

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School
Board of Trustees Meeting
APPROVED Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2009 7:00pm
School Library

Attendance: Trustees President John Neas, Vice President Lori Clements, Treasurer Anna dos Santos, Clerk Richard Frongillo, Faculty Representative Gail Trotin, Nav Chander, Chuck Mayo (7:10), Cheryl O'Donnell (7:35) Cathy Tomaso, Tim Tracy (7:11), Thom Viveiros, Poh-Lin Yeoh (8:06); HOS Dr. Kevin O'Malley, Asst. HOS Heather Zolnowski, Director of School Operations and Student Activities Joe Perna

Absent: None.

Call to order, Comments by the Chair (7:06)

John expresses condolences to Rich at the loss of his mother this week. Poh-Lin will be late due to a work meeting. The Board Retreat will be on July, 18, 8am-2:30pm.

Recognition of the Month (7:07)

Kevin notes there is not enough time to properly recognize all that deserve it. **Music:** BFCCPS is among "100 Best" for a good reason as music at the school is EVERYONE's domain. With Ben Benjamin hospitalized during the spring concert, Matt Boday stepped in and did a fabulous job conducting an excellent concert! Matt thanked students for their performance and Ben for his leadership. 100 students were in Memorial Day program, featured on Boston's Channel 5. Kevin announces that Robert W. Smith, a composer of material for school bands, will come to Franklin to write a piece for Franklin's middle schools. All Franklin middle school bands will collaborate in a concert in June, 2010 to be conducted by Ben Benjamin. Sasha and Sally Gorski are recognized for their recent appearance in Carnegie Hall with each accompanying the other, one on piano and the other playing violin, then swapping instruments! They left New York for Boston and training with the symphony orchestra. Their Capstone project brought their music to the community.

Language: Madame Malouf is recognized as host of the 6/5 French assembly which the Counsel General of Canada attended. She introduced Ruchira Parikh who was the first BFCCPS student to get a perfect 70/70 score and receiving a gold medal in national testing!. In Latin, Njeri Grevious and Jared Ginnetty received gold awards. Madame thanks Kevin and Board for support.

John presents Gail with a gift in honor of her choosing to stay on the Board. He hands a Perna Plaque to "graduating" Board members, Cathy and Chuck. One will be given to Lisa Buchholz.

Report of Faculty Input Team (FIT) (7:26)

Gail notes that the "Ben's Best" Research Action Team (RAT) which is aimed at showcasing the best of BFCCPS and publishing a document for the world is wrapping up and will report later.

Gail reports on the work of the Community Service RAT which she and Becca Harrington facilitated. She distributes a report which includes grade-specific benchmarks, definitions, and philosophy; the recommendations are that each grade will have a "school", "local", and "global" project each year. The global project could be a concerted effort by all grades. Kevin is pleased with the efforts to bring together the disjointed service education programs done in the past and expects the summer workshops will allow time to flesh out details.

Several ask questions about collaboration, sustainability, continuity, role of parents, and documentation. Gail notes that the recommendations are intentionally flexible to allow for all types of implementation to make reasonable choices over time. As councillor, Becca will help knit the program specifics together.

Clerk's Report (7:53)

MOTION: By Rich/Cathy to approve meeting minutes for May 14.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Action Register (7:53)

Lori reviews the Action Register handout. Much of what is being done will be completed this evening. The annual Board Retreat will be on 7/18. Nav wonders whether agenda items can be added for 7/18 and they can be. Anna will be looking for updates on the Strategic Plan in July.

Open Comment (7:54)

No comments offered.

Treasurer's Report (7:55)

Anna reports that the minutes of the 6/3 meeting will be distributed. There are no big changes in the budget to report. The school will be looking at an improved cleaning contract. She reminds the group that there will be a budget deficit due to the lower tuition rate. The school will be switching to Tufts on 7/1 which will save money, but savings has not been allocated.

Head of School Report (7:56)

Kevin lauds the 8th graders and highlights the activities: the banquet was magnificent, the beach trip was on 6/10, graduation on 6/11 to culminate school year. The 8th graders are well prepared for high school and are "the ultimate calling cards" for our school.

This has been an excellent year with lots of progress and stability. Kevin thanks the Board for helping to keep the focus on the children. He notes that the first phase of the re-organization is complete with more adjustments to be discussed in July. Kevin thanks Heather and Joe for their quiet efficiency and energy.

Anna asks about the Red Brick School. The town has closed the building for three safety reasons, two of which have been addressed: adding fire extinguishers and repairing the ceiling. The remaining issue is an expensive removal of the idle oil tanks in the basement.

In response to Nav's query, Kevin confirms that faculty agreement letters have been distributed.

Presentation of HOS Performance Evaluation (8:07)

Lori refers to evaluation and comments documents that had been distributed to the Board in advance. Comments were generally quite positive. John had distributed a copy of the HOS letter of agreement. As had been offered by Kevin, the agreement is for no salary increase.

MOTION: By Anna/Nav to approve letter of agreement for Head of School.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Report from the Elections Task Force (8:15)

Nav introduces the members: Poh-Lin, Lori, Gene Grella, Sergey Yurgenson, Tim Kress, and Katie Lepsevich (absent, recovering from back injury). Tim spoke along with the slides presented, summarizing the approach taken by the task force to review election procedures by other charter schools and other non-profits. A chart was presented with their findings. The group had several recommendations including: eliminate role of nominating committee (have "rolling" reviews to have candidates "in waiting", identify skill gaps and match people to those gaps, establish mentoring of board members for succession, focus on strategy (be more forward-looking and less day-to-day tactical), consolidate committees (including establishment of Development Committee), reduce the size of the Board, and involve individuals from the community (i.e. non-parents).

Questions to the task force: we have a strategic plan now, what does it mean to be more strategic? Perhaps it is a question of time allocation, a need to spend more time on directional items than day-to-day items. Is there an algorithm to determine size of Board given no observable pattern in the data? The data may have included non-voting members; 6-7 voting members seemed to be most common. How do organizations decide upon what skill sets are necessary? Skills are aligned with committees and the topics taken up by each committee.

MOTION: By Anna/Cathy to accept the task force report with gratitude and dissolve the group.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Election of Faculty Representative (9:10)

MOTION: By Thom/Cathy to elect Gail Trotin as faculty representative for 2009-2010.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Election of Board Members (9:11)

John distributed a list of candidates. Although Kevin and Chuck have had some indication that a Dean representative might like to be involved, no candidate was put forth in time for consideration. With each trustee (except the faculty rep) casting votes for 5 of the 6 candidates, the following were elected: Anna, Poh-Lin, Lori, Don Tappin (3 year term), Stephan Katinas (2 year term, filling vacancy left open by resignation of L. Buchholz), Merlyn Irudayaraj as alternate.

Election of Board Officers (9:23)

MOTION: By Cathy/Anna to elect Lori Clements as Board President.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

MOTION: By Lori/Tim to elect Anna dos Santos as Board Treasurer.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Poh-Lin would like to nominate Tim as Vice President, but Tim could not accept the nomination. No candidates stepped forward for the position of Clerk. Each position will be discussed in July.

Committee Reports (9:28)

Annual Appeal: A \$150 donation came in since the last report. Thom wants a thank-you letter to go out this month, but wants to include how the money will be used which is still undecided. This will be deferred until July.

Dress Code: Lori refers to the compiled comments that had been distributed to the Board. The topic will be addressed at a future (unspecified) meeting.

Elections: Lori will provide forms to newly elected Stephan and Don.

Facilities: A letter from BFCCPS Foundation President Matt Ginnetty was distributed prior to the meeting about the visit from Calpers on the Washington Street property. No new information was provided. Kevin will be meeting with Becca Harrington's father who was part of a school building project in Worcester.

Faculty Representative: No report.

Governance: Tim distributed a summary of policy document changes.

MOTION: By Tim/Anna to accept changes to Policy #1: Board Rules, as presented.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

MOTION: By Tim/Nav to accept changes to Policy #22: Budget Amendment Procedures, as presented.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Nav would like to see flexibility to allow for other fundraising organizations in Policy #13. Anna feels that the document reflects the organizations of today and can be amended if need be.

MOTION: By Tim/Anna to accept changes to Policy #13: Fundraising Monies & Grant Administration, as presented.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

MOTION: By Tim/Lori to accept changes to Policy #28: Employee Grievance Procedure, as presented.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

MOTION: By Tim/Lori to accept changes to Policy #26: Professional Code of Conduct for Employees, as presented.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

MOTION: By Tim/Lori to accept changes to Policy #23: Grievance Procedure for Non-BFCCPS

Employees, as presented.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

In all, more than 50% of the policies were reviewed this year, exceeding the team's goal.

Human Resources: Lori compiled input from staff on the Head of School performance; 22 reports were received; the notes were very positive but some areas were identified (e.g. staff evaluations) were noted for improvement.

Adjournment (9:52)

MOTION: By Chuck/Cathy to adjourn.

RESULT: Pass (Anna, Rich against)