Minutes of The Harlem Children’s Zone Promise Academy II Charter School
Board Meeting
November 16th, 2011
35 East 125th Street, New York, NY 10035


Mr. Kenneth Langone called the meeting to order at 8:05 am and requested a motion to approve the October Board meeting minutes; the motion was unanimously upheld.

Promise Academy II Lower Elementary

Ms. Sheryl Ragland reported that average attendance for the month of October was 93%. Many of these absences were not students who were chronically absent but rather another group of students who were out sick.

During Election Day, Ms. Ragland conducted professional development workshops on differentiation for her teachers and teaching assistants. The school also recently hosted a Grandparent’s Day; about 30 of the students’ grandparents came to visit the school.

Additionally, intervention is running smoothly during the school day and after-school. Students, who are struggling, including students with Individualized Educational Plans, IEPs, have been targeted for extra instruction.

Ms. Ragland then introduced Mrs. Santacoloma, Ms. Bovier and Mrs. Louis, who introduced students who recited greetings in both Spanish and French.

Promise Academy II Upper Elementary

Ms. Kathleen Fernald reported that attendance has been consistent with the other schools with a drop in Halloween. Ms. Fernald noted two cases of chronic absences were referred to the Harlem Children’s Zone preventative services. In one case, the student’s grandmother is elderly and the student is accompanying their grandparent to doctor’s appointments. In the other case, the child’s mother is very ill. However, since the involvement of the Harlem Children’s Zone Preventative Services team, Ms. Fernald has seen their attendance improve.

Ms. Fernald recognizes that there is a stigma attached retention of school grade, particularly in kindergarten, and is working hard to prevent students from being retained. Many of these
students were born in November and December. Some students are entering school at the age of four and one-half and may not be prepared for kindergarten. Since the majority of our children entering kindergarten are from the HCZ Harlem Gems program pipeline, Ms. Fernald is working with Ms. Shana Brodnax to ensure students entering into Kindergarten are ready. Indeed, some students have spent extra time in the Gems program to prepare them for kindergarten.

Ms. Fernald also reports that the 7th grade class recently went on a camping trip together. The students enjoyed a high ropes course to establish stronger bonds between students. Ms. Fernald emphasized the importance of these life experiences for students.

The academic progress of students is increasing smoothly. The Fountas and Pinnell scores are posted around the schools so that students can track their growth. Thus far, the students in the Dartmouth cohort have shown the most growth.

Ms. Fernald noted that the Julliard School’s outreach educational program reached out to Promise Academy II for music students to audition for its Saturday program. One Promise Academy II female trumpeter auditioned and got into the coveted Julliard Music Advanced Placement Program.

Financials

Ms. Tracey Costello reports that Promise Academy II is still running slightly under budget and thanked the principals for their due diligence in monitoring expenses.

The Board meeting adjourned at 8:35 am.