NEW VISIONS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES’ MEETING
New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II (AMS II)
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II (HUM II)

Minutes for Meeting held at NVPS:
Monday, February 23, 2015 at 5 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members present: David Faber, Edna Vega (Video), Nancy Grossman (Video)

Not Present: Ronald Chaluisan (Secretary), Angel Rodriguez

NVPS Staff: Jonathan Green, Stephany Martinez, Lori Mei, Julia Forman, Cynthia Rietscha, Ben Rodriguez, Matt Gill, Nadine Dillon, Alec Barrett

School Staff: Julia Chun (Principal AMS), Magaly Hicks (Principal HUM), Frank Parrino (DSO HUM), Stacey King (Principal AMS II), Richard Gonzalez (Principal HUM II), Vanessa Arreola (DSO HUM II), Sharon John (DSO AMS II)

NVCHS Students: Amber Cruz (AMS), Noelia Bautista (HUM II), Steve Hossou (AMS II), David Oladunjoie (AMS II)

Public: John Alderman, John Sanchez, Stacy Martin

WELCOME

The March Board Meeting was the first meeting where the AMS and HUM Board of Trustees and the AMS II and HUM II Board of Trustees Boards met together to discuss all four of the New Vision Charter High Schools. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Sanchez, the chair of the AMS and HUM Board of Trustees.

Mr. Sanchez opened the meeting at 4:55 p.m. and asked that everyone in attendance introduce themselves.
ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MEETING’S MINUTES

Ms. Vega put forth a motion to accept the minutes from the AMS II and HUM II February 9, 2015 video call meeting. Mr. Faber seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

STUDENT PRESENTATION

A student from each of the Bronx New Visions Charter High Schools who are enrolled in a course at either Parsons or the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) discussed their experiences with the Board of Trustees. Ms. Julia Forman, Program Officer at NVPS, introduced the program and facilitated the discussion asking the students specific questions. Among those questions were: what was your experience like at either AMNH or Parsons; what was something important you learned from your experience; what was it like to take a course outside of your high school and how might this be important in preparing for college? At the end of the presentation the Board Members asked the students several questions.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Principals were asked in addition to their regular school report to discuss a particular challenge they face in their schools and the intervention plans they have in place around that challenge.

New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II

Ms. King discussed the challenges of supporting the special education population at AMS II and the supports in place for staff. She noted that many teacher preparation programs do not provide general education teachers with the tools necessary to support special education students’ needs. To support staff and to ultimately support all students an expert from Fordham University has been working with AMS II staff to differentiate instruction, develop best practices around creating student groupings and share strategies for positive behavior and self-regulation for all students. Ms. King will continue to report on progress. Ms. King also briefly discussed the Challenge-based learning (CBL) projects in partnership with community-based internships that all teachers have committed to included in a unit of study.

Ms. Martin asked how Ms. King was able to have teachers commit to the CBL project. Ms. King replied that during the summer teachers spent their professional development time planning and understanding CBL more deeply in order to bring authentic engagement into the classrooms.

Ms. Grossman asked how New Visions is supporting the schools with their strategies for supporting Special Education populations. Ms. Mei noted that Erin Stark, Instructional Specialist for Special Education at NVPS, held two long professional development workshops on special education supports for teachers and Sped Coordinators. Ms. King said that it was very useful and really helped to articulate what those relationships look like in the classroom and it also discussed different Sped strategies.

New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II

Mr. Gonzalez noted that in 2014-2015, HUM II adopted a one-to-one tablet model for all Sophomores and Juniors instead of the laptop cart used previously. A tablet lends itself to a more authentic use of technology for students and is flexible in its application and portability in and out of the classroom. The challenge was that teachers did not use the variety of features and
applications available to them through the tablets. Mr. Gonzalez said that teachers needed additional training on the tablet and help with their own strategies to differentiate and create additional activities and assessments for students. In order to move teachers to meet the technology goals, additional professional development workshops were created. Teachers and the leadership team received one-on-one training and lesson planning support around the various applications available.

Mr. Sanchez asked if the schools meet as a network to discuss these challenges and strategies. Mr. Gonzalez said that the six NVCHS Principals meet once a month to share and discuss each of their respective schools’ challenges and successes. Ms. Mei noted that the schools also meet with the NVCHS Team at quarterly Network Inquiry Team meetings to discuss network-wide goals. Mr. Gonzalez noted that his team also gave a presentation at New Visions for Public Schools around their use of the Amplify tablets.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

**Monthly Reports: Application Update**
Ms. Mei discussed the student application update, noting that the report presents applications by school, unique applications and upcoming planned recruitment events. She said that unique applications refers to applications in which a student applied only to one specific school rather than to multiple schools. Ms. Arriola discussed the school-specific websites that are under development to help students see and be able to distinguish between specific schools to help them make more informed decisions.

**School Financials**
Mr. Sanchez asked Ms. Rietscha for a brief overview of the status of each school. Ms. Rietscha said that the schools are overall in good standing. Mr. Alderman asked if there are minimum enrollment numbers that the schools need to meet in order to support their budgets. Ms. Rietscha said that all the schools are above the expected numbers and HUM wants to admit 200 9th graders next year in order to be in a better place financially. Ms. Mei noted that Ms. Hicks programs students by need rather than grade year and that is how she is able to register a higher number of students.

**Joint Board Meeting Discussion**
Mr. Sanchez and the Trustees of AMS and HUM and AMS II and HUM II agreed to continue meeting jointly. Mr. Sanchez noted that all four schools are part of the same network and therefore are held to the same accountability standards. With joint Board Meetings, the schools can continue to share best practices and maintain the NVCHS model.

**Charter Schools and Suspension Rates**
The Trustees and NVCHS Principals had a lively discussion on the recently released article by Chalkbeat regarding out-of-school suspension rates at AMS and HUM in 2011-2012, their first year of operation. Ms. Mei noted that Mr. Chaluisan spoke with a reporter and acknowledged that the numbers are unacceptably high and that the schools are working to bring them down. Reducing suspension rates is a network-wide metric for all the NVCHS this year.

**ADJOURNMENT**
Mr. Sanchez adjourned the public portion of the Board meeting at 6:03 a.m.