms via Democracy Prep's website and purchasing recovery kits through Amazon.com. Mr. Weston asked about the status of DPBR's building. Ms. Duffy replied that the school took on two feet of water and has been undergoing extensive salvage and restoration efforts since mid-August.

Committee Updates

Finance & Audit

Greg Spreeman, Chief Financial Officer at DPPS, discussed FY16 close-out procedures and set forth a timeline for field work to be completed by the school's independent auditor. Discussion ensued on FY17 projections, including how early enrollment counts aligned to budgeted forecasts.

Academic Accountability

Benjamin Feit, Chief of Staff at DPPS, walked the board through the 2016-17 Accountability Handbook for charter schools authorized by the New York City Department of Education. Mr. Feit explained that the DoE's framework has remained largely consistent since the school was reauthorized for a five-year term effective on July 1, 2015.

Governance

Mr. Feit reviewed the Board's bylaws and Code of Ethics. No changes have been made to the documents in 2016-17.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved unanimously at 7:32 p.m.



DEMOCRACY PREP CHARTER SCHOOL

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Democracy Prep Charter School Board of Trustees MINUTES

November 7th, 2016
207 West 133rd Street

Present

Ken Weiller
Dr. Robert North
Lee Dunst
Alastair Wood
Dan Rosenberg
Josh Pristaw
Joshua Morales

Absent

CJ Kettler
Gregory Weston

Guests

Katie Duffy
Greg Spreeman
Alysa Campbell
Kent Anker
Seun Shokunbi

Network Update:

Katie Duffy, Chief Executive Officer at Democracy Prep Public Schools (DPPS), announced to the board Democracy Prep's receipt of a \$12.7 million award under the U.S. Department of Education's Charter Schools Program. This award allows Democracy Prep to continue strengthening teacher and leader training programs and to open additional high-quality public school seats in communities where families are seeking alternatives to existing options. Ms. Duffy also provided a brief update on the network's efforts to secure authorization as an experienced operator in new regions.

Kent Anker, DPPS General Counsel, then presented on a potential board merger. Pursuant to New York charter law that allows charters to merge corporations while maintaining their individual charter, Mr. Anker articulated the merger process and highlighted positives of a single consolidated board. A board merger would provide a New York wide enrollment, personnel sharing, space to innovate with ELL and ACT programing, an efficient governance structure, and a consolidated budget with shared assets and liabilities. Mr. Anker also emphasized that each charter will retain its unique character, and members of board subcommittees could serve on an advisory board for each charter. The board then discussed the implications of a merger and the need for a special meeting in December to put forth a formal vote.

Josh Pristaw called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.

**MOTION: Motion to approve the minutes from the board's September 7, 2016 meeting.
Motion passed unanimously at 7:25 p.m.**

School Update:

Ms. Duffy provided the school update, highlighting changes made to the data dashboard that more accurately convey the DPCS's academic and cultural growth. Within the attendance section, the Average Weekly Attendance metric was changed to include the Number of Weeks Meeting Goal.

This fraction highlights the number of weeks where attendance was at 96% or higher within the total number of weeks in the school year. The DREAM dollar and demerit numbers were also removed. Instead, the dashboard not reports the percent of scholars who are sent out of class versus the percent of scholars not sent out of class.

Regarding current high school metrics, Ms. Duffy reported that course pass rates are similar to pass rates for this time last year in nearly all courses except Korean. This may be a result of a low number of course assignments. In the middle school, the vast majority of scholars are passing all courses, though Math A, with a 57% pass rate, will be a focal point for improvement.

Committees Update

Finance & Audit: Greg Spreeman, Chief Financial Officer at DPPS, provided updates on end-of-year reconciliations for DPH. Audits for the school were completed over the past week, with no material weaknesses observed. Mr. Spreeman shared the auditors' recommendations regarding cash disbursements, credit card thresholds, and timelines for reconciling accounts with the board.

MOTION: Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 7:17 p.m.