

Integrated Day Charter School
Governing Board Meeting
January 20, 2010

Absent: Jason Jones

•A motion was made by June Morrone and seconded by Michael Seroussi to add the discussion of the Admissions Policy to the agenda. It passed unanimously (9 votes).

Public Comment

•Holly Salegna spoke about the importance of including children with different abilities in the charter school. She is the parent of a special needs student.

•A motion was made by Brianne Temple and seconded by Laura McMahon to accept the minutes of the December 16 Governing Board meeting. The vote was 8 in favor, 0 opposed, with one abstention.

Professional Development

•The collective responsibility of the Board and the oversight it must provide was addressed in this month's article, "Ten Lessons School Board's Can Learn At Someone Else's Expense."

Director's Report

•Anna James shared the CABA letter from the president with the Board.

•Race to the Top Funds – The Obama administration has set aside \$4 billion in "Race to the Top" funds. Charter school directors were asked to sign the application for this funding, which became a political issue. The Charter School Network felt we had to sign the Memorandum of Understanding in order to improve CT's chance of getting this money. As a result, the State has agreed to look at how charter schools are funded, expanded, etc. We will be watching to see how the state supports charter schools in the future.

•A Crisis Intervention Team has been established to convene in emergencies that require professional support.

•June Morrone Melissa Dearborn and Ann Theriault attended a February math workshop and will share strategies to improve math instruction.

•The contract between IDCS and Three Rivers College for practicum students will be signed by Mary Osten, Secretary, since George Rezendes is an employee of Three Rivers.

Committee Reports

- Governance – The Committee discussed the Admissions Policy revisions; the changes have been incorporated. The Governance Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m.
- Planning – did not meet (meetings are scheduled the first Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m.).
- Curriculum – The Committee met on January 11 to review the raw results of the parent survey and to talk about the curriculum revision cycle. The Curriculum and Textbook Adoption Policies have been sent to the Governance Committee. Meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 3:30 p.m.
- Finance – The meeting was canceled pending staff input for budget work. The next meeting is scheduled for February 3 at 4 p.m.

Ad Hoc Committees:

- Building – Our architects have contacted Peter Davis for feedback from the Planning & Zoning Commission as to what can be done with the blue building. Our preference would be to raze it and build on the same footprint. We are awaiting asbestos and lead sampling.
- The Noncertified Staff Compensation Task Force met – (see minutes) The committee is reviewing benefits for noncertified staff. Jan. 25 and Feb. 8 are the next meeting dates to determine what can reasonably be supported in our budget.

Business Report

- The Condo Association's Annual Meeting will be held at the IDCS tomorrow evening.
- See Business Report for additional items.

Discussion/Action Items

- The teachers' contract proposal is lacking one item, which will be addressed in Executive Session. Michael Seroussi made a motion and Dr. Frank Maletz seconded it to modify the agenda to move the teachers' contract agenda item to Executive Session. It passed unanimously (9 votes).
- Admissions Policy – The Board discussed the paragraph regarding Founders children and grandchildren. For consistency in language, the words "staff", instead of "teaching staff," will be used throughout the policy. The words "the founders" will be eliminated. We need to clarify the number of hours required for an employee's child to enter the school.

•Michelle Divine, who has been nominated as a community Board member, visited the school. She has extensive background in public health and education. Michelle has also served on other boards.

•A motion was made by Mary Osten and seconded by Scott Swartz, to add Michelle Devine as a community member to the Board, with a June 2012 term expiration date. Mr. Bennett's term would end in June 2011. It passed unanimously (9).

•A contact was received from Three Rivers College, outlining their expectations and formalizing the school's relationship. A motion was made by Michael Seroussi and seconded by Dr. Frank Maletz to authorize the director to enter into a contract with Three Rivers College for practicum students. The vote was 8 in favor, 0 opposed, with one abstention.

•A motion was made by Michael Seroussi and seconded by Brianne Temple to go into Executive Session. It passed unanimously (9 votes).

Executive Session – discussion of teachers contract with one addition

•A motion was made by Michael Seroussi and seconded by Dr. Frank Maletz to come out of Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.

•A motion was made by Michael Seroussi and seconded by Dr. Frank Maletz to approve the teachers contract with the 2010-2011 salary schedule remaining the same as the 2009-2010 salary schedule with a memorandum of understanding that the teachers would remain on the same step in 2010 – 2011 that they are on in 2009-2010. It was approved 5-0, with the teachers on the Board abstaining.

•A motion was made by Michael Seroussi and seconded by Laura McMahon to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. It was approved unanimously.

Next Meeting: February 24 (winter break February 15-19)

Finance Committee Meeting – 1/6/2010

AGENDA/MINUTES

1. Meeting was cancelled pending staff input for budget work.
2. Next meeting will be February 3rd at 4:00.

Non-Certified Staff Compensation Review Task Force

The Task Force met January 11, 2010 to resume work on reviewing benefits provided for the non-certified/non-contract staff.

Present: George Rezendes, Anna James, Melissa Dearborn, Jason Jones, Sandy Quarto, Myron Huntley and Carl Davis

1. The Task Force discussed needing to determine what the goal was for the group's work. There has to be a balance between what is considered fair in compensating staff and what is known to be affordable. Is the goal to be something that will be done or something that will be worked toward?

2. Benefit items brought forward from earlier meetings included: Family health insurance paid for to some degree by the school, the number of paid holidays provided and establishing a retirement plan that includes employer contributions. Mr. Huntley brought forward items affecting Plant Services personnel who get called in, when not at work, to respond to a facility issue requesting that they should be paid for a greater minimum number of hours, at their over-time rate and receive reimbursement for their mileage. He also would like the over-time pay policy to be revised to be based on all time recorded in a week, not just time worked.

3. Mr. Davis will email all Task Force members a copy of the spreadsheet showing comparative benefits received by employees in local districts for review prior to the next meeting. It will be important to formulate any recommendations in time to incorporate into the Finance Committee's budget planning process.

4. The Task Force set the following schedule for meeting dates:
 - January 25, 2010; 5:00 p.m.
 - February 8, 2010; 5:00 p.m.
 - TBD

**Integrated Day Charter School
Director's Agenda Items
January 20, 2010**

I CABE Letter – Open letter from the president

This is an interesting letter from the CABE president which gives us an insight to the organization's perception of charter schools. While the state has not been fully supportive and it is recognized that its initial purpose was to support innovative pedagogy and governance free from bureaucratic constraints. There is also an insinuation that many of the schools are "laboratory schools" which implies that they may not reflect sound practice. It is true that not every innovation is effective, then again not every traditional practice has proven to be successful.

II Race To The Top grant - Update

After numerous conference calls with state officials and the president of the Charter School Network, charter school directors were encouraged to sign the Memorandum of Agreement MOU supporting the state's application for the Race to The Top RTTT grant. We were in essence told that the grant had a charter school section worth 40 points and our support was needed. With unanimous support from the Charter School Network, I felt compelled to sign the MOU. I had a direct conversation with Mark Linabury, SDE Bureau Chief, and he assured me that we could pull out of the agreement if the board decided to do so.

It was expressed that the SDE intent is to apply now, knowing that the chances are questionable and to reapply in June. In the interim, the State Board of Education has met and acknowledged the need to address the funding disparity for charter schools.

It was mentioned that because Connecticut misused the stimulus funds to supplement ECS funds and has not been supportive of charter schools, chances of success are questionable.

III Crisis Intervention Team

We have initiated an effort to establish a crisis intervention team for our school. This team would convene in emergencies that require professional support. Members will be: June Morrone, Mary Osten, Amy Sheppard, Donna Manca, Jacquee Wilke and I.

IV February Professional Development – Math Instruction will focus on Center based instruction

PRESIDENT COMMENTARY

Charter Schools' effect on public education

Donald Blevins
President, CABE

There has been much discussion in the media recently about charter schools. Both President Obama and Education Secretary Duncan have made it clear that they see charter schools as an important component of national educational policy and thus, presumably, federal funding. Several recent studies have reported contradictory performance evaluations of charter schools nationwide.

In particular, Dr. Margaret Raymond at the Center for Research on Education Outcomes, CREDO, at Stanford University and Dr. Caroline Hoxby of Stanford have been exchanging what in scholarly circles is a pretty nasty fight over whether charters perform more poorly (Raymond) or better (Hoxby) than public schools in general.

One consideration stands out in looking at these studies, and it is acknowledged by the researchers, is that a charter school can be many different things depending on the state and the organizers of the school. Some states, notably Louisiana, are looking at a movement from the state to charter large numbers of privately operated, for profit, charter schools ostensibly to replace "failing" public schools.

In other states, for example in Connecticut under current law, charter schools must be non-profit. Some

states have only state chartered schools, some only locally chartered and some a mix. Some charter schools are essentially selective academic academies, others are specialized theme schools.

It is hard to see how a single conclusion can be reached about the effectiveness of charter schools as measured by standardized test scores or even by more sophisticated value added measures.

The original concept of a charter school, at least in Connecticut, was as a sort of publicly funded "laboratory school."

It was thought by some that a school which was mostly not subject to the usual regulations on public schools in general, could experiment with innovative governance and pedagogical methods. The idea was then that those methods which worked could be adopted by

public schools in general.

Because of this philosophy, the legislation establishing charter schools in Connecticut specified that they would be relatively small with limited enrollments, non-profit state funded, and a limited number. Implicit in this philosophy and framework was the assumption that some of these schools would be successful, but by the nature of experimentation some would be failures. Not every innovation is effective in practice no matter how well it looks in theory.

Given this concept of charter schools as experiments, it is not surprising that they achieve widely varying results and resist simplistic summary evaluations. I suspect that every public official who thinks charter schools are the future of education has in mind a particular charter school or group of charter schools as what they think of as "the charter school model." In particular, President Obama and Secretary Duncan are no doubt thinking of a particular success in Chicago.

The advocates of public education during the ongoing national and state debates over educational funding need to be clear that while we are eager to adopt any innovations proven effective by charter schools, in general the laboratory is not the real world. Charter schools have a place in education, but not the central place some people would like to see.



Donald Blevins

"The advocates of public education. . . funding need to be clear that while we are eager to adopt any innovations proven effective by charter schools. . . but not the central place some people would like to see."

