

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF  
CULTURAL ARTS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

A virtual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cultural Arts Academy Charter School was held on June 17, 2020 using freeconferencecall.com.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Henry Clouden III, Treasurer  
Shirley A Glasgow, Secretary  
Cheryl Pemberton-Graves, Vice-President  
Chrysetta Patterson, Member  
Dr. Laurie B. Midgette, Principal

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm with a quorum present.

**VOTE**

The financial statements of Cultural Arts Academy Charter School were prepared by Stuart Sabal and presented by Henry Clouden, Treasurer. The related statements of activities and cash flows for one month were presented with the accompanying supplemental information. These statements were discussed in detail. CAACS has sufficient cash to fund monthly operations.

**GEORGE FLOYD AND THE ISSUES OF RACE**

**NOBLE Mentoring Session**

June 12, 2020 1:30 pm-2:30 pm

**Mentor Attendees:**

Linda Simmons, Karen Smith-Moore, Thomas Stephens Sr., Thomas Stephens Jr., Yvette Strong, Derek Zimmerman

**Scholar Attendees:**

Briana Robinson, Carina Davis, Dacota Parker, Eliezer Valme, Emma Calderon, Ethan Paul, Mya Beckford, Zaiden Miller, Jayden Collins, Keziah Jospeh, Joshua Vitet,

**Professor Attendees:**

Prudence Gooden

**Agenda:**

- **Mentor Row Call and Scholars attendance:** Mentors and scholars each took time to reintroduce themselves.
- **Greetings and “Catching Up”:** Everyone greeted each other and expressed personal feelings of attending the session. Each scholar took time to share things they’ve been doing since the last mentorship session on February 28, 2020. Our mentors applauded our scholars and school staff for being able to adapt to the new way of education at home. Thomas Jr. (who is a father of a young son) jokingly shared his experience of his struggles he has with his son’s schooling at home during the quarantine. He has a new found respect for educators.
- **Purpose of NOBLE Mentorship:** Due to the time off and to get everyone back to speed, Karen and Thomas Sr. reiterated the purpose, and goals of NOBLE Mentorship.

### **Topics of the session:**

- **Opening question: “How are you feeling about the COVID 19 pandemic”?** The scholars individually expressed concerns about experiencing the pandemic. Some shared personal trials and tribulations of friends and family members. The mentors addressed each concern on an individual basis.
- **Next question: “Would anyone like to share their thoughts on the recent protests”?** The scholars individually shared their thoughts and concerns about the recent Police brutality protests all over the world. The mentors encouraged honesty and transparency, and assured the scholars that their opinions on law enforcement would not hurt their feelings, nor would it stop the mentors from “loving” them.
- **Last Question: “What changes would you like to see”?** The scholars individually expressed a plethora of ideas, such as, “less shootings”, “hire nicer cops”, “stop only killing Black people”. The mentors each took turns addressing the scholars concern for change. Thomas Sr. really took charge in this point of the session. He assured our scholars that he and his colleagues will do everything in their power to create a change in today’s policing. He also expressed that he empathizes and feels the exact same way the scholars are feeling, that he too is angry at today’s social climate.
- Sgt. Thomas Jr. who is still on active duty gave the scholars an insight to what it’s like to be a Black police officer in the midst of the protests. Joshua Vitet encouraged him to, “keep being good”, as well as everyone else.
- The session closed out with each mentor addressing the scholars with parting words of wisdom, assurance, confidence, and change. Thomas Sr. reiterated the detailed rules of behavior when approached by law enforcement. NOBLE seeks to have one last session before school ends.

### **DOE Preliminary Social Distancing Capacity Statement**

- Schools in DOE co-locations were sent a letter from Deputy Chancellor Karin Goldmark regarding the DOE’s preliminary standards for opening schools within CDC guidelines and keeping staff and students safe. Schools in private space are not mandated to follow these directions. Every building has its own constraints and advantages, even DOE buildings, so these assumptions reflect an “average” and allow for considerable leeway. Charter schools in private space are being made aware of these guidelines as a touchstone for your own planning.

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES**

- How many students and staff can we accommodate in our school buildings under social distancing constraints, with the goal of ensuring that we safely serve our students and staff?
- **The Division of School Planning and Development** is developing new school-level student and staff capacities factoring in social-distancing requirements for all schools in DOE buildings, including charter schools. Using guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, New

York State Department of Health, and New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; data from the Principal Annual Space Survey (PASS); **enrollment data; and prior capacity and utilization data**, these capacity calculations aim to ensure that **at least six feet of space can be maintained around each person in a classroom**, and that there remains **room for teachers and students to circulate**.

- Guidance is forthcoming regarding common areas of buildings, including hallways, bathrooms, entrances, and public assembly space. Any classrooms that serve students six years old and younger must be inspected for lead and cleared for use for this age group.
- Capacity ranges assume approximately 65 square feet per person.
- The student capacity of each room assumes one adult, with the exception of 3-K and pre-K classes (where we assume two adults) and District 75 (where we assume 3 adults); classes requiring additional staff would result in a smaller student capacity for that room.
- Full-size rooms are at least 500 square feet; half-size rooms are 240-499 square feet.
- Instructional spaces include any rooms currently used for instruction or students support services.
- Administrative spaces include all offices, as well as teachers' and parents' rooms; it excludes storage and building support rooms, as well as quarter-size rooms (<240 square feet).
- Estimated total school-level capacity calculations assume that 100% of full-size instructional rooms will be used for instruction, and that 50% of full-size administrative space could be repurposed for instruction.
- These preliminary total capacity calculations do not assume use of half-size rooms for regular instruction, with the exception of District 75.
- School-level capacity does not include public assembly space at this stage. However, these spaces may be able to be repurposed for instruction as necessary. More guidance on this is forthcoming.

### **COVID-19 WEBINARS** *(14 so far)*

The New York Charter Schools Association will be hosting standing weekly webinars regarding COVID-19 response in partnership with the SUNY Charter Schools Institute, New York State Education Department and the NYC Department of Education and the NYC Charter Center.

### **SCHOOL FUNDING**

Schools throughout New York State are expected to lose an estimated 20% of education funding due to projected budget cuts resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. Governor Cuomo has called for \$61 billion in federal aid to avoid the 20% cut. A 20% cut would devastate school budgets and severely impact student learning.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

In previous years, priority for summer school enrollment is given to students who are residents and currently enrolled in the New York City public school system. Enrollment for all other applicants will be on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to available seats. Students eligible for Summer School 2020 are those in grades 3-12 whose school requires them to attend summer learning to be promoted to the next grade level or to graduate from high school.

**Charter School Students:**

- All eligible charter school students can attend summer school tuition-free.
- To register for Summer School 2020, families have to email the school that the student wants to attend and provide a completed Non-Public School Enrollment Application or a Charter School Enrollment Application, and a copy of the student’s report card and/or transcript from their current school, if available.
- Starting **June 15**, the **receiving district schools** will admit charter school students to summer school.

**BRIDGING-GRADUATION**

As I previously communicated, I made the decision to implement a VIRTUAL BRIDGING-GRADUATION CEREMONY in light of the current stay-at-home orders, social distancing requirements and restrictions on large gatherings. It was a very difficult decision made with the health, safety and wellbeing of our scholars, staff, families and community in mind. Our VIRTUAL BRIDGING-GRADUATION CEREMONY will replicate many components of our in-person ceremony, including pre-recorded videos of traditional graduation speeches, a roll call of names of the graduates, guest speakers and performances, student speeches, honors and student recognition, etc. The ceremony will be streamed for families to view from the comfort and safety of their own homes. The CAACS BRIDGING GRADUATION CEREMONY will take place on June 26, 2020. It will be viewable through a variety of CAACS social media platforms and on our school website. We will send out specific viewing information as soon as it is available.

**OTHER MATTERS**

- All CAACS Chromebooks or other technology can remain at home with K-4 scholars over the summer IF they are returning to CAACS when we re-open.
- **Grade 5 Diplomas and Technology:** Diplomas will be available for pick-up on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 8am – 3pm. **Grade 5 Graduates will bring their technology to return to the school also on Wednesday, June 24, 2020.** CAACS Laptops, Chromebooks & chargers must be returned. Any damages to laptops must also be paid (*\$100.00 as stated in our CAACS Technology Policy*). Any Library books or other CAACS property that has been checked out or distributed may be returned with the laptops.
- We asked families to let us know as soon as possible if their plans change and they will not be returning to CAACS for next year so that arrangements can be made to return our technology.
- Report cards and awards will be emailed home when school ends on June 26th.

- Within the next few days, a survey will be sent out to gather information about each family's experiences with distance learning, as well as their thoughts about returning to our brick and mortar building. We are asking for feedback so we can do our best to continue to support our scholars and families.