

# APPROVED BOARD MINUTES

## **ASD Board Meeting**

**April 4, 2012**

**Board Members Present:** William Bonner, Jack Donovan, Thomas Frischknecht, Karen Graham, Kent Glossop, Idina Holden, Patty Humphrey, Brandon Jackson, Kim Lavallee and Heather MacDonald

**Board Members Absent:** Matt Collins and Michael White

**Non-voting Members Present:** Doug Belley, Jennifer Cava, Dominique Dadekian and Andrew Myers

**Other Public in Attendance:** Kym Harmon, James Overman, Dawn Gallant, Linda Marquis, Cathy Luie and Napoleon Luie

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

### **1. Public Comments**

Napoleon Luie and his wife Cathy Luie have two children at the school. They are considering moving their children back to public school. Mr. Luie asked a list of questions: How the school is standing with regard to NECAP, whether the school is competitive in the syllabus—in terms of study programs, how the qualifications of teachers compare to other schools, whether there is too much homework and what the new facility will be like.

Mr. Frischknecht asked if the questions had been addressed to the Director. Mr. Luie said they had not. Mr. Frischknecht said the Director is more qualified to answer. Mr. Frischknecht will address the questions about the facility later in this meeting.

Ms. Cava said there is a State of the Charter webinar on the website that goes through the NECAP scores and the school's performance against the rest of the state. She would be happy to sit down with the Luies and go over their questions.

Cathy Luie asked what the Board is looking for from parents and how information is shared back with the parents. She requested a link to the minutes be included in the Weekly Bulletin, and that highlights be called out in the bulletin. She asked the role of the Board *vs.* the role of the administration. Mr. Frischknecht replied that the Board's primary responsibility is the governance of the school – policy setting, strategic planning and contractual obligations. Mrs. Luie asked where she should go to get involved in Board committees addressing specific areas of concern. Mr. Frischknecht said these meetings are open to the public and should be announced in advance. Mrs. Luie suggested these could be announced in the Weekly Bulletin as well.

### **2. Approve minutes from previous meeting**

**Ms. Holden moved that the Board approve the minutes from the March 14 meeting. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. All voted in favor.**

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Ms. Holden moved that the Board approve the minutes from the March 29 meeting. Ms. Humphrey seconded the motion. The motion passed with 8 in favor and 1 abstention.

The May Board meeting will include motions to make public previously sealed minutes from prior Board meetings.

### 3. Items of Board Business

#### a. Board Chairman

- Committee Minutes: Mr. Frischknecht reminded Board members that all committee meeting minutes should be posted publicly. All meetings should be posted in two places: The ASD calendar and by the front desk. Mr. Jackson asked if there is a list of Committee members anywhere. Mr. Frischknecht said that the list is very fluid, which made it difficult to keep a list current.
- Director Search is now completed. The change has been announced and the Director has signed the contract.

### 4. Director's Report

- #### a. Budget – 100% of ASD families, faculty and staff have participated, raising over \$71,000 in pledges, with over \$68,000 already received.

Ms. Harmon presented a report on actual income and expenses against the budgeted figures. She has moved projected income for “per pupil aid” to August instead of July. Ms. Harmon will discuss the projected cash flow deficit in July through September with the Strategic Planning Committee tomorrow.

- #### b. 2012-2013 School Calendar: The calculation has shifted from 180 days to a particular number of ‘instructional minutes.’ Since the school has encouraged dismissal before enrichment period, enrichment period no longer counts toward instructional minutes. Next year, the school will take back the 45 minutes as instructional time. Ms. Cava presented a proposed calendar that includes mandatory enrichment periods and provides enough of a cushion that we would not need to extend the school year for snow days.

Dr. Graham moved that the Board approve the 2012-2013 Academic Calendar as proposed. Ms. Lavalley seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

- #### c. Charter Renewal: The Director dropped off the Charter Renewal application in person this week. The visitors will be here in May, and the school is on track to be in front of the state board in August.
- #### d. Learning Studios: This program is part of the Next Generation initiative. Ms. Cava is putting together a small team of teachers, led by Doug Belley, to offer an upper class course to work with community and industry partners on innovative problem solving. One could work on one problem all year or work on several problems over the course of the year. Mr. Belley and Ms. Cava will attend a workshop to plan this course out.
- #### e. Honors and Awards: Ms. Cava recognized:
- 6 students took 1<sup>st</sup> place at the Technology Student Awards and 1 student took 2<sup>nd</sup> place. One of our students was elected Secretary of the New Hampshire TSA.

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- Destination Imagination: A team including students from ASD came in 1<sup>st</sup> place in the state at the middle school level and received the DI Renaissance Award in the competition.
- ASD students won 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Math Counts competition. ASD finished 1<sup>st</sup> place overall.
- Science Olympiad: The ASD team placed in 9 events and finished 8<sup>th</sup> overall. The team was led by Board member, Mr. Myers, and included Board member Ms. Dadekian.
- Science Quiz Bowl: The ASD team scored 4<sup>th</sup> overall in New England, and also included Ms. Dadekian.

## 5. Committee Reports

- a. Strategic Planning & Finance: Mr. Donovan confirmed that the Board has a site selected for next year. The lease is being reviewed. Once it is confirmed and signed details will be released to the community.

The committee can now finalize the budget for next year. This will be discussed in tomorrow's committee meeting. The goal is to rough out a budget a couple of years out. The committee will share the budget at next month's Board meeting.

Ms. Holden asked how much longer the lease would take to finalize. Mr. Frischknecht said it is likely to be finalized next week.

Ms. MacDonald noted that a Q&A has been started by the Board to aid communication to the community.

Ms. Humphrey asked if there is anything that can allay the unease of the parent community, while waiting for the final announcement. Mr. Frischknecht said the community should know the new site is about 8-10 minutes' drive from the current site. Mr. Donovan said that it is a much better facility than the current one, with a great deal more room. Mr. Frischknecht explained that providing more information jeopardizes the negotiation.

Mr. Frischknecht also explained that the process has taken longer than expected. The process started last year, but we encountered issues, because the school is a young, start-up organization that does not look as sound on paper. Audits for several years had not been completed so could not be provided to landlords who were interested in discussing a facility with us. The school had to get its business affairs in order to be credible in a serious negotiation with the landlord.

- b. Curriculum:

Ms. Lavalley shared the Committee's suggestion for restructuring Algebra 1 for next year. This would allow incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders to either pursue Algebra 1 in a single year (Algebra 1 Honors) or over two years (Algebra 1A and Algebra 1B). The two year option would not be available for incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

Mr. Bonner spoke in favor of the change.

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Ms. Lavallee said that out of 32 districts that we pull from, the kids come in at all different levels and this would allow the curriculum to adjust for the different levels of preparation.

Ms. Humphrey asked if the Board needs to vote on every course change. Mr. Glossop said the Board could vote on an entire revision of the Program of Studies, but agreed that it would make sense to bring forth certain changes that are noteworthy.

Ms. MacDonald asked if approving this motion would change the plans for staffing that the Personnel Committee would be presenting later in the evening. Ms. Cava said her staffing plan had taken this change into account and suggested that the motion be amended to say something like “provided the staff is available.”

The Board discussed in detail the problems that students face in Algebra today and how this motion would address those concerns. Ms. Humphrey stated that Algebra 1 is the most important course in the school and is a strong foundation for all the other classes at the school.

Ms. Lavallee moved that the Board approve offering Algebra 1A as a full-year program for a ½ credit, Algebra 1B as a full-year program for a ½ credit and Algebra 1 Honors as a full-year program for 1 full credit. Ms. Holden seconded the motion. The motion passed 7 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention.

Ms. Lavallee shared the Committee’s second recommendation: To add a “Foundations in Calculus” course as another way to satisfy the Calculus requirement in the charter, other than Calculus AB or Calculus BC. The new course would be a high school level Calculus, instead of college level as is currently offered.

Ms. Macdonald requested additional time to consider motions like this from the Curriculum Committee in the future.

Ms. Humphrey asked if the faculty approves of the Calculus graduation requirement. Ms. Cava said that she and the Calculus teacher agree with the requirement but do not feel that every student needs to be doing Calculus at a college level.

Ms. Lavallee moved that the Board approve “Foundations in Calculus” to satisfy the Calculus requirement in the charter. Ms. Holden seconded the motion. The motion passed: 5 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstained.

Ms. Lavallee tabled the remaining motions from the Curriculum committee. She will email the notes to the Board for consideration and they will be discussed in more detail at the next Board meeting.

- c. Outreach: Mr. Collins is actively looking for more people to join the Outreach Committee. This committee establishes connections with businesses and community outreach, such as the food drive.

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- d. Personnel Committee: Ms. Holden presented the new employment contract. The key differences include some changes to how the template works for part-time employees and to reduce the period of notice for termination from 6 weeks to 4 weeks.

Ms. Holden moved that the Board approve the new employment contract for next year. Ms. Humphrey seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. Holden and Ms. Harmon explained the new approach to paid time off. This reduces the liability of carrying over sick days indefinitely by paying teachers out for the time each school year. The number of days would be reduced from 15 days to 10 days. Teachers would be paid out at the beginning of the next school year. It is also a benefit to those teachers who do not use all the time off.

Ms. Humphrey suggested that 10 days is still too many. She suggested 8 days, something like 5 sick days and 3 professional development days, with additional days available at the Director's discretion. Ms. Cava reminded the Board that this is already decreasing from 15 to 10 days. Mr. Myers expressed concern that reducing the number further would disincite people from taking professional days because they would lose sick days.

Ms. Holden moved that the Board approve the new Paid Time Off approach as written. Mr. Glossop seconded the motion. 6 voted in favor, 1 abstained.

## 6. Student Affairs

Ms. Dadekian said that at the next Board meeting she will present to the Board on the concerns that students have about the school. She will email the students a summary of tonight's meeting, highlighting what is pertinent for them. Mr. Frischknecht asked that the Board be included in the email.

## 7. Faculty Affairs

Mr. Myers said that the faculty was unanimously pleased with the result of the Director search. He e-mails the teachers after each meeting with a breakdown of what is relevant.

The faculty is interested in eligibility for the New Hampshire retirement system. He has heard that recently a change has made charter school teachers eligible. He is working with Ms. Harmon to look into it and plans to bring a proposal to the Board. Mr. Frischknecht asked him to present to the Strategic Planning & Finance Committee that is very interested in improving teacher benefits. Ms. Holden asked that the Personnel Committee work with the Strategic Planning Committee on this.

Ms. Holden moved that the Board go into closed session to confirm teacher renewals, consistent with RSA 91-A:3 II (a), the dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee. Mr. Jackson seconded the motion. In favor: Donovan, Glossop, Holden, Jackson, Bonner, Lavalley, MacDonald, Humphrey, Graham. None opposed.

Ms. Harmon was asked to remain.

**\*\* Closed Session \*\***

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The Board reviewed the staffing recommendations from the Personnel Committee.

Based on projected needs for the number of new students and the number of grades, the Committee recommends:

- 6 Science teachers with 1 Curriculum lead
- 3.5 Math teachers with 1 Curriculum lead
- 3.5 English teachers with 1 Curriculum lead
- 1 Full-time and 3 part-time foreign language teachers
- 2.5 History teachers
- 3 Engineering/Computer science teachers
- 3 6<sup>th</sup> Grade teachers
- Art, PE and permanent substitute teacher
- 6 full-time administrative staff and 3 part-time

Total cost would be: \$979,160 for faculty and \$399,000 for administrative staff.

This represents an increase of a little over 9 positions from this year.

The Committee, at the same time, reviewed the recommended renewals and non-renewals. The Committee discussed the recommendations for non-renewal and renewal with improvement plan.

Ms. Cava disagreed with the committee's recommendation to not renew Diane Ramirez. She spoke favorably of Ms. Ramirez's significant improvement over the last year and indicated that last year's improvement plan had not been specific enough to guide.

Mr. Glossop moved that the Board renew the people recommended by the Committee for renewal. Mr. Jackson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. This list includes: Betournay, Myers, MacDonald, Haney, Frischknecht, Gandhi, Plante, Lowenthal, Xu, Bellay, DeMott, Korade, McMahon, van Wagner, J. Overman, A. Overman, Harmon, Moser, Michaels, Tierney.

Mr. Jackson moved to renew Ms. Olmstead and Ms. Chauvette with improvement plans to be created by the Director. Mr. Glossop seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Jackson moved to approve the total number of positions recommended by the Committee, pending agreement by the Strategic Planning Committee and budget approval. Dr. Graham seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Ms. Holden moved that the Strategic Planning Committee have the authority of the Board to authorize Ms. Cava to proceed with her hiring in advance of the next Board meeting. Ms. Humphrey seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Bonner moved that Jennifer Patsos's contract not be renewed. Ms. Humphrey seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Donovan moved that the Board defer a decision on Diane Ramirez to Ms. Cava. If Ms. Cava decides to renew her with an improvement plan, then Ms. Ramirez needs to understand that

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this will be her last opportunity for an improvement plan – another will not be offered in the future. Mr. Bonner seconded the motion. 7 voted in favor. 1 abstained.

Dr. Graham moved that the Board not renew Seth Hussey's contract. Ms. Humphrey seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Bonner asked if the school really needs two certified guidance counselors next year, or if it could be one guidance person and one discipline person. Ms. Cava answered that without hiring a school resource officer type of person, she would end up hiring someone with the qualifications of a guidance counselor. Mr. Glossop suggested that Ms. Cava have the flexibility to figure out how to break out the work based on the candidates she chooses to hire.

Ms. Holden moved that the decisions of the meeting be sealed. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. In favor: Bonner, Donovan, Graham, Glossop, Holden, Humphrey, Jackson and MacDonald. None were opposed.

Ms. Holden moved that the Board come out of closed session. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. In favor: Bonner, Donovan, Graham, Glossop, Holden, Humphrey, Jackson and MacDonald. None were opposed.

**\*\* End of Closed Session \*\***

Ms. Humphrey moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and all voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Idina Holden  
Secretary