

Hillsboro Charter Academy Board of Directors
Thursday March 16, 2017
Minutes
7:30 PM Hillsboro Charter School

1. Call to order – Attendance and establishment of a quorum at 7:40 PM.

Present: Rebecca Baldwin Fuller, President; Ben Lenhart, Vice-President; Marie Doe, Treasurer; Yvonne Balfour, Secretary; Amy Marasco Newton, Nicole Rude, Gwen Wilf, Roger Vance

Absent: Carolyn DeMary and Nikki Nicki Bazaco,

2. Executive Session – 15 minutes – Personnel Issue.

Action Item: Ben moved to adjourn executive session to address personnel matters. Rebecca seconded. Approved: 9-0-2. Returned to open meeting at 7:55.

3. Call for public comment:

K. Hackett and M. Hafener – after being more than half way through the school year it is recommended that the BOD's address the class sizes. With PBL and our current experiences it is clear that class sizes of 23-24 are too great.

J. Merckler – request that any discussion or vote on class size be advertised clearly prior to it occurring and that discussion about the matter be held in open forum. Also requested that we not add a grandparent to the BOD because it is too close to having another parent on the board. Also asked that the BOD add a member that has more experience with fund raising and experience with low SES populations.

M Hafener – We really need a reading specialist. Asked whether reading specialist will be added to the staff. Parents who have taken their students out of the school were interviewed. They indicated that they left because services had been reduced – speech and reading. Said that using computer programs is not the best way to address students' learning needs. Another parent indicated that they pulled their children because of the limited resources, lack of principal, and the feeling that students who were “just average” were getting lost. It is a good school for gifted.

Rebecca –expressed appreciation for the survey conducted of parents who had left the school.

Ben – we have been searching for BOD members with a broader range of experiences for the HCA BOD.

4. Approval of Minutes from 1/17/16.

Action Item: Ben moved that the content of the minutes be approved but Rebecca asked that changes be made to the spelling of parent names. Amy seconded. Approved: 9-0-2.

5. President's comments

- Update on Principal search – we found a candidate for interim principal who was interviewed by Yvonne, Rebecca and the HCA teachers. Mr. Craig Mueller has the appropriate licensure and background checks. The candidate's resume was reviewed – HS principal for 10 years, AP for middle school (4th – 8th), and Montessori director. Returned to VA after retiring from a school system in New Hampshire. He has experience with the MCCS board. Mr. Mueller stated that he has reviewed the HCA charter and met the teachers and is impressed. He noted that the first year issues were hard for MCCS and that HCA was experiencing similar first year issues. Of the charter he said, “Public input is an asset.” He said that he would be “grateful to have the opportunity to help provide HCA stability and to encourage teachers to be the best that they can be.” Amy recognized the effort of the teachers to work through the first year issues of the school without a principal.

Action item: Yvonne moved that Mr. Mueller be appointed as interim principal, Ben seconded.

Approved: 9-0-2.

- Enrollment Update: Lottery Outcome – 80 applicants, 2 not eligible, 18 children were placed, the rest are on the wait list. 20 – K with 29 on wait list; 22 -1st with 12 on the wait list; 2nd – 24 returning, 9 on wait list; 3rd – 20 with 6 on wait list; 4- 20 with 4 on wait list; 5th – 20 with no wait list.
 - Class size is a consideration. We are in the budgeting process. We will not change these limits until we have the first draft of the budget in April. We want to budget for the things that the school needs such as a ½ time reading specialist which is a priority based on surveys of the parents and input of the teachers.
 - School Attendance Issues - Want to stay over the LCPS requirement that we have a 95% attendance rate. Currently we are under this and letters will be going out to parents from Dr. Minshew. We are held to the VDOE standards and poor attendance puts the charter in jeopardy. Missing school due to bad moods, vacation, etc. impacts the school and the individual child's learning. A letter regarding attendance will be sent to individual parents about specific absences and to the all of the parents regarding the need to keep attendance at 95% for the charter.
6. Report from the Leadership Team – Mrs. Tucker.
- The teachers are pleased to have Mr. Mueller come on board. The PD day held recently was helpful. New technology was introduced. Tiffany Miller has been named the Civil Air Patrol Middle East Region Teacher of the Year. She is one of 8 finalists for the national award. She is awarded this for her work on STEAM and the charter.
7. Management Committee Report – A. Marasco-Newton
- The meeting was good tonight. We need a parent lead on transportation. Yvonne asked whether a principal could handle this. It is important to determine whether the 3rd bus is needed.
 - It is recommended that we buy teachers spirit wear so that they can be in public and at events with HCA shirts, etc.
 - MC will create a welcome manual for new parents to be distributed in fall, 2017.
 - Mary Michael Ponzer, a parent, will head the fund raising for the MC/HCA. A Book-a-Thon is in the works.
 - The roles of the PTO, BOD, MC. Need to be determined and a meeting after the auction will be held to do this.
 - Reviewed traffic management issues. It seems that some of the issues were blown out of proportion. We do need some orderly communication but it is not as big of a problem as was originally presented. Roger will ask Deputy Moats to review the traffic pattern in the car line.
8. Old Business
- BOD Candidates – information about 2 candidates were circulated but since then both candidates have indicated that they do not have the time to commit to the HCA BOD at this time. Ben has a candidate in mind from the Tree of Life in Purcellville. He is a businessman and is very active in his mission with Tree of Life. Ben has one other candidate who has experience with low-income populations whom he will contact. Carolyn DeMary is stepping down from the board and this leaves HCA with 10 BOD members.
 - SPED Parent Session – B. Lenhart reached out to LCPS director of sped and the advocate from Paxton (Eileen Schafer). Both are willing to meet with parents and BOD's as needed. Need to determine what the best venue for these meetings would be. Reports from LCPS are that HCA is

getting the same level of service as are other LCPS schools. Perhaps Dr. Jimenez will be invited to the next BOD meeting and Eileen Schaffer to a following meeting. Questions from the board and from parents will be submitted.

- Fundraiser hiring update – G. Wilf has negotiated a contractor Emily to develop a fund raising plan. Several sessions will occur and then HCA can implement the plan at a later date.
- HCA Camp – Nicole advised that the HCA camps would be advertised starting on April 1st.

9. New Business

- The school staff has proposed a change to the School Calendar for 2017-2018. This is related to extra ½ hour a day that HCA pays to the teachers. If the calendar is changed and teachers are given comp time for the extra half hour with days off, HCA can save money. The extra ½ hour each day is important to the PBL and STEAM activities in the PM. Ben will develop a proposal to submit to the LCPS Charter Committee. Essentially it takes 8 days from the school calendar to compensate for the teachers for the ½ hour extra that they work each day.

Action Item: Ben moved that the HCA calendar be changed to remove 8 instructional days and retain the extra ½ hour. Yvonne seconded. Approved 9-0-2.

- Ben asked about the stump at the front of the building. He feels that it should be removed. LCPS took the tree down and should be responsible for removing the stump. Rebecca will contact LCPS.

10. Committee Reports:

- Ad Hoc Committee on Policies and Procedures – R. Fuller. Nikki is working on updating the policy manual.
- Marketing and Outreach Committee – R. Vance. Press release will go out re: interim principal; coverage on the lottery; and on Tiffany Miller's award.
- Personnel and Recruitment Committee - Y. Balfour. Hiring process needs to begin for teaching vacancies and Mr. Mueller will be tasked with vetting applicants and interviewing.
- Fundraising Report - A. Newton. Finance – Currently ahead of budget; access to the budget will be improved; a “nuts and bolts” meeting will be scheduled; financial audit by LCPS will occur in July. Ben requested a copy of the budget for each meeting; the school will need to hire a bookkeeper who is not a member of the board or a parent this summer; the finance committee met with Tim Yetter, LCPS finance director.
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Committee – C. DeMary. The BOD requested an instructional audit. The teachers with Mr. Mueller's assistance will review the strategic plan developed last school year.
- Fund raising – we need a professional fundraiser or someone from the board to take the lead; the MC has some fund raising events including “tea for a cause” on Sunday May 21st; s summer farm to table event is needed and a BOD will need to take the lead; Nikki will lead a book event in the fall. The Corporate Lead (Megan and Amy) will look for corporate sponsors to take the S, T. E. A. or M; ice cream specials will take place soon; a concert series is in the planning for this summer; the PTO is planning the spring auction; to be held on May 5.

11. Adjourn at 9:55 PM.