

DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL

Board Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2015

A Board of Trustees Meeting was held on May 21, 2015, at the Discovery Charter School, 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester, NY 14615.

Trustees Present: Scott Adair; Sarah Armignacco; Dan Aureli; Yoshida Blackman; Thomas DaRin; Lisa Lewis; Joseph Martino; David Vigren

Trustees Excused: Donna Dedee Doyle; Sara Varhus; Olivia West

Also Present: Joseph Saia, School Director; Anne Culver, School Business Manager; Sara Castner, Dean; Steve Gleason, Administrative Consultant; Steven Polowitz, Attorney; Valerie Nolan, Independent 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. Rochester Youth Year Volunteer Report

Loraine Ngarambe presented a summary of her work with the school. Two major outcomes included: 1) a 75 page directory of Rochester Area Community Resources, complete with descriptions of each resource, for families and; 2) a description of her project to connect students and families to local libraries. The latter project produced a list of libraries closest to the homes of the school's students. The list includes various literacy activities and the librarian who is available to work with our students. The board expressed sincere appreciation for the fine work of Ms. Ngarambe.

3. Proof of Public Notice of Meeting

Public Notice was provided in the Messenger Post.

4. Conflict of Interest Reminder

The Chair read the following statement: "The Chair reminds everyone that if a potential conflict of interest exists concerning a subject under discussion by the Board that you have an obligation

to disclose the potential conflict and, if deemed a conflict, recuse yourself and leave the room during any discussion and vote on the subject.”

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

After mention of some needed edits, a motion to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2015 meeting, as edited, was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Mr. DaRin and unanimously approved.

6. Nominating Committee Report

Mr. Martino reported that Mr. DaRin has indicated that he will not stand for reelection to the board when his term expires at the July Annual Meeting. He discussed the qualifications of Mr. Robert Stiles as a successor to Mr. Darin. There was broad consensus that Mr. Stiles would be a fine trustee for the school and that he should be invited to the next meeting of the board in order to meet everyone and see how the board conducts its business.

7. Board Projects

- a. **Graduate Placement & Support.** Ms. Armignacco presented the most recent planning work of the team working on this project.
 - Agree on timeline for transition (June 2015 parent information night; Fall 2015 orientation and transition process; Dec-Feb 2016 assist parents with application process)
 - Identify resources to do school outreach to counselors and facilitation action items on timeline.
 - Identify which schools are preferred (follow up with schools already talked to; define criteria for preferred school partnership).
 - Understand experience of other charter schools who have been through a similar transition process.
- b. **Training.** Mr. Martino reported that Ms. Nancy Snyder from Bonadio will join the board immediately after the Annual Meeting in July in order to conduct board training.
- c. **Summer Learning Program.** Mr. Gleason reported that implementation of the expanded summer learning program continues on track. 26 of 27 staff are hired. 77 students are enrolled in the full day program. 41 are enrolled in the supported reading program and 10 are enrolled in the independent reading program. The various agreements between the various parties are executed or about to be executed.

- d. **Succession Plan.** Mr. Saia reported that a staff member has been identified as an internal replacement for him should the need arise. Mr. Vigren also reported that a person has been identified to become board chair at an appropriate point in the future. The consensus of the board was that both choices are reasonable and appropriate.

8. Education Enterprise Affiliate Director

Resolution # 202, designating Mr. Vigren to continue his service as Affiliate Director on the Education Enterprise of NY Board of Directors, subject to election by the Education Enterprise of NY Board of Directors, was moved by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Adair and unanimously approved.

9. Director's Report

Mr. Saia reviewed the highlights of his report. Among them:

- One of our 5th graders was a winner in the Monroe County Volunteer Fireman's Association essay contest.
- One of our 3rd graders had his Courage Speech selected for publication by the Rochester Area Literacy Council.
- Sergeant Jared R. Rene of the Greece Police Department toured the school and attended Community Circle. This is part of a concerted effort on the part of the school and Department to build a positive view among students of the Police Department.
- Discovery attended a Brockport College Jobs and Internship Fair seeking outstanding diverse candidates.

a. **Academic Performance – 3Q.** Mr. Saia presented the school's third quarter internal assessment report in detail. All grades continued to improve compared to assessment expectations and compared to assessments a year ago.

b. **NWEA MAP Assessment.** Mr. Saia provided the board with a recommendation to adopt NWEA MAP Assessments in favor of TerraNova testing, effective with the school's next charter. Among the more important reasons for the change is that NWEA MAP is more aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. It was the consensus of the board that this change should be part of the Charter Renewal Application.

c. **Mandated Education Reforms.** Mr. Saia outlined the contents of Mr. Wagner's and Mr. Tangorra's April 9 letter regarding 2015-2016 Enacted Budget Education Reform Initiatives. He noted that the school will be affected. It was agreed that changes at Discovery will be in accordance with directives from the Board of Regents, that the HR Committee of the Board will work with the Director to create necessary policy changes

that will be in accordance with the new regulations to be adopted by the Regents, and that policy changes are expected to be discussed at the August board meeting.

- d. NYSED Report.** Mr. Saia reviewed the April 29, 2015 report of the NYSED Check-in Site Visit which occurred on March 25.
- e. SchoolWorks Report.** Mr. Saia reviewed a summary of the SchoolWorks School Quality Review report noting strengths and areas for Improvement for the school.
- f. Hiring.** Mr. Saia shared resumes of three candidates for teaching positions. He recommended the following, all of whom having clear NYSED background checks:
 - Rebecca L. Bradstreet for the position of Intervention Teacher.
 - Paige Culver for the position of Teaching Assistant.
 - Alexandria Riccio for the position of Apprentice Teacher.A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Martino and approved with Mr. Adair and Mrs. Lewis dissenting and voting to not approve the motion.

10. Charter Renewal

Mr. Vigren presented a recommendation concerning expansion of the school during its next charter period. After discussion, a motion to not request expansion approval concurrent with the school's upcoming charter renewal application and to seek expansion only when NYS test scores are high enough to justify NYSED's confidence that we are and will continue to be a successful school, was made by Mr. Aureli seconded by Ms. Armignacco and unanimously approved.

11. Business Manager's Report

- a. Enrollment Report.** Ms. Culver presented the April 30 Enrollment Report noting a year-to-date average number of students in the school of 256.5. Also presented was an Enrollment Report indicating completed enrollment packets for the 2015-16 school year.
- b. Bus Contract.** Ms. Culver presented Bus Agreement for service from First Student, Inc. during the upcoming school year. She noted that pricing is the same as provided to the Rochester City School District and that Discovery, RCSD and First Student work closely together to plan and provide transportation service to the school's students. A **Resolution (#203)** to approve the agreement was moved by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Blackman and unanimously approved.

- c. **Copier.** Ms. Culver presented a summary of proposals obtained for a new copier for the school. She recommended acceptance of the Konica Minolta proposal which met the school's needs and was the least expensive option. A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mr. Adair, seconded by Mr. DaRin and unanimously approved.
- d. **Summer Facility Projects.** Ms. Culver reported that there are no significant summer facility projects or expenditures for this summer. Furniture and equipment for the school's new 6th grade was obtained earlier, largely through grants.

12. Finance Committee Report

- a. **April Financial Statements.** Ms. Culver reviewed the April Financial Statements and Cash Flow Forecast with the Board, noting results continue to track favorably against the budget.
- b. **Key Financial Indicators.** Ms. Culver reviewed the Key Financial Indicators report.
- c. **Line of Credit.** Mr. Vigren reported that the new M&T Bank Business Access Line of Credit is scheduled to close May 22, 2015. A **Resolution (#204)** to approve the line of credit was moved by Mr. Adair, seconded by Ms. Lewis and unanimously approved.
- d. **OSC Audit.** Ms. Culver presented Office of the State Comptroller's audit report for the period July 1, 2013 – October 31, 2014 along with a proposed Response and Corrective Action Plan. A motion to approve the Response and Corrective Action Plan was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Mr. Adair and unanimously approved.
- e. **Grant Status.** Ms. Culver presented the May Grants Report.
- f. **Check Detail Report.** Ms. Culver asked if there were any questions concerning the 6-page Check Detail Report, totaling \$111,213.60, for the month of April. There were none.
- g. **Checks Over \$5,000.** Ms. Culver presented a **Resolution (#205)**, detailing non-routine payments of \$5,000 or more. The Resolution was moved by Mr. Adair, seconded by Mr. DaRin and unanimously approved with Mr. Martino abstaining.

13. Old Business

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

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 Mrs. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Blackman and unanimously approved at 9:15 pm.