

# The Renaissance

35-59 81st Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

www.renaissancecharter.org • 718-803-0060 • 718-803-3785 (fax)

Charter School

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## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sandra Geyer

*Chairperson*

Monte Joffee, Ed.D.

*Vice Chairperson*

Everett Boyd

*Secretary*

Stacey Gauthier

Justin Ginsburgh

Chester Hicks

Margaret Martinez-DeLuca

Francine Smith

Helen Zumaeta

## Public Meeting of The Board of Trustees

October 1, 2014

1. The chairperson called the meeting to order with a welcome message at 7:03 PM.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call was taken (See attendance below)

## HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

### Attendance:

Everett Boyd – present

Stacey Gauthier – present

Sandy Geyer – present

Justin Ginsburgh – present

Chester Hicks – present

Monte Joffee – present

Margaret Martinez- DeLuca – absent

Francine Smith – present

Helen Zumaeta – absent

Also present: Matthew DelForte, School Counsel, Daniel Fanelli, PLC Coach, and public attendee - Lilian Chen

3. Minutes from June 4, 2014 meeting were approved.
4. School Management Team Report (as per data dashboard) :
  - A report on student demographics was presented and entered into the record.Program Highlights and Initiatives for this year:
  - Advisory Program and Evaluation – We viewed a short video highlighting student perspectives on the HS Advisory Program.
  - Global Humanities and Geography Grant is ongoing as a partnership with TRCS and Truman HS in the Bronx. Teachers met last June at TRCS for professional development to look at methods to tie in Geography and History.
  - Singapore Math K-3

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- K-5 Morning Meetings
- Children’s literacy Initiatives – PK-3
- Guided Reading and Literacy Support – K-8
- Spanish Consultant
- Pre-K
- OST Grant and After-School
- Counseling Grant, Project Aware Mental Health Literacy Grant, Primary Projects
- New Partner – Global Kids (Global Issues) – HS, Bubble Foundation K-4 (Farm to Table – Healthy Eating), Sadie Nash MS, Magic Box 6-8 Videography and Photography, Engineering for Kids 9/10 Elective.
- A New Arts Elective for students in grades 8-12 began with 38 students enrolled for Wed. classes, 9-11AM, which will culminate in a Spring 2015 multimedia production.
- New Culinary Arts Program will be two-tiered, with Joe Ford offering beginning and intermediate cooking classes on Wednesday mornings and Chef Mo offering HS students classes toward their professional certification in culinary arts and food service.
- Rensizzle Week is October 27-31; 20 groups formed.
- PSAL Girls Volleyball has been added as a varsity sport at TRCS.
- Everett Boyd and Lillian Chen attended a Summer Training Institute on Family Engagement at The Harvard University Graduate School of Education. We are looking forward to initiatives to promote family engagement at TRCS this year.
- Stacey will be continuing her coalition work this year as well as encouraging charter advocacy efforts among several constituencies at TRCS.
- Dan Fanelli is working with The Science Department as a teacher and administrative support person to align and enhance the K-12 science curriculum at TRCS. Mr. Fanelli presented his work to the board. One of his initiatives is a professional development program called Urban Advantage which offers opportunities for students and parents to engage in hands-on science experiences at TRCS and various institutions around NYC. He also serves as PLC Coach Facilitator. There are coaches for each discipline and / or grade clusters for elementary. Coaches met recently for the first time with the SMT.
- The Expanded SMT met for the first recently.
- One of our teachers, Ramil Buenaventura, was awarded the prestigious Big Apple Teacher Award as well as being designated a Hometown Hero by the NY Daily News.
- We were just awarded a two-year Project AWARE grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to support the training of school personnel and other adults who interact with youth

in both school settings and communities to detect and respond to mental illness in children and youth throughout New York City.

5. Matthew Delforte presented an update on the Non-disclosure policy as it relates to reporting incidents of student discipline to colleges (copy of draft policy is entered into the record)

Question (Justin): Is a student likely to become aware of the records that have been created and that will be forwarded to requesting institutions? The point was made that students should have an avenue of redress or of self-reflection that would allow them to align their responses to the reality of their records.

Question: What if a student decides not to answer questions that may arise from a college's inquiry into his or her record?

Matthew suggested that we can develop protocols for dealing with sensitive issues of disclosure and that the college office can discuss these issues with students.

6. Consolidated Application Report – We received \$128,541 in Title I funding which is used to offset John Vanek's salary (K-5 reading specialist) and funds all of Amanda Scott's salary (6-8 reading specialist).

7. Renewal Discussion –

- Our timeline for submitting our charter renewal application is Dec. 5, 2014.
- We will be visited by our authorizers, who will be meeting with selected staff and the SMT, board members and possibly parents and students.
- Board members will be interviewed, as has been the practice in the past.
- Resumes should be updated at Board Member's discretion.
- Board member questionnaires need to be resubmitted.
- There are several issues that we will need to address as a board for our renewal application -
  - 1) How to address that we are not currently meeting our ELL enrollment target.
  - 2) The need for additional professional development time for teachers.
  - 3) The potential need for an extended day in grades K-6.
  - 4) Formalizing the looping requirement in grades PK-6.
- We may also be asked to schedule 12 board meetings during the school year.

At the suggestion of several board members, we have agreed to be available to meet again before the December meeting and/or to empower the Executive Committee to discuss and act on any issues regarding our renewal application.

Public Session adjourned at 8:37PM.

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## AGENDA

December 3, 2014 – 6:45 PM

Public Meeting of The Board of Trustees

## HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1) Chairperson's Welcome   | 2 minutes  |
| 2) Pledge of Allegiance  | 1 minute   |
| 3) Roll Call   | 2 minutes  |
| 4) Approval of October 1, 2014 minutes   | 10 minutes |
| 5) School Management Team Report   | 30 minutes |
| a. Progress Towards Goals 2013-2014  |            |
| b. School Quality Guides   |            |
| c. School Food Update  |            |
| 6) Review and Approval of FY2014 Certified Financial Report  | 20 minutes |
| 7) Charter Renewal Discussion  | 30 minutes |
| 8) Board Members New Business  | 5 minutes  |
| 9) Public Speaking   | TBD        |
| <i>Public speaking time of three minutes per person will be permitted. All speakers should sign up with the Secretary prior to the meeting and state the topic they will be speaking on. Speakers may be grouped according to topic.</i> |            |
| 10) Adjournment of Public Session  |            |
| 11) Executive Session  |            |

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Meryl Thompson

## Public Meeting of The Board of Trustees on Dec. 03, 2014

1. The Vice-Chairperson, Monte Joffe, called the meeting to order with a welcome message at 6:55 PM. Mr. Joffe cited a recent encounter he had with former U.N. Under-Secretary and Ambassador Choudry, who cited that “Global Education First” is a motto that he is trying to live by and encourages us to uphold. He remembers the students and his visit to the school fondly.

2. Roll Call was taken.

Everett Boyd – present

Stacey Gauthier – present

Sandy Geyer - absent

Justin Ginsburgh - absent

Chester Hicks – present

Monte Joffe – present

Margaret Martinez- DeLuca - present

Francine Smith – present

Helen Zumaeta – present

Also present: Matthew DelForte, School Counselor;

School Management Team Members: Denise Hur, Director of Operations; Rebekah Oakes, Director of Development and Partnerships; Yumeris Morel, Director of Teaching and Learning; Emily Byrum, Director of Teaching and Learning; Victor Motta, Director of Data and Accountability.

Public Attendees: 8 total

3. Minutes from Oct. 1, 2014 meeting minutes were approved.
4. School Management Team Report:
  - a. Progress Towards Goals 2013-2014 –

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Stacey Gauthier cited the data handouts for this report. Stacey reminded The Board that our annual report has been updated and posted on the TRCS website.

- b. School Quality Guides – Rebekah Oakes cited the initiative “Move This World”.
- c. School Food Program Update – Geoff Ramsey delivered the update with the following highlights:
  - Necessary personnel changes have been made to streamline the cafeteria workforce in order to better serve the student population and control costs.
  - Food and dietary adjustments have been made to comply with state nutritional requirements, including the addition of fruit smoothies
  - TRCS, in partnership with our food service provider, has initiated a culinary training program taught by our executive chef. The program includes 6 seniors.
  - Food and supply costs have increased by 2%, but have been offset by labor and personnel changes as well as increased food sales.
  - The program has realized an overall savings of 6%, despite the aforementioned increase in costs.
  - Special celebration days have been added to enhance the food program in an effort to increase sales and provide nutritional and attractive lunches with special themes for holidays and events.

5. The Certified Financial Report for 2014 was reviewed and approved.
6. The Board engaged in a discussion about the upcoming Charter Renewal process and inspection visit. A one page document of the highlights of the renewal application prepared by The School Management team was circulated and reviewed. The Principal reported that an extension for the deadline to submit the application was granted for Dec. 10, 2014.

Matthew Delforte, School Counsel, presented a resolution stating that the Board of Trustees grants decision-making power to the executive committee of the board in the event that the full board is unable to meet to vote on any unforeseen changes or actions.

Public Session adjourned at 8:38 PM.

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## AGENDA

February 4, 2015 – 6:45 PM

Public Meeting of The Board of Trustees

## HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1) Chairperson's Welcome   | 2 minutes  |
| 2) Pledge of Allegiance  | 1 minute   |
| 3) Roll Call   | 2 minutes  |
| 4) Approval of December 3, 2014 minutes  | 10 minutes |
| 5) School Management Team Report   | 15 minutes |
| a. Mid-Year Academic Report  |            |
| 6) Development Report  | 10 minutes |
| 7) Mid-Year Financial Report and Audit Firm Search Update  | 15 minutes |
| 8) Charter Renewal Update  | 15 minutes |
| 9) Board Members New Business  | 5 minutes  |
| 10) Public Speaking  | TBD        |
| <i>Public speaking time of three minutes per person will be permitted. All speakers should sign up with the Secretary prior to the meeting and state the topic they will be speaking on. Speakers may be grouped according to topic.</i> |            |
| 11) Adjournment of Public Session  |            |
| 12) Executive Session  |            |

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2. Roll Call was taken.

Everett Boyd – present

Stacey Gauthier – present

Sandy Geyer - absent

Justin Ginsburgh - absent

Chester Hicks – present

Monte Joffe – present

Margaret Martinez- DeLuca - present

Francine Smith – present

Helen Zumaeta – present

Also present: Matthew DelForte, School Counselor;

School Management Team Members: Denise Hur, Director of Operations; Rebekah Oakes, Director of Development and Partnerships; Yumeris Morel, Director of Teaching and Learning; Emily Byrum, Director of Teaching and Learning; Victor Motta, Director of Data and Accountability.

Public Attendees: 8 total

3. Minutes from Oct. 1, 2014 meeting minutes were approved.
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5. The Certified Financial Report for 2014 was reviewed and approved.
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## Minutes of TRCS BOT Meeting of May 6, 2015

## HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

Meeting convened at 6:35 PM

1. Chairperson's Welcome: Mr. Joffe welcomed Board Members and Public attendees with appreciation for their efforts this year as we have met with and continue to meet many challenges.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call: all board members present except Margaret Martinez-DeLuca – absent. Also present: Julia Cohen, School Counsel; and Matthew Delforte, School Counsel
4. Minutes of February 4 2015 meeting were approved with one correction (sent in separate doc.)
5. School Management Team Report –  
Principal Stacey Gauthier gave a “shout out” of thanks to Assemblyman Francisco Moya for arranging for the funding of our roof garden.  
Ms. Gauthier announced and distributed organization sheets for the 2015-2016 School Administration and Faculty Assignments.
6. Audit Firm Search Update –

Mr. Ginsburgh reported that David Ashenfarb had been selected as our new accountant to oversee our audit, along with Charter School Business Management. Mr. Ashenfarb will take on

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our accounting services going forward. He was selected from 6 candidates, who were interviewed, and comes highly recommended and qualified, as he has worked with Wildcat Academy, which is also a conversion charter school.

7. Board Members New Business – none
8. Public Speaking – none
9. Adjournment of Public Meeting – 7:12PM
10. Executive Session convened at 7:20PM

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Minutes of TRCS Board of Trustees

Meeting of June 30, 2015

## HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

Meeting convened at 3:15 PM

1. Chairperson's Welcome: Ms. Geyer welcomed Board Members and Public attendees. She expressed her appreciation for everyone's efforts this year.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.
3. Roll Call was taken: All board members were present except Margaret Martinez-DeLuca, Monte Joffe, and Helen Zumaeta. Also present: Julia Cohen, School Counsel and Denise Hur, Director of Operations

The Chair reordered the agenda to include items that required voting by a quorum of BOT members, as some members expressed that they would need to leave by 5:00.

4. Minutes of May 6, 2015 BOT Meeting were reviewed and approved.
5. (Agenda item 7) – Vote to Approve FY 2016 Working Budget -- Chester Hicks, of the Finance Committee, presented the Working Budget for FY 2016, which was included in the board packet. Motion made to approve. Motion was seconded. Motion approved.
6. (Agenda item 8) - Vote to Approve New Financial Policies and Procedures – This document was sent electronically for board review. Motion made to approve. Motion was seconded. Motion approved.

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7. (Agenda item 9) – Vote to Approve Board Meeting Calendar for 2015-2016 – This document was sent electronically for board review. Motion made to approve. Motion was seconded. Motion approved.
8. (Agenda item 10) - Vote to Approve Board Officers for 2015-2016 – Everett Boyd made a motion to table this item until next board meeting, as there were key members of the board who were absent, including one officer. Motion was seconded. Motion approved.
9. (Agenda item 11) - Vote to Approve a Revision to our School’s Charter regarding Student Enrollment –TRCS submitted a revision to our charter with our charter renewal requesting an enrollment of 558 students which has been our actual enrollment (including District 75 students) for the last several years. The DOE denied this request and approved an enrollment of 541 students, which the DOE based on our last charter’s enrollment numbers TRCS disagrees with this decision and has submitted numerous correspondences and justifications for our position to DOE.

Motion made by Chester Hicks to resolve that the BOT delegates the authority to Stacey Gauthier, Principal, to request a material change of the charter to increase the student enrollment to 558 for the school year 2015-2016 and forward. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

10. (Agenda item 12) - Vote to Approve a Revision to our School’s Charter regarding Enrollment Preference for the Children of Staff – Motion made by Justin Ginsburgh to resolve that, consistent with the outcome of the most recent legislative session in Albany, that TRCS implements a revision to its charter with regard to enrollment preferences as follows:
  1. Returning students
  2. Siblings of returning students
  3. Children of staff
  4. Children of residents of Community School District 30

The board delegates the authority to Stacey Gauthier, Principal, to submit a revision to the charter as indicated above.

11. Charter Renewal Update and Next Steps – We were granted a 4.2 year renewal, which we continue to contest. Harvey Newman of CEI-PEA has set up a meeting with Stacey and a member of the Board of Regents to discuss the issues with our renewal in an effort to further our case since multiple discussions with the DOE have proven fruitless.

We want to issue a public statement regarding the inequities in the charter renewal process based on our experience. It is also imperative that matters related to our enrollment, funding and inaccuracies in Renaissance’s renewal report be resolved.

12. School Management Team Report and CSG/CEP – Principal, Stacey Gauthier presented the School Management Team Report which included the following items included in the board packet:

- Development and Partnership Report
- Over \$10,000 expense Report
- College Bound and Leadership Report
- Admissions Statistics Update

CSG Chair, Everett Boyd, presented the CSG/CEP Report, which was included in the board packet.

13. New Teacher-elected Representative – Raymond Johnson was introduced as the newly elected candidate for teacher representative to the Board. Mr. Johnson has an 18 year tenure as a teacher at the Renaissance Charter School.

Mr. Johnson spoke briefly about his experience and his desire to become a Board member.

Discussion was held about board member experience and responsibilities. Mr. Johnson's application was submitted for review and a motion was made and seconded to recommend Mr. Johnson's candidacy to the Board.

14. Discussion on Recruitment of New Community Members to the Board – Justin Ginsburgh informed the board that he would be stepping down from the board. He and the board expressed their appreciation for his service over the past four years.

Discussion was held about the need to begin searching for new candidates to replace Justin.

15. Board Members New Business – none
16. Public Speaking – none
17. Adjournment of Public Session - 5:15PM