Ascend Charter Schools Board meeting
May 11, 2022
Introductions
School and network updates
Financial highlights
March YTD Net Income of $11.8M is $3.4M ahead of budget.
- Revenue of $99.0M is $460k short of budget
  - Enrollment continues to be strong, but SpEd revenue is running below budget due to an overestimation of revenue in the budget and a shortage of staff to provide SpEd services
- Expenses of $87.2M are $3.9M favorable
  - Virtually all is due to open positions at the schools
- March cash is $42.3M or 161 days of expense coverage (ex. non cash items)
- Through March, Management has approved $13.5M in expenditures to be funded using Covid stimulus funds
  - $6.1M has been spent and we’ve received $2.8M cash back
  - We’re beginning the process of submitting for reimbursement of the balance
- Tracking favorably against all covenant, SUNY and financial sustainability metrics

Finance Committee met May 5 to review financials and other matters including:
- An update on the refinancing work
- A review of recent real estate projects
Strategic changes for SY22-23
Our SY22-23 org-wide goal

- Ascend’s org-wide goal and priority for SY22-23 is to increase the academic achievement of all our students.
- We will know we have been successful when:
  - At least 75% of students pass the state exams in SY22-23
  - At least 80% of students score at least 80% on benchmark exams by the end of SY22-23
  - We halve the gap between students with IEPs or labeled ELL and students without IEPs on benchmark exams by the end of SY22-23.
Ascend’s strategy for improving student academic outcomes

Leaders

- Instructional management
- Intellectual preparation
- People management and accountability
- Hiring
- Time on task
- Family-schools partnership
### Ascend’s strategy for improving student academic outcomes

We equip, inspire, and empower school leaders to drive student academic outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory of change</th>
<th>Levers</th>
<th>Changes for SY22-23</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional management by leaders</td>
<td>Planning robust leader institute</td>
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<td>Intellectual preparation by teachers</td>
<td>Provide ongoing instructional management development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People management and accountability</td>
<td>Planning robust teacher institute</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Purchasing curriculum for select subjects and grade bands</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Planning robust teacher institute</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Enhanced HR processes for performance evaluation</td>
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<td>Partner with curriculum providers</td>
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<td>Ongoing development for MD and CIT directors</td>
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<td>Codifying systems for engaging with data</td>
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<td>Increased opportunities for collaborative problem solving</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Identify clear growth goals for school health</td>
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Ascend’s strategy for improving student academic outcomes

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<td>Creating school data role</td>
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<td>Time on task</td>
<td>Implementing SY22-23 schedule changes</td>
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<td>Implementing SY22-23 calendar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Family – schools partnership</td>
<td>Introducing ParentSquare to improve family communication</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Support the Parent Teacher Association</td>
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- Hiring
  - Expanding school leadership structure
  - Creating school data role

- Time on task
  - Implementing SY22-23 schedule changes
  - Implementing SY22-23 calendar

- Family – schools partnership
  - Introducing ParentSquare to improve family communication
  - Support the Parent Teacher Association

- Creating associate teacher role
- Strategic leader placement
- Establishing after-school tutoring program
- Funding HS summer programs
- Host network wide Family Academic Events
Enrollment continues to track above goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SY22 Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SY22 - Current</td>
<td>5,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SY22 - Q4 Target</td>
<td>5,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On track with enrollment goals and will exceed EOY target

Source: Enrollment Dashboard, 5.11.2022
Registrations on track for SY22-23 Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SY22-23 New Students</th>
<th>Current (5/10/22)</th>
<th>Goal (7/1/22)</th>
<th>Budget (SY23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Performance</strong></td>
<td>1,329 (78%)</td>
<td>1,701</td>
<td>1,485</td>
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</table>

- **Focus Areas:**
  - K acceptance and registration
  - CHACS and EBACS funnels
- All MS/HS already at or above July target
- Focus Groups on Family Experience to drive key areas of focus, in partnership with schooling

Source: Enrollment Dashboard, 5.11.2022
### High School enrollment outperformance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brooklyn Ascend High School</th>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Acceptances</th>
<th>July Goal</th>
<th>Offers</th>
<th>% Accepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SY22-23</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- SY21-22: 21% acceptance rate, 100 total 9th graders
- Initial budget: 120 9th graders in SY23
- Improved and reimagined MS to HS process across all 5 current MS

Source: Enrollment Dashboard, 5.11.2022
SY23 recruitment underway!
Staff positions filled vs not filled for SY23

[Bar chart showing the number of vacancies and filled roles for different schools for SY23]
Outreach machine in motion

- 192 school-based hires in SY22
  - 164 immediate/SY23
  - 28 SY23

- Much more work to do
  - New language about purpose and mission
  - Refreshing and reposting all jobs
  - Targeted lead outreach
  - Reviewing incomplete candidate profiles
  - Investments in recruitment marketing (email campaigns and social media)
  - Hiring another recruiter
  - Working with consultants
  - Referral parties!!
DEIA update
Areas of focus

- Curriculum and instruction
- Staff learning and development
- Accountability and communication
- Family and community engagement
- Staff systems and culture
- Student support

Source: DEIA Strategy
DEIA update

- May DEIA workshop: Deep dive: intersectionality
- Equity Advisory Committee continue to provide meaningful advice and input on our DEIA strategic imperatives.
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism Leaders (IDEALs) continue to work to embed DEIA principles and practices in our work.
- Using the diversity dashboard to inform our strategic priorities and goals
Diversity dashboard Q3 snapshot

- Our **staff provide windows and mirrors to our students**. We have diverse racial and gender representation across all levels of the organization, including senior leaders.
- **Overall, student attendance continued to increase** in Q3.
- **Student discipline is an area of opportunity** for us to explore further. The data identifies some disparities when examined by race and ethnicity, students with disability, and students who receive free and reduced price lunch.
- **Female students slightly outperform male students in social studies and science.** There are minimal differences between ELA, math and history academic outcomes for female and male students.
- There are **significant disparities between students with an IEP and ELL students** in all subjects. Students with IEP and ELL students experienced academic gains in all subjects, except ELA between Q2 and Q3.
- We saw academic increases across all racial groups in most subject areas, but there are some disparities across different racial groups. **Native American students experienced significantly lower academic outcomes than other students.**
Four Ascend charters are due for renewal

- **Schools involved**
  - Brooklyn Ascend (BACS, BAMS, BAHS)
  - Bushwick Ascend (BWLS, BWMS)
  - Canarsie Ascend (CALS, CAMS)
  - Cypress Hills Ascend (CHACS)

- **Timeline**
  - August 16th: application deadline
  - Mid-October: DOE public hearing
  - Early December: SUNY Trustees hearing and decision

- Renewals will last one year
- Next year, we will renew all nine charters for five-year terms to synchronize their expiration dates
Exec session
## Principal hiring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>REASON FOR HIRING</th>
<th>PRINCIPAL CANDIDATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BWLS</td>
<td>Interim principal this spring after Zelda Washington’s departure</td>
<td>Lisa Roach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBACS</td>
<td>Shanice Sanchez will not be returning</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGACS</td>
<td>Nadine Rubinstein will not be returning</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAMS</td>
<td>Interim principal this spring after Richard Tucker’s departure</td>
<td>Brandon Barnet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BVMS</td>
<td>Lauren Kinrich will not be returning</td>
<td>Brittany Michelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWMS</td>
<td>Miatta Massaley will not be returning</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAMS</td>
<td>New school opening</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer Bauer - Location TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Exec session
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Next steps</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Chief curriculum and instruction officer                  | • This role will not be replaced  
• The curriculum and instruction team will be absorbed under the schools team                                                                 |
| Chief people officer                                      | • We have identified a search firm  
• We are interviewing two candidates (one internal, one external)  
• We have a contingency plan for management of the talent and HR teams while the role is vacant                                    |
| Chief financial officer                                   | • We will post the role and begin the interview process  
• We are interviewing firms that can provide interim CFO support and/or where we can outsource financial functions  
• We have a contingency plan for management of the finance team while the role is vacant                                      |
| Chief of staff                                            | • We are posting the role this week and will begin the interview process  
• We have two candidates already (one internal, one external)                                                                                |
| Director of strategic initiatives, DEIA                   | • We have posted the role and will begin the interview process  
• We are creating a transition plan to support the new DSI, DEIA upon their hiring                                                                 |
| MD of marketing and communications                        | • We are continuing to search for this role  
• We have hired consultants to support with this work in the interim                                                                                  |
| Director of development                                   | • We have hired a search firm  
• We will be interviewing two final candidates this month                                                                                     |
| Controller                                                 | • We are interviewing firms that can provide interim support and/or where we can outsource financial functions                                |
Current state

Recy Dunn, CEO

- Danique Day, CSO
  - Schools, Data
  - SST

- Aniya Thomas, CCIO
  - CIT

- VACANT, CPO
  - Talent, HR

- Jordan Akhurst, DSI - DEIA
  - DEIA

- VACANT, MD MarComm
  - Marketing & Comms

- Maryann Li, COO
  - Ops, SRE, Tech
  - Facilities, Security

- Cathy Jessup, CFO
  - Finance
  - Real Estate

- Sophie Kramer, CoS
  - Planning
  - Exec & Boards

- Kate McGrath, GC
  - Legal

- VACANT, Development
  - Development

Summary of changes

1. CIT reports to Danique (6/16)
2. Finance reports to Recy
3. Real Estate reports to Maryann
4. Talent reports to Danique
5. HR lead by Janet until 6/30 then Danielle, and reports to Maryann
6. Planning reports to Maryann (7/1)
7. Exec & boards to Recy (7/1)
8. DSI - DEIA remains vacant (5/30)
9. MarComm reports to Holly (7/1)

Future state (interim)

Recy Dunn, CEO

- Finance
- Exec & boards

- Danique Day, CSO
  - Schools, CIT
  - Data, Talent

- Maryann Li, COO
  - Ops
  - SRE, HR
  - Tech, Planning
  - Facilities, MarComm*
  - Security

- Cathy Jessup, CFO
  - Finance
  - Real Estate

- Sophie Kramer, CoS
  - Planning
  - Exec & Boards

VACANT ROLES

- CFO: DSI-DEIA
- CPO: MD MarComm
- CoS: Development

Immediate change

Future change (date specified in summary)