Minutes of the Harlem Children’s Zone Promise Academy I Charter School
Board Meeting
June 29th, 2011
35 East 125th Street New York, NY 10035

In attendance: Geoffrey Canada, Ken Langone, Mitch Kurz, Aisha Tomlinson, Stanley Druckenmiller, Alfonso Wyatt (via phone), Hope Williams, Kathleen Fernald, Sheryl Ragland, Achil Petit, Marquitta Speller, Shakira Petit, Edward Landry, Anne Williams-Isom, Mindy Miller, Marlene Fox, Debbie Gonzalez, Tracey Costello, George Khaldun, Betina Jean-Louis, Kate Shoemaker, Conrad Pinnock, Shana Brodnax, Margo Wright, Lauren Scopaz, Tiffany Fountain, Sharleen Morris, Jenny Lai, Brian McClendon

New Building Update

At 7:05 am, Ms. Lauren Scopaz reported that the blue construction fence is up and crews are currently working on excavating and building the foundation. The project was originally scheduled to be completed in early fall of 2012 but is now expected to be completed later in the fall of 2012. Thus far, the project is under budget.

NYCHA residents have been hired as a part of Tishman Construction's administration staff, construction site security staff, and as construction workers. HCZ has also hired St. Nicholas residents for HCZ staff positions. The effort to hire more NYCHA residents will continue. Ms. Scopaz noted that HCZ is committed to working with M/WBEs (Minority and Women Business Enterprises). The goal is to have 25% of the construction trade work on the project to be from M/WBEs, but we are targeting to exceed that goal. Currently, 21% of the total construction trades work are from M/WBEs.

Outreach to the community has continued. Monthly meetings are being held and residents can call the hotline or email their questions and concerns. The number of requests for air conditioners has increased and Ms. Scopaz reports that there are enough air conditioners to meet the residents' needs.

Mr. Canada’s Report

Mr. Geoffrey Canada reported that Promise Academy has been removed from the NAACP lawsuit over charter school co-locations. As the new building is being constructed, Grade 4 of Promise Academy I Elementary School will operate in the Salem location of HCZ. This location will bridge the transition into the new school building.

Ms. White will retain oversight of the Promise Academy I Grade 4 students at Salem for the upcoming school year. This will help to transition students into Promise Academy I Upper Elementary.

Mr. Canada then announced Mr. Achil Petit as the new principal of Promise Academy I Upper Elementary. The new team of Promise Academy Principals came together as one unit and Mr.
Petit has been very active in ensuring a smooth transition for Promise Academy I Upper Elementary.

**Promise Academy I Elementary**

Mr. Edward Landry, the Promise Academy I Elementary Math Coach, reported on behalf of Ms. White. He noted that attendance has been monitored carefully and the raffles for parents have been helpful. In the month of April, 100% of the students were present and on time.

The Promise Academy I Elementary team is preparing for the changes in State standards. Plans for the summer will accommodate the expected changes that include an increased level of higher order thinking. This summer, each week of professional development will have a different focus. Professional development topics will include grammar, math, social studies, and science and character education.

Mr. Landry also highlighted a few special events. Promise Academy I Elementary students who met their reading goals enjoyed a visit to Mr. Stanley Druckenmiller’s house. Additionally, everyone in the meeting was invited to the next production of “Aladdin” on July 7th.

Mr. Landry also noted that two students will be on academic probation for the summer. Using F & P standards, it has been determined that both students are two levels behind in their reading levels. The Promise Academy I Elementary team has had close contact with the family all year. Each family understands that the school will continue to support each student and that retention is a possibility.

**Promise Academy I Upper Elementary**

Mr. Achil Petit reported that he is continuing to add new members to his staff. Ms. Speller, Mrs. Petit, and Mr. Padela have all supported Mr. Petit’s efforts to fill the positions with qualified candidates. Mr. Petit is searching for new teachers and teaching assistants. His plan is to hire teaching assistants that also have the qualifications and potential to be teachers so that he can support their on-going professional development. He also hired five deans to focus on student behavior; each dean has been trained by TCI.

Mr. Petit then reported that the summer program will focus on basic skills in math and ELA. He noted that students continue to struggle with basic math skills and that summer academy is a good time to review and ensure students know the basics including the multiplication table. Additionally, an intervention team will be assigned to support the seven students who failed the math and ELA portion of the New York State exam. These students will have until January to meet requirements; if these students meet the requirements, they will then be promoted into the next grade.
Promise Academy I Junior High School

Ms. Shakira Petit stated that attendance ranged between 95% and 97%. She also stated that HCZ’s human resources department has been very helpful in staffing her school. She is now 90% staffed and is looking for one science teacher and one Special Education teacher.

Ms. Petit is developing a pre-algebra program and training her staff to teach critical thinking and writing skills to students. Her team is also developing a character education program that includes fostering public speaking skills.

There are 6 to 8 students that are in danger of retention. She has developed a bridge program for these students; they have the summer to master the necessary skills to be promoted.

Promise Academy I High School

Ms. Marquitta Speller announced that an Advanced Placement Calculus class will be offered next year at her school. Promise Academy I High School students performed well on their Regents exams. Her students took the Global Studies, Earth Science, Chemistry, Geography, U.S. History, Trigonometry and Physics Regents. Over 95% of the students passed most of the Regents exams. Every student who took the Chemistry Regents passed the exam. Ms. Speller noted that this course was taught by a first year teacher.

Two Promise Academy I High School students will need to make up extra work to graduate on time.

Ms. Speller noted that the SAT scores left room for improvement. More than half of the students fell below the national average. Ms. Speller plans to have small group instruction for all students who scored below 400 points on any part of the exam and she will also utilize the help of Princeton Review.

The Board suggested that Ms. Speller keep in mind her school’s profile as the time for college application approaches and emphasized the importance of SAT scores for individual students and the school as a whole.

Financials

Ms. Tracey Costello reported that Promise Academy I is on budget.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 a.m.