

## **Harlem Hebrew Board Meeting Agenda**

September 22, 2021, 6:30 pm

Location: Zoom

1. Call to Order & Reminder for Public Comment(s) Sign Up
2. Adoption of September 2021 Agenda
3. Approval of August 2021 Minutes
4. School Leadership Update
5. Network Update
6. Dashboard review:
  - a. Enrollment
  - b. Staff Demography
  - c. Staff Vacancies
  - d. COVID-19 Cases
7. Board Member Recruitment
8. PTO Update
9. Public Comments
10. Executive Session
11. Adjournment

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

August 11, 2021, 6:30 pm

Location: Zoom

**Trustees Present**

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman
Sara Bloom
Linda Aristondo
William Allen
Rev. Linda Tarry-Chard
Scott Wickham
Tanya Jones

**Also Present**

Emily Carson, Head of School, Harlem Hebrew  
 Jon Rosenberg, Chief Executive Officer, Hebrew Public  
 Valerie Khaytina, Chief External Officer, Hebrew Public  
 Lauren Murphy, External Relations Manager, Hebrew Public  
 | HH Staff Member

**1. Call to Order & Reminder for Public Comments**

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman opened the meeting at 6:34 pm and reminded everyone in attendance in order to sign up to make a public comment prior to our board meeting, email [boardharlem@hebrewpublic.org](mailto:boardharlem@hebrewpublic.org). Members of the public who missed the public notices can sign up now by using the chat function. Members of the board and staff do not typically respond to

public comments at the time they are made. However, unanswered questions will be responded to within a few business days.

## **2. Adoption of August 2021 Agenda**

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman asked for a motion to adopt, Linda Aristondo made a motion to adopt the August 2021 agenda. Sara Bloom seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

## **3. Approval of the July 2021 Minutes**

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman asked for a motion to approve, William Allen made a motion to approve the July 2021 minutes. Reverend Linda Tarry-Chard seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

## **4. School Leadership Update**

Emily Carson, Head of School informed the board of the following:

- Summer Professional Development
  - New teachers will begin on Monday
  - Returning teachers will begin on Wednesday
  - Many of the sessions will be facilitated by HH teachers
    - Coaching
    - Practicing lunch, dismissal, arrival...etc.
  - Welcoming back team leaders tomorrow to finish prepping for new teacher arrival
- Family Updates
  - September 1, K & 5th grade to start in-person
  - Full classes of kids in over a year and a half
  - Focus on easing students back into school and routines
  - Family orientation for both new and returning families
    - Will take place virtually
    - Opportunity to meet teachers
    - A traditional back to school night will be planned for later in September

## **5. Action Items**

Two weeks ago, viewing rights were shared with the board for Harlem Hebrew's draft renewal application. They were encouraged to review the documents and ask questions.

### **a. Approval of the Application for Charter Renewal**

After a brief review with Jon Rosenberg, Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman asked for a motion to approve the application for charter renewal. Sara Bloom made the motion, Linda Aristondo seconded the motion, and the motion went to a vote: the board members voted unanimously in favor of the approval, with no objections or abstentions.

**b. Approval of the Application Cover Letter**

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman asked for a motion to approve the application cover letter. William Allen made the motion, Sara Bloom seconded the motion, and the motion went to a vote: the board members voted unanimously in favor of the approval, with no objections or abstentions.

**6. Staff Vaccine Mandate**

Jon Rosenberg led the discussion on the COVID-19 vaccine.

- Health and Safety remains the #1 priority
  - Hebrew Public continues to push an internal public health campaign to emphasize the importance of the vaccine, asking staff to share their status, address concerns 1:1, and offer outreach
  - Collective effort has led Hebrew Public to exceed 3/4 of staff reported that they are partially or fully vaccinated.
  - Under current health guidelines, staff members who are fully vaccinated do not have to quarantine if they are exposed to someone with COVID-19; unvaccinated staff members will still need to quarantine
  - Delta variant is on the rise, a substantial number of cases. Over the last 2 weeks: Denver public schools, US military, medical centers, and more charter schools are mandating the vaccine for staff.
  - All staff will be tested 1x a week in school regardless of vaccination status
  - Hebrew Public will be asking staff members to provide proof of vaccination status
  - Hebrew Public and the Harlem Hebrew team have been speaking about the vaccine mandate daily

Hebrew Public and the Harlem Hebrew Leadership Team recommend implementing the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

*Based on:*

- *the significant rise in Covid cases in recent weeks and the transmissibility of the Delta variant,*
- *the evidence supporting the Covid vaccines' effectiveness and safety, and*
- *the importance of vaccination both to our efforts to serve children in person and to the health of our local, national, and global communities,*

*The Board hereby requires that all Harlem Hebrew staff become vaccinated against COVID-19 unless they qualify for an exception under federal or state law. The Board authorizes Hebrew Public to determine a date by which all staff must receive their first dose of the vaccine (but in no case later than September 7th), as well as the date by which all staff must be fully vaccinated (but in no case later than October 15th). Staff members who do not comply with this requirement will be subject to suspension without pay and/or termination.*

Scott Wickham suggested the board approve the resolution as written above. A few clarifying questions were answered regarding the mandate.

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman asked for a motion to approve the aforementioned resolution. Sara Bloom made the motion, Reverend Linda Tarry-Chard seconded. The board then voted on the motion, and it was unanimously passed, with no objections and no abstentions.

## **7. Network Update**

Jon Rosenberg, CEO, Hebrew Public shared the following:

- NYC COVID-19 Context
  - Death rates, hospitalizations, and ICU cases are no longer rising at the same rate of infection
  - Rates of infection have increased dramatically by 100,000 dependent on location in NYC
  - COVID-19 outcomes for those vaccinated are far milder than those without the vaccine
- Hebrew Public Schools Fall 2021
  - Planning for a full in-person reopening with VERY limited medical exceptions
  - Hoping 97% of families back in the building
  - Procedures will be in place for the start of school
    - Social distancing, mask-wearing, ventilation system updates
  - Keeping eye on data from the CDC, NYC Department of Health Guidelines
    - The Network Team will be ready to shift back to a remote option at any time if needed (not likely, but the team is prepared)
- Renewal Application
  - Submitted Monday, August 16
  - The state will conduct consultant-based site visits, which may take place in person or remotely (very important in the renewal process)
  - Board member capacity interview
  - Letters of support from parents and from local elected officials

- The timeline of the renewal decision is unknown but likely in January 2022

After Jon's update, he answered questions from board members on the following:

- State Testing
  - Likely to be back in place this year
- Social Distancing Standards
  - Three feet distance between children
- Harlem Hebrew Renovations
  - The 6th floor is likely to be closed down except the roof deck for the first part of the school year
  - It is likely the last of the work will not be done until next summer
  - Continued substantial interest in subletting
    - Hoping to bring 1 or more proposals to the board in the near future
- Vaccine Mandate, Staff, and Vacancies
  - Position Vacancies
    - Offers are out to a few people
    - If offers are accepted then we have 4 vacancies (1 Ops associate, 1 social worker, and 2 teaching positions)
    - Back-up plans are in place if we are unable to hire
    - More interviews this week and next
  - Specials
    - Former 3rd-grade teacher moved into music position
      - Music Degree from NYU
    - No art this year, but will bring it into the classrooms
    - Dance and Music teaching in person
    - This information will be communicated during family orientation on August 30th, recording it and will share the update before the start of the school year
    - The trustees brainstormed and offered some suggestions on how to bring art into the classrooms

## 8. Public Comments

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman read a letter from her and six parents. She requested it be shared through Facebook, school email, and school social media platforms. The board fully supported releasing the letter below.

“Dear Harlem Hebrew Community,



Shalom and Hello. Like many of you, we are realizing that school is approaching, summer barely happened and the world is back in a shaky place regarding the Delta Variant and COVID. For many of us, this is our first time sending our children into the world without us in nearly a year and a half and that's both exciting and frightening.

We are writing to appeal to our community: parents, teachers, guardians, and friends. Like many of you, We have children under the age of 10 (Fifth graders like Sarah, Gabby, Zani, Ben, and Rosa who are not eligible for the vaccine and it is very scary. As responsible adults, we know that all of us would do anything to protect our kids, at no time has our responsibility been greater than now to get the COVID vaccine and **all of us have**.

Our children under 12 do not qualify for the vaccine, but all of us who can get it, taking that step, we make the world safer for our children and all of the other children under 12 like our kids, like your children, grandchildren, and dependents.

By ensuring that the Harlem Hebrew adult community is vaccinated, we make the world safer for our kids. Keeping our kids home another year is just not realistic or good for their education and mental health, but keeping our kids safe is VERY MUCH within our control. Please help us help our children by working to have our community come as close to **100 percent** vaccinated as possible.

We appreciate your support in keeping the Harlem Hebrew Community safe as we return to this new normal.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman, Harlem Hebrew Mom of Sarah, and HHLA Board Chair, [vanessaknows@gmail.com](mailto:vanessaknows@gmail.com)

We are very excited to return to Harlem Hebrew this September and see everyone, as safe as possible.

All the best,

Parents in support:

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman

Annette Zygmunt

Galia Galansky

Andrea and Puma Jones

Debbie Appel

Clara Bauler

Edward Drossman

Yelena Raffoul"

**9. Adjournment**

Vanessa Goldberg-Drossman motioned to adjourn the meeting, Scott Wickham seconded, the motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm.