

EDUCATION BOARD

Tuesday, 16 April 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held at Committee Room 3 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 16 April 2024 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines	John Griffiths
Naresh Hari Sonpar (Chairman)	Joanna Tufuo Abeyie
Deputy Shравan Joshi	Bolu Faseun
Luis Felipe Tilleria	Mary Robey

Also attending:

Catherine McGuinness

City of London:

Deborah Bell	- Community & Children's Services Department
Scott Caizley	- Community & Children's Services Department
Jack Joslin	- The City Bridge Trust
Emily Rimington	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Torriano Stewart	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
Jayne Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Judith Finlay	- Executive Director, Community and Children's Services
Barbara Hamilton	- Community and Children's Services Department
Vasima Patel	- Community and Children's Services Department

City of London Academy Trust:

Mark Emmerson	- CEO, City of London Academy Trust
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A New Direction

Steve Moffit
Rebecca Branch
Laura Fuller

1. APOLOGIES

The meeting was chaired by the most senior Member, Caroline Haines, until the election of the Chair.

Apologies for absence were received from Alderman Lyons and from Steve Goodman.

The following Members observed the meeting online: Alderman Robert Howard, James Adeleke, Floyd Steadman, Ruby Sayed, and Benjamin Murphy.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED, That Naresh Sonpar be elected Chair of the Education Board.

The Chair thanked the Board for entrusting him with the chairmanship of the Board and paid tribute to the past Chair, as well as to two Board Members who had tendered their resignation from the Board.

The Chair reiterated his commitment to ensuring that all the resources and additionality of the City of London Corporation to all schools would be directed to the areas that mattered most, including teacher and pupil access to digital technology and access to careers and apprenticeships, emphasising also the importance of supporting SEND students.

The Chair thanked Caroline Haines for the enthusiastic and dedicated manner in which she had carried out the duties of Chair of the Board since May 2018 and the leadership shown in steering it through significant periods of change over the past six years. The Board noted in particular her consistent, reasoned and visionary strategic direction that played an essential role in shaping and promoting the educational strategy of the Corporation across its family of schools and nurturing the partnerships and leadership needed to secure the continued delivery of excellent educational outcomes at the City of London Corporation, as well as her involvement in a wide range of other organisations including Newham Collegiate Sixth Form, City of London School, the City of London Academy Trust, and King Edwards School Witley. The Board was reminded of her significant experience as a lifelong educator and her steadfast commitment to social mobility, equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion through her dedication to ensuring better access to education for the socially disadvantaged via a wide range of initiatives tirelessly and relentlessly championed by her. The Chair and the Board thanked Caroline for the gracious, good-humoured and energetic way in which she had presided over the meetings during the past six years, and wished her every success in her continued service in the City Corporation and in other bodies.

The Chair thanked Alderman Lyons for his contribution to the work of the Board - noting in particular his strong support for financial education in primary schools and his many initiatives to improve financial literacy and inclusion during his time as the 694th Lord Mayor during 2022-23 as well as his involvement in King Edward's School Witley, noting that he would continue to champion the importance of the City's work in education.

The Chair also thanked Ben Murphy, who joined the Board in March 2019 two years after being elected to represent the Ward of Bishopsgate, noting that Ben joined the Board during the Tomlinson Review and had been hugely supportive

of the Board's work – particularly its impact on social mobility and its drive to ensure that every child can thrive. The Board noted that Ben Murphy would continue to champion the work of the Board across a range of activities and groups including Policy & Resources, Finance, Natural Environment, and Epping Forest alongside a number of related groups, commending him for his work on the raising of the profile of environmental issues.

4. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

RESOLVED, That John Griffiths be elected Deputy Chair.

John Griffiths thanked the Board for entrusting him with the deputy chairmanship of the Board, and thanked Caroline Haines and also his fellow Ward councillor Catherine McGuinness for their support and encouragement. Mr Griffiths also emphasised that his support of the Chair would be unstinting, commenting on the importance of greater connectivity across the Corporation to encompass all six priority areas of the City of London's corporate plan.

5. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That the public minutes of the meeting of 05 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

6. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

RESOLVED, That the Terms of Reference be approved for submission to the April meeting of the Court of Common Council.

7. **UPDATE: ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEADERS**

The update on the Association of School and College Leaders was deferred to a later date.

8. **CITY PREMIUM GRANT APPLICATIONS 2024-25**

The Board heard an update on City Premium Grants 2024-25, noting the following:

- The total envelope is £2.2M;
- Schools were invited to bid in early March 2024;
- A CoLAT partnerships co-ordinator was appointed earlier in the year to support the application process;
- The bid development window has been extended; and
- Around 32 bids have been received, to be reviewed during May 2024 and submitted to the Board's next meeting.

9. **GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS UPDATE**

RESOLVED, That Members

1. Note that the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) Board of Trustees ratified new appointments to Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) at their meeting on 21 March 2024, as detailed in paragraph 2 of the report;
2. Approve the appointment of Peter Green as Chair of the Newham Collegiate Sixth Form College LGB, subject to CoLAT approval;

3. Note the DfE governance guides which now serve as the DfE's primary source of governance information, replacing the Governance Handbook; and
4. Ratify the appointment of John Griffiths to the City of London Academy Trust Board in his capacity as Deputy Chair of the Education Board.

10. **LONDON CAREERS FESTIVAL - REPORT**

Members heard an update on the London Careers Festival 2024, noting the following:

- Teacher feedback was positive, especially for SEND and care-experienced pupils;
- Attendance was: 2887 in person and 14,252 online (increase of +34% on 2023); and
- The 3 areas particularly well-matched to learner needs were: Science Technology and Engineering; Architecture/Construction; and Arts & Communication.

The Board noted that a full report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

In response to a question on whether a full report would include feedback and suggested changes to the website, format or content (noting the lower relative attendance among secondary school students), the meeting heard that such discussions were already taking place and related recommendations would be presented.

11. **APPRENTICESHIP ACADEMY UPDATE**

The Board received the report of the CEO of CoLAT, noting in particular the interest in more sustained support in the form of a three-year CoL grant, the ultimate aim being for the Trust to handle the funding itself when the target of 12 schools is achieved (expected by 2027). The Trust's Chair and CEO thanked the City of London Corporation (CoLC) for its support of the Apprenticeship Academy, noting also that more placements from the CoLC would be welcome. The meeting heard that recent CoLC appointments had been made that would facilitate the apprenticeship placement process.

In response to a question on the placement numbers required, the Board heard that the requirement was for one day per week during the student's time at the Apprenticeship Academy (currently 15 students), noting that students performed well during placements.

The meeting heard that a story in *The Daily Mirror* in early April 2024 had featured two Y6 students from Galleywall Primary school who had been admitted to City of London School following a successful entrance exam, noting similar success stories from Redriff school (also two students).

12. CITY SKILLS OFFER MAPPING

Members noted the report of the Director of Community and Children's Services Department, noting its intention to capture all the initial CoL offerings in one place with a view to developing the offering.

In response to a question on the purpose and practical application of the mapping exercise, the Board heard that it is aimed at informing all CoL Members about the current breadth of activity of CoL's skills development.

A Member asked for more information about how the CoL apprenticeship levy is used, the meeting heard that further information would be brought to the next meeting of the Board (see action point 1)

12. EDUCATION, CULTURAL AND CREATIVE LEARNING AND SKILLS UPDATE

Members noted the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services updating Members on recent events and activities delivered across the three strategies overseen by the Education Board: Education; Cultural and Creative Learning; and Skills, together with the calendar of forums and events across the 2023-24 academic year.

Noting that CoLAT meetings were colour-coded to delineate them from CoLC activities, the Board noted that CoLAT meetings could be shown separately to reflect the Trust's independence of the CoLC among other options.

13. CULTURAL & CREATIVE LEARNING FUNDING APPLICATIONS 2024-25

The Board considered the report of the Department of Community & Children's Services presenting Members with key information relating to the second year of the City's Cultural and Creative Learning (CCL) funding model, noting that the applications relate to funding for July 2024/25 and that the list of cultural partners has expanded.

The Board noted that applications for 14 projects have been received and reviewed, with a combined associated cost of £255,984 (the total pot available is £190,000), noting also that the current year is the first year in which CCL funding applications are being handled in-house.

A Member commented on an apparent paucity of SEND-related projects and asked whether there was any significance to that. Members noted that no declined projects had a SEND focus, and that few SEND-focussed applications had been received.

A Member asked for further details of the three unsuccessful applications. The meeting heard that one application was invalid, one was requesting schools to pay at the point of entry, and one raised concerns about the venue and staffing costs. A Member commented that an overview of the range of funding sources available for CCL would be useful, partly to assess the extent of any overlap in remit and eligibility, noting also that further such information would be provided. (see action point 2).

A Member asked whether partners were aware of and encouraged to consider match-funding opportunities from CoL livery companies (particularly for outdoor activities, including gardening), noting also the potential for reaching out to other partners working across a range of departments.

RESOLVED, That Members

1. Delegate authority to the Chair and the Strategic Education and Skills Director (in consultation with the Town Clerk, where appropriate) to distribute the CCL funds to the relevant cultural partners; and
2. Recommend that 11 out of 14 of the applications be awarded funding from the CCL budget in line with the recommendations set out in the report.

15. EQUITY AWARDS PRESENTATION FROM GOLDSMITH'S, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Members viewed a presentation from Goldsmith's, University of London.

16. A NEW DIRECTION - PRESENTATION

Members viewed a presentation delivered by A New Direction, noting in particular the following:

- In April 2023, A New Direction was awarded £650K towards a 14-month pilot to build a cultural arts programme in primary schools;
- All CoLAT schools have been invited to take part;
- The Primary Arts pilot programme was launched on 21 January 2024;
- All available programme offers are fully booked;
- The programme works with a range of agencies including The Crafts Council, The Polka Theatre, and the UCL Centre for Educational Leadership;
- Matrices are being developed for the selection of participating schools to ensure a balanced and equitable approach using criteria such as PP, EHCP and EAL student numbers;
- Feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive; and
- The rollout phase is expected to retain the programme's fundamental structure and partnerships, and expand capacity and involve more cultural partners.

In response to a Member question, the Board heard that successful applicants' access criteria would be made available to the Board (see action point 3).

Members commented on the merits of a formalised academic study to examine the benefits and measurable outcomes of accessing the programme (as against a cohort that does not have access to the programme) once the programme is up and running, as well as of sharing the learnings to maximise impact.

The Board noted that the timing of some of the offerings did not always work well round key points in the school year, particularly in the pre-exam periods.

17. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

A Member commented on the benefits of working with charities such as ThinkForward and organisations that provided pastoral support alongside the development of the parental toolkit to be re-presented to the Board in autumn 2024, noting also that a skills audit would be circulated soon after the reappointment of the Board at the April Court meeting (see action point 4).

The Board noted that the kind of behaviour that could result in exclusions (for a small minority of children) could often be detected at primary school level, and that the interventions would be useful at that point as well as at secondary level – noting rising levels of concern at national level around behaviour, parenting and attendance that had been exacerbated by lockdown restrictions and increasing levels of social media use.

Members commented on the importance of ensuring that any organisation interested in working on schools in that capacity should be carefully examined to ensure the right message was being communicated (including, for example, emphasis on avoiding involvement in gang or criminal activity).

19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no items of urgent business.

20. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm

Chairman

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