

**Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Approved Minutes  
Thursday, May 10, 7:30pm  
BFCCPS Library**

Attendance: Trustees President John Neas, Vice President Lauren Pfizenmaier, Clerk Richard Frongillo, Faculty Representative Joe Perna, Colleen Brown, Lori Clements, Anna dos Santos, Jennifer Moccia, Michele Pearl, Cathy Tomaso; HOS Dr. Kevin O'Malley

Absent: Treasurer Mark Kripp, Chuck Mayo, Jack McCarthy

**Call to order, Introductions, Comments from the Chair (7:38)**

John introduces guests who are candidates for next year's Board of Trustees; Caroline Agresti, Tim Tracy, and Maria Weiss. He notes that the June meeting will be held, as originally scheduled, on June 14. He expresses his gratitude to Board members for their continued efforts.

**Recognition of the Month (7:43)**

Dr. O'Malley highlights the accomplishments of the music and chorus departments. BFCCPS participated in a competition of 70 schools; 5 singers and 1 band member were selected for Central Districts; great and talented kids; five students -- Tim Haigh, Will Martin, David Meredith, Edie Richardson, and Catherine Weiss -- presented a sample selection of the songs. Sam Zatkowski was the musician (tuba) selected for Central Districts. Carol Babineau expressed her thanks for teacher appreciation efforts. The selection was Into the West from Lord of the Rings; Fantastic!

**Clerk's Report (7:51)**

MOTION: By Anna/Michele to approve minutes of 4/12/2007 as posted.

RESULT: Pass

**Action Register (7:52)**

Lauren reports that there are few items left on the register and no new register was published. John will put the Strategic Plan on the agenda for July, Lauren offered a template of a Board calendar showing what to be doing and when, Board election revisions are ongoing with the Governance Committee. Lauren believes the register is a valuable tool that she hopes will endure.

**Treasurer's Report (7:54)**

Anna presents report what shows a \$60K variance (as approved) for money spent for curriculum items to be utilized in upcoming months.

In the FY08 budget, there were some additions from last meeting: using 390 FTEs and higher rate from mFY07 (from the end of the year); \$80K added to Curriculum and Teaching for math program only to be spent after March when DOE numbers are firm for FY08 (this is an estimate and more analysis for what is needed will be done for K-8); Michele asks whether the school is leaning more toward computer learning. Kevin states that committees of teachers will be looking at solution. The tool would be put in use in September, 2009.

Cathy wonders whether Franklin Proposition 2 1/2 override will have an effect on BFCCPS budget. Kevin believes that in the large picture it should not but that it is likely to have some spill-over in some way.

MOTION: By Rich/Colleen to approve the FY08 budget with math program notation.

RESULT: Pass

**Report from the Development Director (8:06)**

Joe Chillo reports on three avenues being pursued: Annual Fund (handout provided; using feasibility studies for basic information), Grants Program with private resources (initial steps are to

introduce BFCCPS to grant providers, telling the story of the school and setting up visits in advance of grant proposals next fall), and a Capital Campaign (built on Annual Fund)

John expresses his gratitude for having Joe C. He (and Anna) notes the target of \$80k through the annual fund and grant program included in the just-approved budget; would funds go to operations? Joe expects the trustees would decide; it is typical that capital campaign monies would go for building development.

Laureen wonders about the timing of the Annual Fund. Joe C. is looking at two “asks”: one in mid-October (for 12/31 deadline for charity) and another in mid-February (for March, to address potential end-of-year expenses/giving). Michele asks whether there will be any “grassroots” involvement of projects (e.g. brick-buying); is there interaction with the Foundation? Yes, it is ongoing and there will not be a separate drive initiated by the Foundation. Cathy suggests that grandparents be contacted as changes to retirement money management has changed allowing for gifts to IRS Chapter 501(3)c organizations.

### **HOS report (8:27)**

Several notes:

- Kevin notes that Joe C. has been a very valuable asset at BFCCPS already! He continues to note the success of the banking program: Dean Bank’s Millionaire for a Day had three winners from BFCCPS: Brianna Gatto (1st grade), Bradley Clements (5th grade), Jacob Tomaso (6th grade).
- BFCCPS will be mentioned in Channel 2’s “Minorities in Classical Education” as the Grevious family was featured in telling a story of how a child “gets it all done.”
- Kevin is pleased with the math initiatives which demonstrate the BFCCPS commitment to improving math. The school is a member of the New England Math League which involves use of a standardized test with some incentives through prizes. The BFCCPS 7th grade is described as “7th most successful school in New England”
- Kevin announces that there is an upcoming meeting of parents of students entering 5th through 8th grade (5/16). Staff will be available to answer questions.
- There is some “gray area” related to Out of State Travel in that it is not clear whether the approval of the Board is needed in each case. Colleen suggests that the Board approve future trips:

MOTION: By Lori/Michele to approve 5th and 8th grade trips to Rhode Island

RESULT: Withdrawn

MOTION: By Colleen/Lori to provide HOS authority to approve in-state, out-of-state, out-of-country school trips for 2007-08

RESULT: Pass

John points out that the Assistant HOS interviews are beginning on 5/12 and will be addressed in the Human Resources committee report.

### **Open Comment (8:43)**

Ben Benjamin restates Carol Babineau’s sentiments: thanks to all of the folks involved in planning activities related to Teacher Appreciation Week.

### **Committee Reports (8:45)**

Facilities: John received an answer from the Washington Street land broker (in discussion with Paula Wobby): the broker has decided to recommend to their client that they NOT sell the strip of land; they want to keep land “intact”. This is answer is really no answer at all. John asked for a copy of the appraiser report but this question will not be answered until 5/20, at least. Similarly, is a land swap possible? No answer until 5/20. Discussions with Franklin Town Administrator Jeff Nutting and others regarding the possibility of eminent domain has led to recommendations that the municipality be involved (i.e. not the school directly). John will be calling a meeting of the Board, Foundation and Facility Committee (6/28). Michele observes that the time is ripe to

use a public relations campaign to move issue. John suggests that this be an agenda item for the joint meeting.

Faculty: Several colleagues offered thanks for Teacher Appreciation Week; Faculty reviewed organizational chart: feedback has been generally optimistic and positive, some are enthusiastic and others are cautious as details of how all committees will interact; a call has been put out for a replacement of Joe in his Faculty Representative position wanting input from committee chair people about folks involved in committees

Governance: Meeting held on 4/24. Updates will be distributed in future meetings. It would be great to have a faculty person involved with this committee.

Human Resources: Lori states that there will be interviews of five candidates for the Assistant HOS position. The 10-person interview committee (3 parents, 3 trustees, 3 faculty, Deb Schwab) have set up four hour-long sessions on 5/12 (9am-1pm) and another on 5/14 (7pm). Trustees are welcome. There is optimism that a candidate will be selected during the second round of interviews.

Lori is looking for trustees to provide input on HOS evaluation. Several trustees had not submitted information by the 5/10 deadline. Lori thanks the faculty representatives on the HR Committee for their participation.

Mission: A meeting is noted on the school calendar but is not expected. John to check with Chuck.

Nominating: Nominations are closed with ten candidates, 1 of which is from the community. Lori thanks the candidates in attendance tonight. Lori states that it is the intention of she and Chuck that the Nominating Committee NOT convene and put all ten names forward in June. Rich suggests that the Committee be involved in the decision not to meet. Consensus of the Board on this point is apparent.

John comments on how we select candidates given that we have members of different terms. The Governance Committee will discuss this in an upcoming meeting. All are encouraged to be familiar with Policy #2 in advance of the June meeting. Michele notes lingering perception of “old boy network” and cautions the need to be “open” in selection process. Colleen points out that changes will be in place for next year to improve the process. John summarizes: Chuck and Lori will communicate with Nominating Committee, Governance Committee will hold a meeting, and packets will be distributed to the Board for all candidates.

John points out that the Faculty Representative will need to be selected at the June meeting. Joe expects a vote at the 6/5 faculty meeting.

Current Board members interested in leadership positions for next year: Clerk (Chuck), Treasurer (Anna), Vice President (Lori, Rich), President (John). Although we can have an election, John suggests that Lori and Rich discuss possible avoidance of an election and/or have one be President and the other be Vice President.

Public Relations: Michele is continuing to draft the Media Notification Policy; not quite complete. John wonders about voting in members of the PR Committee. Jennifer points out that no publication of notice seeking members has been made. John is hoping for a PR statement in coming weeks. Cathy points out need for sensitivity about public view of our financial position.

Technology: Meeting held on 5/4

### **Discussion and Vote on the Following Items at the Discretion of the Chair (9:26)**

John will occasionally have workshop-type meetings in future. He notes that we may not get to all issues tonight.

Policy Regarding Requests from the Media: moved to June meeting.

School Calendar: Kevin notes that the faculty has reviewed the calendar. Some “features” are highlighted tonight:

- same start date as other Franklin Public School districts

- Friday 8/31 no school
- Rosh Hashanah 9/13 no school
- half/full days off for professional development rotate
- Wednesday before Thanksgiving 11/21 no school
- Full day professional development on 3/10 might be good to discuss math program
- Good Friday 3/21 no school
- Friday 6/13 is scheduled last day but likely to go into the following week

Some brief discussion about possible swaps of start date, earlier finish date.

MOTION: By Colleen/Laureen to approve school calendar as presented.

RESULT: Pass

Review and Discussion of Employee Handbook: Cathy wonders how faculty know who Civil Rights officer is; Lori states that they are notified separately. How will faculty know who HR Committee Chair is? They could attend any open meeting. Anna presents Lori with some issues “for next revision”. She expresses some concern that the whistle-blower policy is not quite final, needing “cleaning” by Governance Committee. John notes that other revisions are already in line.

MOTION: By Lori/Laureen to approve Employee Handbook as presented.

RESULT: Pass

Laureen notes amount of work in this draft. Applause for Lori’s efforts is noted.

Organizational Flow Chart: Kevin notes that it is difficult at this time to describe how the School Leadership team will be formed. Some staff are excited to get started with committee work, others are reluctant to join committees. Kevin is continuing to work on the concerns of all. Laureen wonders if there will be training. Yes, in the initial days of school. Jennifer wants to confirm that the plan starts on the first day of school. Yes. Rich questions the presentation of the chart which leaves some room for interpretation. Kevin points to Professional Development Committee as a good working model of collaborative effort. He hopes good will carry us through first year of plan.

MOTION: By Laureen/Lori to approve organizational chart as presented.

RESULT: Pass (1 against, Rich)

MOTION: By Jennifer/Anna to suspend rules to allow discussion past 10pm.

RESULT: Pass

Dress Code: Kevin has presented a “middle ground, conservative” policy. No punishments are explicitly given. Colleen wonders about enforcement. Kevin’s approach is to talk with parents and children in cases of violation. Jennifer thanks Kevin for this much-needed document. She is concerned about the lack of clarity and enforcement in the document: section 2.1 should include “students”, 6.3.2 does not have “offensive” defined, suggests communication of policy change related to “denim”. Cathy suggests that it is okay to wear denim TO school, just not IN school. She is also wondering about open-toed sandals (concession to faculty). Anna highlights that there is a loosening of the policy on “logos”. Caroline Agresti wonders what has been the reason to reduce the policy: Kevin notes that changes are trying to bring clarity. Rich agrees with need for a definition of “offensive”. Joe notes that the policy must be enforceable and wants to take care that student input is honored. Laureen recognizes work done by Kevin and wonders whether someone else would be willing to re-draft. It seems most want to move forward.

MOTION: By Colleen/Lori to approve the Dress Code presented by Dr. O’Malley for next year with amendment of definition of “offensive” to be taken from the Employee’s documentation from the summer information packet (page 25, point 4).

RESULT: Pass

It is noted that the policy addresses field trips but not all school functions.

## **Adjournment (10:26)**

Next meetings: 6/14/2007 (regular Board meeting)