

Agenda

The American Dream Charter School Board Meeting

Monday October 19, 2015 @ 6:00 PM
at 510 E 141st St New York, New York 10454

I. Opening Items

Call the Meeting to Order - L. Rojas

Meeting Called to order by Luz at 6:00

All Board Members are present

Approve Minutes - L. Rojas

Minutes Unanimously Approved

II. Executive

High School Expansion Amendment – Melissa Melkonian

Parents are coming to tonight's Board Meeting to offer testimony in favor of submitting a charter amendment proposing the expansion of ADS from Middle School to High School. (Transcribed testimony is below)

Update on After School Program – Melissa Melkonian/Nick

Parents are invoiced monthly \$50 a student. Our current count is 23 students.

Audit Update – Nick Gallagher

The audit has been successfully completed. The auditors report will be distributed to the board.

Organizational Structure Update – Melissa Melkonian

Sarah Fuentes has resigned as the Director of Curriculum

II. Finances

Account Balances – Nick Gallagher

Checking \$431,082.32

Savings 555,029.98

Escrow 25,000

IV. Governance

Board Involvement – Nick

We're requesting more board involvement (e.g. parent workshops by Damian, PD by Luz and Zuleika, social media coordination by Sandra, Treasury Committee and Fundraising by Roselin and Rick. Just a few examples of possibilities).

V. Closing Items

Adjourn Meeting - L. Rojas

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm

Parent of Paola Rivera 6th grade

"My name is Silvia Rivera and I have child here in the 6th grade ,and I want to speak on behalf of everyone in this room and state that the South Bronx is as we all know is a very poor neighborhood and I believe that we need a high school that is at the same level as ADS for the future of our children . I can see my daughter's growth based on the work she completes at home and how she is motivated at school. My daughter has attended other charter schools since kindergarten and for me to let her go to a public school will be out of place for me and I imagine the same for other parents . "

Azucena Rosendo Parent of Monserrat Rosendo & Jose Mendoza 6th grade

"More than anything I like this school for the safety there is a lot of safety which is needed in this area and the principal every morning greets the students in the morning and when they are dismissed as well . If parents do not get here on time after dismissal they bring the students to the main office and have them wait... not like other schools where a child is dismissed and then you don't know where they are...I like it here... both of my children are in the 6th grade and I have seen teachers push them to the level they need to be in . Teachers focus on the student's weakest subject and makes sure they pass . Most of all what I like about this school is that when arrive you feel like family and the staff in the main office helps you in anything you need . If you have any concerns Ms. Melkonian helps you not like in other schools where you feel discriminated because you do not speak english . Not here they offer you water ,coffee and they make you feel welcomed . Mr. Flores is always helping parents with strollers and grocery bags and he constantly offers his help and is very friendly person and most of all cares."

Victor Clemente Parent of Layla Clemente 7th grade

Communication is essential for parents . The ability to easily communicate with teachers , students and staff brings us comfort to know you can always express yourself as you please to improve your child's grades .

It makes us parents proud to see students progress and see our students become more responsible and it makes us feel good and if the expansion is successful this would make us even more proud.

The easy access to have a school close to home and not have to worry my child will have to take public transportation . The facility to have a school near home is a relief for many parents that work and don't have to worry their child is traveling from far .

Celeste Henry Parent of Camille Henry 7th grade

Here we are like a family . At 7:00 am students are greeted and welcomed by staff downstairs ready for the day .For dismissal , if a parent is late staff bring up the student upstairs to the main office and call the parent to see what is going on . Every week there is reunion may it be the coffee with the principal or parent workshops and Principal Melkonian is always present in the meetings at in the mornings at 7 am welcoming students with a high-five . Everyone here is a team we are all like family . Our travel time is 1 hour to make it here on time everyday at 7am and my child has never been absent . I make sure to all her medical appointments are on Fridays after 1:10 pm to make sure she does not miss any school work . We are very comfortable and thankful that you have decided to listen to our thoughts . May God place in your hands the petition to expand ADS into a high school the progress is for our kids who are the future .

Bernardina Cortez Parent of Jorge Miron 6th grade

As many parents have mentioned we wish you can help us expand the school . This year is the 1st year my child attends ADS my son started school at the age of 1 yr and 7 months and since then he always in a small classroom setting with 8 students and 2 teachers and that was until 4th grade and in 5th grade they transferred him to a regular classroom of 26 students and I wanted him out of the 12 to 1 classroom environment . He was " the mother of the classroom" caring , helping those who suffered from emotional attacks . One day I was walking pass ADS and I meet Ms. Melkonian and explained to her my child's situation and was informed that I could fill out an application for 6th grade and that is how my child is now at ADS .My child has developed very well and the teachers i noticed are very helpful with my son . Any information that I need Ms. De La Cruz is very helpful and she is constantly in contact with me when it

comes to my child's attendance and lateness . I was called one day to see why my son did not go to school and this shows to me that they care and are on top of attendance . At my son's other school which I won't say the name he would always be absent or late b/c he did not like the school and there were changes with teachers that screamed at all the children and my child is not disorderly and the staff members in this room can agree with me . I have seen his progress and how well he is improving and what I would like and everyone in here and those who are not present today.....is for you all to help us since you are our liaison and I know the principal loves our children and wants them to make it into college and this is our wish from you all to make the expansion possible .Help us please , I believe you are able to make this happen , we can't but by showing support we can achieve it .

Parent of Leslie Quechol-Raya - 7th grader

Before anything good evening to all ,for the parents present like myself and wife, this is something we want to aspire to help us expand more grades in the American Dream School . The children are happy to come to school . My daughter wakes up in the morning and is happy to come to school , she sets her alarm and starts to get ready on her own and once she is ready comes to the room and says "Dad I am ready let's go " and that shows her enthusiasm to come to school . We have had the opportunity to come observe her class and most students are happy to see their parents in class and they feel satisfied to feel their parents are involved . I am happy to see the students who are all well disciplined . There are other schools that are students act like that are in a party . The strict dress code implied and policies I would like to continue to see up until 12th grade and not worry if i have to move her , adapting to other rules and policies . We ask for the help to reach to expand to more grades .

Silvia Rivera Parent of Paula Rivera 6th grade

What else can we do besides this meeting today to make this happen ? How else can we do to achieve this change ?

Bernardina Cortez Parent of Jorge Miron 6th grade

If you see they are still young kids they are not big yet . They still need care , here the staff at ADS as other parents stated there is always someone dismissing

our students and if a parent does not show up they stay and bring up the student to the main office . In some schools I can't say all , they let them leave and so many accidents happen with car accidents and people that do bad things . That is why we want an extension , here all student wear a uniform , if you were to come in and look at all the students in the classrooms , my child enjoys his uniform he says it makes him look professional , if you were to see how the students address a staff member is by Mr. or Mrs . , Even my daughter asked why her brother addresses his teachers by Mr. or Miss and I explained to her it is a sign of respect . My students are Mexican and i brought them very small and they have forgotten and here in NYC students disrespect adults everywhere, my kids were not raised in that way .I would like this education style to continue and like another mom stated , you see the personnel,teachers and Principal in other schools you don't see the principal and if you , she carries an unpleasant face not wanting to hear your complaints . I tell you this because my student has been part of special ed classes and he was bullied and i always had to be present in the school and I know the educational system i have older students who have graduated and my student is the youngest one and that is why i still care for his well-being and this is the educational style we wall want to continue .

Alejandra Urena Parent of Jackeline Dejesus 7th & Gabriela Dejesus 6th grade

In other schools for example Catholic schools they require for you to make monthly payments and in Charter schools you don't. All they ask is for your child to be in complete uniform. In the mornings at the front door the principal or another staff member is present checking for students uniforms .As other parents mentioned, during dismissal they wait for parents and not allow students to leave . Also , not losing the culture for example fall festival students were allowed to wear costumes and parents get together to bring in dishes that represent their country like a family.

Manuela Pineda Parent of Henry Moreno 7th grade & Michelle Moreno 6th grade

What I like the most is the education my children are receiving at this school . Sometimes i see the children in the morning and those who don't say hi to the principals are asked to return and say good morning and to give her a high five. Most kids try to hide not to say Hi , My mom always said you always to good afternoon or morning depending on the time of day . If you don't then you are considered a Donkey . These manners are not seen in NYC . You don't hear that

in other schools they care if you say Hi or not . The respect always has to be first and cannot be forgotten and this is what i like the most about this school .

Maricela Zermeno Parent of Ismael Garcia 7th grade

Idk if anyone else talked about bullying but this is something important in ADS. No One can bad mouth a child because everyone here is respected , this is a zero bullying school . What i have seen in children and parents are conscious to speak up and inform if they see bullying . its rare to hear or see someone say their child was bullied in this school . The principal and staff are very alert to bullying , respect within students ,coexistence like a family . I have a child with special needs and in other schools they bully him because of his hearing I am happy here with Ms.Melkonian who has been with him for 2 years now that he is in 7th grade . He feels great which is important to me and for all of us and that why we are here to extend to more grades we started with 6th and now 7th and we can't more . Nothing is impossible and we are here to try .

Amalia Ariza Parent of Roberto Bravo 6th grade

I , a parent of children of 5 and i have 3 students that have graduated from high school and 1 child here in ADS 6th grader . Our wish and the reason why we are all here is for you to support and help us to achieve extending into a high school . As another parent stated I am scared for my child who is right here and spoke to move onto another school and he knows what his siblings went through , which was discrimination and bullying and they could not speak up instead stay quiet and not comment . in other schools you weren't able to speak with the principal and I am afraid that my 13 year old son will go through the same problem to throw him in the lions den . He was not raised that way to curve , bully or discriminate other . I have another young one joining ADS next year and it is our wish to accomplish the expansion of ADS.