

APPROVED BOARD MINUTES

ASD Board Meeting March 14, 2012

Board Members Present: William Bonner, Matt Collins, Thomas Frischknecht, Idina Holden, Patty Humphrey, Brandon Jackson, Kim Lavallee, Heather MacDonald, Michael White

Board Members Absent: Jack Donovan, Kent Glossop, Karen Graham

Non-voting Members Present: Jennifer Cava, Dominique Dadekian, Andrew Myers

Others in Attendance: James Overman, Andrew Slebodnick, J.L. Stutzman, Kelli Twiss, Marian Roessling, Brian Smith, Terry Williams, Michelle Upton (Mahrabani).

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m.

1. Public Comments

None.

2. Approval of Board Minutes from the Prior Meeting

Mr. Jackson moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting. Ms. MacDonald seconded. All voted in favor.

3. Parent Request

Mrs. Marian Roessling explained that she has three children in the school, but missed the deadline to enroll her youngest child. The family had considered not sending their children to the school next year because of the distance from home. Within the past few months, circumstances changed so they could move closer to the school. Because of the uncertainty, she did not pursue registering her youngest child for next school year. Mrs. Roessling requested that the Board consider allowing the youngest child to register for enrollment next year. Mrs. Roessling described how the family has been active in the school community and concluded by saying they respect the school's policy and will live with the decision.

Mr. Frischknecht told Mrs. Roessling the Board would get back to her.

4. Items of Board Business

a. Board Chairman

- Sustainability – The Board and administration have heard a rumor that the school is not going to be in business next year. Mr. Frischknecht clarified for the record that the school will be in business next year and will be fully functioning.
- Director Search update – The Director Search committee finalized its interviews yesterday. The committee has a first choice and an alternative, which will be reviewed with the Board in closed session later tonight. The Board will take the report into consideration tonight and will bring forward a candidate to the public, hosting a question and answer session to allow people to meet the candidate. The decision would be made in the next couple of weeks. The goal is to have someone on board no later than July 1.
- Dissemination Grant update – This matter will also be taken up in closed session. The dissemination grant is a federal grant awarded to the school. There is some housekeeping related to that grant.

b. Board Treasurer – The treasurer is working on completing independent audits. As of yesterday, encumbrances have been validated and cleaned up, which was a major objective. The external auditor we have contracted with has provided a

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list of things to be completed in advance of the audits, which is currently underway. The auditors plan to begin before the end of March and be completed by mid July. The Director confirmed that this timing will work for the Department of Education and re-charter. The audit findings would be made publicly available.

5. Acting Director's Report

- a. *National Next Generation Learning Project* – New Hampshire is one of several states involved with an initiative looking for innovative ways to improve learning. 15 schools in New Hampshire were selected to work with this program. Specifically, the schools will explore the idea of using learning studios. Learning studios are like Community Problem Solvers, where a problem is introduced and students team up with corporations and educators to solve the problems. Ms. Cava is working with Ms. Elizabeth Colby to put together a team of teachers to pilot this program at ASD next year. Ms. Cava hopes to use this to grow the upper school curriculum and to move the school closer on the things we are working on as part of our mission.
- b. *Application posting for new teachers* – We have not made any official determination of a facility, so it has been challenging to determine how many students we would have next year. However, Ms. Cava has posted several positions that are anticipated based on what we know today. She received a flood of applications. Interviews will begin next week.
- c. *Best Practice Conference* – This conference is on Friday at our facility. Mr. Myers and Ms. Betournay will present on flipped classrooms. We anticipate over 100 participants from current or developing charter schools around New Hampshire. They will all be coming and sharing best practices. The sessions follow specific topics gearing up for a full conference to share best practices between charter schools and traditional schools, in the fall of 2012. There will be a presentation for current Board members of New Hampshire public charter schools at the school tomorrow night as part of the conference.
- d. *Charter Renewal Update* – Ms. Cava has communicated progress to the Department of Education. She plans to have the entire application completed (with the exception of the audits) by the end of March. This will give the visiting team the time necessary to review the application. Ms. Cava anticipates they will be at the school in May. This sets the school on schedule to complete the steps by September. Mr. Frischknecht asked if Ms. Cava needed any help from the Board. Ms. Cava responded in the negative, commenting that the teachers have been very helpful in providing examples from their classrooms to paint a picture of the great things that are happening at the school.
- e. *Budget & Fundraising* – Ms. Cava has been working with Ms. Kym Harmon on different budget scenarios for next year. The Annual Fund is now at 64% participation. Ms. Cava has is calling parents to encourage participation of any amount. So far we have raised over \$63,000. Once she has maximized participation, she will take steps to try to increase the amount toward the \$90,000 goal. Mr. White said that this is the highest participation we have seen for the Annual Fund and commended Ms. Cava's efforts.

6. Committee Reports

- a. *Strategic Planning & Finance* – Speaking for Mr. Donovan, Ms. Lavallee explained that we have been working on three different buildings and have been going back and forth on two different buildings. We do have the ability to stay in the current location for another year if we need to. We hope to have an answer by the end of this week on our new location. This will be discussed in more detail in closed session at the end of the meeting. In response to a question from the public, Ms. Lavallee explained that affordability and location limited our

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- available choices. We could open the question up to parent input but we may only have one option that we can afford. Mr. Frischknecht explained that the Charter School is not permitted to take on long-term debt, by state law. There has been quite a process to get to a point where we have several landlords who would work with us. A member of the public asked whether the rumors mentioned at the beginning of the meeting have impacted negotiations. Mr. Frischknecht explained that the landlord negotiators are more interested in the actual numbers on paper. Our financial projections are solid and demonstrate that we would still be in business five years from now. Mr. Frischknecht said he would communicate the facility to the public and the school community as soon as the contract is inked.
- b. *Admissions:* Ms. Lavalley stated that all the mandatory information sessions have been completed, as have the tests. A lottery will be held on April 14 and will be open to the public. Ms. Lavalley could not answer a question about how many would be accepted, because we do not know how many students will re-enroll for next year. Mr. Jackson asked if a delay in finalizing the facility would impact the date of the lottery. Ms. Lavalley thought that the facility decision would not realistically be delayed long enough to delay the lottery.
 - c. *Curriculum:* Mr. Collins said there are a number of things being looked at with decisions being made next Thursday.
 - d. *Outreach:* Mr. Collins has talked with TD Bank about the Affinity program that was discussed last month and has reviewed it with parents. Mr. Collins presented it to ASDEF also, and it was well-received. Mr. Collins will clarify whether TD Bank would enter into an agreement with the school or with ASDEF. Mr. Collins is also trying to schedule the WOW program to bring TD Bank executives to the school to provide financial education to the school.

Mr. Bonner moved that the Affinity program be supported by ASD and authorized either the Director of ASD or Chairman of ASDEF to sign the paperwork, depending on which organization should be signed up. Mr. Collins seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

- e. *Personnel:* Ms. Holden said the committee will meet again before the next Board meeting to finalize recommendations about the hiring and renewals for next year. They plan to present this recommendation along with a new contract template and the Employee Handbook.

Ms. Holden moved to reschedule the next Board meeting to April 4 instead of April 11 to give the administration time to distribute contracts for renewing teachers and finalize hiring decisions. Ms. Lavalley seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

- f. *Policy Committee:* Did not meet this month.

Ms. Holden moved that the Board go into closed session to discuss the hiring of a public employee, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (b). Ms. Lavalley seconded. The following members voted in favor: Ms. Holden, Mr. Collins, Mr. White, Ms. Humphrey, Mr. Bonner, Mr. Jackson, Ms. Lavalley and Ms. MacDonald.

The public left the meeting with the exception of Mr. Myers and Ms. Harmon.

*** Closed Session ***

Ms. Holden moved that the Board go back into closed session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3(II) (c), matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the

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reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself. Mr. Collins seconded the motion. In favor: Ms. Holden, Mr. Collins, Mr. White, Ms. Humphrey, Mr. Bonner, Mr. Jackson, Ms. MacDonald and Ms. Lavallee. None were opposed or abstained.

Ms. Harmon, Ms. Cava and Mr. Myers remained for the discussion.

*** Closed Session begins ***

Mr. Bonner moved that in response to an inquiry for funds from the dissemination grant, it is the Board's intention to honor the obligation of the grant by fulfilling the terms of the grant as written. Mr. Collins seconded the motion. All voted in favor. I

Ms. Holden moved to keep the minutes of the closed session sealed, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 (III) where divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the public body itself, or render the action ineffective, or pertain to terrorism. Ms. Holden added that the motions of the closed session could be released. This motion was seconded. In favor: Ms. Holden, Mr. Collins, Mr. White, Ms. Humphrey, Mr. Bonner, Mr. Jackson, Ms. MacDonald and Ms. Lavallee. None opposed.

Ms. Holden moved that the Board come out of closed session. Mr. Collins seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

*** End Closed Session ***

Ms. Holden moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 (II) (d), consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property. Mr. White seconded the motion. In favor: Ms. Holden, Mr. Collins, Mr. White, Ms. Humphrey, Mr. Bonner, Mr. Jackson, Ms. MacDonald and Ms. Lavallee. None opposed.

Ms. Harmon, Ms. Cava and Mr. Overman remained in the meeting.

*** Closed Session ***

Ms. Holden moved that Mrs. Roessling be allowed to enroll her 6th grader. There was no second.

Ms. MacDonald explained that the Admissions Committee had discussed Mrs. Roessling's request extensively over several meetings. The committee concluded that the committee had agreed to a policy and a process which was reviewed and approved by the Board and had publicized that there would be no exceptions. Ms. Lavallee added that she felt the exception would not be fair to the public. The Committee struggled with this decision; it was very difficult because the committee wants to try and help ASD families but had to act in the best interest of the school. Mr. Frischknecht expressed concern that others would want an exception as well. Ms. Cava offered to work with the Roessling family to ensure their child is well prepared for the 7th grade year.

Mr. White moved to decline Mrs. Roessling's request to allow her 6th grader to apply for admission after the deadline. Ms. Humphrey seconded the motion. The Board voted in favor of the motion, 7-1.

Ms. Lavallee moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. All were in favor.

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7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on April 4 at 6:30 p.m.

The Board meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Idina Holden
Secretary