

Gabrielle Apollon (Vice President)
Ankur Dalal (President)
Katie Embree
Maureen Higgins (Treasurer)
Mirlande Joachim
Kristopher John
Salone Kapur (Secretary)
Lindsey Moschet
Jennifer Ng
Elizabeth Pernick



St. HOPE Leadership Academy Board of Trustees
Board Meeting

MINUTES

August 24, 2023 from 6:30-8:00 pm
Meeting Conducted Virtually and In-Person

• **Welcome**

Call to Order

Gabrielle Apollon	Present (Virtually)
Ankur Dalal	Absent (Excused)
Katie Embree	Present (Virtually)
Maureen Higgins	Present (Virtually)
Kristopher John	Absent (Excused)
Salone Kapur	Absent (Excused)
Jennifer Ng	Absent (Excused)
Elizabeth Pernick	Present (Virtually)
Lindsey Moschet	Present (Virtually)
Mirlande Joachim	Present

Also present at the meeting: Meghann Persenaire, Principal. The meeting took place in person and via teleconference. The meeting was recorded.

• **Public Comment**

No requests for public comment were received.

• **Consent Agenda**

Minutes from the July 27, 2023 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

• **Finance Committee**

- *Feedback from Wells Fargo and Other Providers:* The Board continued the review of 401k providers. The school's current provider, Wells Fargo, responded to the school's concerns by assigning a new person as the primary contact for the school's account along with a supervisor who can be contacted to quickly escalate concerns. They also decreased their fee 10% from .29 to .26 percent.
- *Retirement Plan: Auto Enroll:* The Board discussed the possibility of transitioning to an auto enroll policy for the school's 401k plan. As only one member of the Finance Committee was in attendance, the Board will wait to vote on auto enroll until the September meeting.
- *June Financial Report:* The Board reviewed the June, 2023 Finance Report, the last report for the 2023 fiscal year. Ms. Persenaire noted the projected surplus of \$172,999 which will only change if there is an additional unexpected expense that arrives late. While the school had a lower-than-expected enrollment, staffing changes kept pace with enrollment changes ensuring a balanced budget. It was also noted that the school's

Commented [CB1]: I'm not sure if you recorded. No need to include either of these sentences going forward.

investment account did well last fiscal year. In September, the Board will discuss moving the FY2023 surplus to the scholarship investment account.

- *Recruitment and Enrollment:* With two weeks to go until the start of school, current enrollment stands at 189 students - 37 in 6th grade, 55 in 7th grade and 97 in 8th grade. While the original goal was 250 students Ms. Persenaire believes 200 is more likely. A tremendous effort was made this year to recruit students including visiting shelters, community centers, public and K-5 charter schools in Harlem and the Bronx; tabling at subway entrances; mailing flyers, post cards and applications through Vanguard; bus/bus stops ads and an increased presence online. Leadership has already built a contingency plan to ensure a balanced budget based mostly on building a staffing structure that matches projected enrollment. Other schools in NYC have experienced dramatic decreases as well, including Success Academy and DOE schools that are feeders to St HOPE. Five years ago there were 1.1 million students in NYC, this year the DOE expects to enroll about 800,000. 75% of those students who left public schools moved out of the City or the state, with religious and private schools also under-enrolling. Charter revisions are due November 1 so if the plan is to reduce the charter enrollment number then the Board would have to vote on it at the October meeting. Ms. Persenaire also recommends that the Board form a subcommittee to think about other marketing options to increase visibility.
- *Update on the 2023-24 Budget:* The contingency plan is to budget for an enrollment of 200 with the hope of reaching 220. This will mean a \$600,000 shortfall. Part of this will be filled through the \$175,000 employee retention credit the school received in July. The remainder will come from not filling teacher vacancies and creating a schedule that allows the school to operate effectively this year with the funds allotted.
- *Stronger Connections Grant:* The school is applying for a state grant that, if awarded, would provide additional staff lines for family engagement and counseling for 3 years.

Accountability Committee

- *Proposed 2023-24 Dashboard:* **The Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed dashboard which includes a historical comparison and College and Career Readiness percentages.**
- *Proposed 2023-24 Professional Development Calendar:* **The Board voted unanimously to approve the Professional Development calendar, as presented.** This year's staff professional development will continue to focus on Restorative Practices, Grade Team Meetings, and sessions helping teachers to develop and meet their individual professional development goals.
- *Proposed 2023-24 District-Wide Safety Plan:* **The Board voted unanimously to approve the District-Wide Safety Plan, as presented.** St HOPE is small but it considered a district so the school is required to develop and submit an entire plan. The plan is sent to parents and posted on the website for review. This year a remote emergency plan was added.

Principal Update

- *Message from a HARLEM Scholarship Recipient:* Ms Persenaire shared a beautiful recorded video made by and featuring an alum who was a scholarship recipient.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

I, Katie Embree, do hereby certify that I am the duly qualified and acting interim Secretary of St HOPE Leadership Academy, a New York education corporation and that the above is a true and complete copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the said corporation held on August 24, 2023 at which quorum was present throughout. (August 31, 2023)