

DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL

Board Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2014

A Board of Trustees Meeting was held on September 18, 2014, at the Discovery Charter School; 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester, NY 14615.

Trustees Present: Daniel Aureli; Yoshida Blackman; Joseph Martino; Sara Varhus; David Vigren; Olivia West (trustee-elect)

Trustees Excused: Scott Adair; Sarah Amering; Thomas DaRin; Donna Dedee Doyle

Also Present: Joe Saia, School Director; Anne Culver, School Business Manager; Steven Polowitz, Attorney; Valerie Nolan, Independent Consultant; Steve Gleason, Administrative Consultant

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 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. Nominating Committee

Ms. Varhus reported that the Nominating Committee was prepared to nominate Mrs. Olivia West to replace Mr. Delmonize Smith. A **Resolution (#185)** electing Mrs. West to the Board, contingent on NYSED's approval, was moved by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.

Mrs. West entered the room.

4. Primary Project

Mr. Chris Potter, who served as an intern to the School's Director during the summer, made a presentation on Primary Project, a play-based, tier 2 intervention program designed to provide one-on-one time for students and adults. The object is to improve social and language skills. He

indicated that the program will be instituted in grades K-3 this year for about 12 students during each half of the year. The project is grant-funded.

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2014 meeting was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved.

6. Board Schedule

A motion to approve the Board Meeting schedule for 2015 was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Ms. Varhus and unanimously approved.

7. Summer Learning Program

Mr. Gleason reviewed the progress of the group defining the desired nature of the summer learning program for 2015 and beyond. The objective is to maintain or improve academic achievement during the summer. It is likely that no less than three options will be offered to parents. Cost is a very large issue, particularly for transportation.

8. Expansion Committee

- a. Financial Model.** Mr. Vigren reviewed the results of financial modeling for doubling the size of the K-6 school, beginning Year 6 and beginning with Kindergarten, adding one grade per year. Financial results indicate more work needs to be done with staffing and other expenses. The inevitable pinch between flat revenue per student and expense inflation is evident over the next charter period.
- b. Placement of Grade 6 Students.** It was reported that two significant efforts are now underway to have placement opportunities for Discovery students when they leave 6th grade.

9. Charter Renewal

- a. Mission.** After discussion, a motion to leave the Mission unchanged for the next charter period was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Martino and unanimously approved.
- b. Director Evaluation Form.** After discussion, a motion to adopt an evaluation form that reflects the nature of Director evaluations during the last three years was moved by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.

- c. **Long Term Plan.** After discussion, a motion to adopt the draft Long Term Plan distributed prior to the meeting was moved by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved.

10. Director's Report

Mr. Saia reviewed the more significant elements of his Operations Report, noting that compared to August a year ago attendance dropped two percentage points due to transportation issues, behavior referrals decreased dramatically, a higher percentage of families have returned signed handbook pages (81%), that our partnership with Nazareth College continues to grow with 5 student teachers, 9 volunteer college students and a class of 10 college students on site, and that a staff "wish list" has been created for use with potential grant opportunities. He also highlighted changes to the DCS grade level social studies curriculum based on the newly adopted SED Social Studies curriculum.

- a. **AIMSweb Results.** Mr. Saia reported that results are clearly moving in the right direction with more and more students climbing to grade-level status (Tier 1). He noted that these tests help us utilize resources where they are most needed, for example with our incoming Kindergarten cohort this year, our neediest since opening the school. Grade 2 is another case in point where we added more staff last year for this cohort and are continuing that approach this year.
- b. **SAVE Policy.** Mr. Gleason reported that his thorough review and revisions to the SAVE Policy re almost completed. He expects to report at the October meeting.

11. Business Matters

- a. **Enrollment Report.** Ms. Culver presented the September 1 Enrollment Report noting 263 students in the school.
- b. **Paid Time Off Policy (4310).** Ms. Culver presented the Paid Time Off Policy, revised to concur with the changes approved by the board to the Staff Handbook. A motion to approve the revisions was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Ms. Varhus and unanimously approved.
- c. **Employee Computer and Internet Usage Policy (3520).** Ms. Culver presented a new policy concerning employee computer and internet use. A motion to approve the new policy was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.

- d. **Family and Medical Leave Procedures (3400).** Ms. Culver presented the revised procedures for the board to review. No changes were suggested.
- e. **Personnel Policies (3100).** Ms. Culver presented the Personnel Policies document, revised to concur with the changes approved by the board to the Staff Handbook. A motion to approve the revisions was made by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved.
- f. **Financial Management Policy (2100).** Ms. Culver presented revisions to the Financial Management Policy. A motion to approve the revisions was made by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.
- g. **Financial Procedures (2110).** Ms. Culver presented several revisions to the Financial Procedures document. A motion to approve the changes was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved.
- h. **Cash Control Procedure (2120).** Ms. Culver presented revisions to the Internal Controls for Cash document. A motion to approve the changes was made by Mrs. Blackman, seconded by Mr. Martino and unanimously approved.
- i. **ABVI Contract.** Ms. Culver presented the food services contract with Goodwill of the Finger Lakes, Inc. (also known as ABVI), noting that their service during the 3 years the school has been operating has been excellent and pricing continues to be lower than competitive bids obtained three years ago. A **Resolution (#186)** to ratify the acceptance of the contract and approve and ratify the signing of same by the School's Business Manager was moved by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved.
- j. **HP Direct Order.** Ms. Culver presented an order for the purchase of computers under state contract pricing. A **Resolution (#187)** ratifying the acceptance of the order and approving and ratifying the signing of the purchase order by the School's Business Manager was moved by Mr. Martino, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved.
- k. **Audit Progress.** Ms. Culver reported that the MMB financial audit is virtually complete and should be available to the Finance Committee and Board for their regular meetings in October and that the Office of State Controller audit is now nearing the end of its second month with no serious issues raised.

12. Finance Committee Report

- a. **Key Financial Indicators.** Ms. Culver reviewed the Key Financial Indicators Report.
- b. **Monthly Statements.** Ms. Culver reviewed the August financial statements with the board.
- c. **Grant Status.** Ms. Culver presented a Grants Report as of September 9. Mrs. Nolan indicated that first Title grant payments should be received early in November.
- d. **Check Detail Report.** Ms. Culver reported that there was a total of \$223,670.35 in checks written during August and asked for any questions concerning the August report. There were none.
- e. **Checks Over \$5,000. Resolution (#188)** approving non-routine checks over \$5000 was moved by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Ms. Varhus and unanimously approved.

13. Old Business.

The Chair asked if there was any old business. Mr. Martino reported that the Personnel Committee is working on the position description for the Support Teacher/Apprentice Teacher position, salary benchmarking for use in updating the DCS salary scales and long-term planning. Ms. Culver reported that the web site is now fully up-to-date.

14. New Business

The Chair asked if there was any new business. There was none.

15. Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved at 8:25 pm.