

**DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

**August 15, 2013**

A Board of Trustees Meeting was held on August 15, 2013, at the Hoover Drive School; 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester, NY 14615.

**Trustees Present:** Betsy Archibald; Daniel Aureli; Barthelemy Koumassou; Joseph Martino; Delmonize Smith; Grace Tillinghast; Ferris Todd; David Vigren

**Trustees Excused:** Donna Dedee Doyle; Sara Varhus

**Also Present:** Joseph Saia, School Director; Steven Polowitz, Attorney; Valerie Nolan, Independent Consultant; Kenneth Marvald, Attorney

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and it was determined that a lawful quorum was present.

**2. Proof of Public Notice of Meeting**

Public Notice was provided in the Messenger Post.

**3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2013 meeting was made by Mrs. Archibald, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved with Mr. Koumassou and Mr. Smith abstaining.

**4. Motion to Move into Executive Session**

A motion to move into Executive Session to discuss a confidential legal matter was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Smith and unanimously approved.

## **5. Motion to Move out of Executive Session**

A motion to move out of Executive Session was made by Mrs. Tillinghast, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.

## **6. Director's Report**

**a. NYS Test Scores.** Mr. Saia presented the school's NYS Test Scores, noting poor performance that had been expected from the third grade class which has had two years of schooling elsewhere and two years of schooling at Discovery. He also noted the following:

- ELA passing rate is greater than 64% of RCSD comparison schools (+94% poverty).
- ELA mean score greater than 82% of RCSD comparison schools.
- Math passing rate greater than 55% of RCSD comparison schools.
- Math mean score greater than 64% of RCSD comparison schools.

He underscored changes being implemented for the upcoming year: a) integrated co-taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade so an additional teacher added at that grade level; b) an additional special education teacher on special assignment working extensively with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students; c) More rigorous observations and mentoring planned for the upcoming year.

He is optimistic because our internal data shows progress across all grade levels, the new staff have developed remarkably over the first two years, and when staff were presented with the NYS results, they responded with horror and went into planning/improvement/action mode rather than seeking excuses.

**b. Attendance Policy Changes.** Mr. Saia presented a revised Attendance Policy noting that there are no major changes but rather changes to simplify, shorten and make the policy more useful for parents. He also noted the addition of a summary guide that outlines actions to be taken for chronic absenteeism. A motion to approve the changes as presented was made by Mrs. Archibald, seconded by Mr. Martino and unanimously approved.

**c. Discipline Policy Changes.** Mr. Saia presented a revised Discipline Policy noting elements that were removed because they are more applicable to high school students. A motion to approve the changes as presented was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Archibald and unanimously approved.

**d. Code of Conduct Summary.** Mr Saia presented a draft Code of Conduct summary to incorporate Dignity Act provisions into the Family Handbook. He expects to modify the Discipline Policy in the future to include these provisions. A motion to approve the summary as presented was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Martino and unanimously approved.

**e. Family Handbook Changes.** Mr. Saia presented changes proposed for the Family Handbook, many stemming from the school's relocation and others resulting from changes to the Attendance and Discipline Policies and incorporation of a Code of Conduct summary. A motion to approve the changes as presented was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Mrs. Archibald and unanimously approved.

**f. Staff Decisions**

- Mr. Saia explained why giving the staff an option to start one week later next year was desirable. The board's consensus was favorable to the suggestion.
- Mr. Saia recommended Ms. K Nowakowski and Ms. K. Clark as Dignity Act Coordinators. A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Koumassou and unanimously approved.
- Mr. Saia asked if the board would favor a calendar of trustee assignments to send recognition letters to staff throughout the year. The board's consensus was favorable and Mr. Smith agreed to create the calendar.
- Mr. Saia recommended Crissa King to be a Support Teacher in the school. A **Resolution (#128)** was moved by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Martino and unanimously approved.

**7. Business Manager's Report**

**a. Enrollment Report.** Mr. Saia reported that the school has full enrollment of 220 expected for the first day of school 8/19.

**b. Financial Management Policy.** Mrs. Archibald presented a revised Financial Management Policy that had been reviewed by the Finance Committee and which

incorporates additions/changes to accommodate purchase order handling, payroll system processing, competitive bidding, and grants/federal and state funding. A motion to approve the revisions was made by Mrs. Archibald, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.

## **8. Expansion Committee Report**

Mrs. Archibald reported that the committee will be meeting with Mr. Saia on 8/28.

## **9. Finance committee Report**

**a. Monthly Statements.** Mrs. Archibald presented the monthly financial statements, noting that very little activity took place during the month of July.

**b. Friends of DCS Report.** Mrs. Archibald noted that there was receipt of a \$10,000 foundation grant and that notice has been received from another party of a \$20,000 donation.

**c. Grant Status.** Ms. Nolan reported that the Title grant applications will be filed by 8/31. It was decided to apply for the SUNY Facilities Grant and Mr. Vigren volunteered to set up a meeting to discuss preparation of the application.

**e. Check Detail Report.** The Chair called for questions on the June Check Detail Report. There were none.

**f. Checks Over \$5,000.** A *Resolution (#129)* authorizing payment to Smart Solutions was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Smith and unanimously approved.

## **10. Old Business**

Mr. Vigren asked if there was any old business to come before the board. There was none.

## **11. New Business**

Mr. Vigren asked if there was any new business to come before the board. There was none.

## **12. Motion to Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Archibald, seconded by Mr. Smith and unanimously approved at 9:58 pm.