

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School (BFCCPS)
Board of Trustees Meeting
Approved Minutes
Thursday, March 11, 2010 7:00pm
School Library

Attendance: Trustees President Lori Clements, Vice President Rich Frongillo, Treasurer Anna dos Santos, Clerk Thomas Viveiros, Nav Chander, Stephan Katinas (8:25 pm), John Neas, Donald Tappin, Tim Tracy, Gail Trotin, Poh-Lin Yeoh, Head of School Dr. Kevin O'Malley, Assistant Head of School Heather Zolnowski, Director of School Operations and Student Activities Joe Perna

Absent: Cheryl O'Donnell,

Call to Order, Comment by the Chair (7:07 pm):

Lori mentions that the Board Members should fill out the Head of School Performance Evaluation found in the board packet. Lori thanks John Neas for participating in the faculty basketball game and Don Tappin for bringing the refreshments. She also thanks Thom and Cheryl for completing the strategic workshop input sheets. Lori also solicits people to respond to her if they have an interest in running for an officer position.

Voting to approve the minutes from the February 2010 Board of Trustees meeting:

COMMENTS: Rich mentions that in the section where the lease negotiations are discussed, we should refer to St. Mary's Pastor as Father Manning as opposed to the more familiar Father Brian.

MOTION: Rich initiates and Don seconds a motion to approve the February 2010 minutes.

RESULT: Motion passes unanimously.

Recognition of the Month (7:12pm):

Dr. O'Malley recognizes all of the student performers who participated in the BFCCPS production of "Fiddler on the Roof Junior". Dr. O'Malley mentions that the musical was well attended and that we sold approximately \$7,000 in tickets. He also talks about the fact that the Fiddler on the Roof is a difficult play to perform and the students did an amazing job pulling the performance together given the physical constraints of our building. He mentions that the only thing in his mind that could have been improved was if we had better facilities. In fact, the physical location of the musical in years moving forward will be a discussion taking place in the coming weeks. Dr. O'Malley invites all members of the Board of Trustees as well as the BFCCPS community as a whole to be active participants in the discussion.

Dr. O'Malley introduces and recognizes three of the student performers: Gabriela Blood (who played Hodel), Julia Meredith (who played the Fiddler), and Abhiram Rao (who played Tevye the Milkman). He mentions that all of the performers not only did well in the play, but they each managed to do well in their respective academic studies as well.

Abhiram introduced himself and mentioned that he was nervous at first but that the encouragement of his peers forced him to translate that nervous energy into confidence.

Julia introduces herself and mentions that she had lots of fun. She learned that no matter what your role in the play, you need to stay focused. She also mentions that you really have to not talk backstage (laughter erupts in the room).

Gabriela introduced herself and mentioned that she had never sang a solo in front of others before and that this was a great opportunity for her. She is sad that the play is over.

Dr. O'Malley applauds the students and emphasizes that one of the many positive attributes of the school is that it helps to build confidence in students.

Lori asks the three (3) student representatives what three (3) things they would change if they could. Abhiram mentioned that they were limited by space. Julia wished that they had more stage space and more room for the audience. Gabriela agreed that the space is tight. One example that was mentioned was that the support beams (poles) were an issue in that they caused obstructed views for both the performers and the audience. The parents of the performers were then introduced by the performers themselves.

A question came up as to whether or not we would have a Sunday matinee in future years. Dr. O'Malley says that we will be doing a top to bottom review on the play in the coming weeks, and that all community member questions (including performance times) are up for discussion.

Open Comment Period (7:30 pm):

No comments offered.

Board Size for Next Year (7:31 pm):

Lori brings up the size of the board. According to policy, the Board must set the size of the Board for the subsequent year. Lori talks about possibly reducing the board size. Gail mentions that reducing the board size may present difficulties particularly since we voted to remove many of the committees from last year. Nav mentions that the number of committees does not necessarily relate to the amount of work. Lori mentions that parents who are not voted in as board members could be invited to be part of the committees. Rich mentions that he feels that if the board size changes, it should only be reducing as opposed to increasing.

Voting to reduce the board size to 11:

COMMENTS: Discussion revolves around logistical issues moving forward. For example, what would the staggering of the terms look like if we approve the vote. Tim asks about the timing and whether or not we can start over (i.e., getting everyone to start their terms over at the end of the year). Rich mentions that the workshop had only 11 members and that he felt this number provided enough diversity of opinion. Anna mentions that the workshop felt like it was a good size to her even though it was missing two people. A discussion ensues about what our max/min size must be according to our bylaws.

MOTION: Rich initiates and Nav seconds a motion to reduce the board size to eleven (11).

RESULT: Nine (9) members vote in favor of the motion & 1 abstention (Thom). The motion passes.

Lori mentions that we currently have two (2) board openings. Thom Viveiros and Cheryl O'Donnell have both indicated their intent to be considered for another term on the Board of Trustees. Thom and Cheryl will both be going into the general pool with all of the other applicants. John asks if we are still planning to have a nominating committee. Lori reminds the board that we voted at our annual retreat last July to eliminate the Nominating Committee. Governance will draft the appropriate bylaw changes for approval at the next board meeting..

Head of School Report (7:48 pm):

Dr. O'Malley begins his report by discussing the faculty/ student basketball game. He mentions that there were twenty-six (26) children at the game and admits that the students won.

Dr. O'Malley then briefly reiterates the fact that the Fiddler on the Roof play was a success. He then asks the board to be part of the upcoming strategic discussions about what we should do next year.

He continues his report by discussing our recruitment drive which recently finished. He mentions that this year we televised our lottery. He thanks Deb Schwab for her efforts. Dr. O'Malley mentions that we currently have four-hundred and thirty-three (433) students enrolled. The good news is that we have lots of interest in the school. The bad news is that we must turn lots of families away. As of today, we think we will have four-hundred and forty-one (441) students for next year. This means that grades K-4 would have twenty-four (24) students in each of the two classes and grades 5-8 would have about fifty (50) students per grade. During our new family night, we will only be able to invite thirteen (13) new families; all of whom will have entering kindergarten students.

Dr. O'Malley mentions that we have an upcoming state visit to review our special needs program. Pat Fairbanks will be preparing lots of paper work in the coming days for the state representatives to review. Dr. O'Malley also mentions that we do a good job with the special needs students.

There will be a meeting on March 30, 2010 at 3:30pm in the auditorium to discuss next year's school calendar. We will be using the Franklin Public School calendar as a reference. However, the final calendar is for the board to approve. Dr. O'Malley suggests that we put the vote for next year's calendar on next month's agenda.

The next half day will be next Tuesday, March 16 at 1pm. That afternoon, Paresh Motiwala will be our guest speaker in the auditorium. Paresh will be educating the school community about the subtleties of Indian culture.

Since the last board meeting, the school has had environmental testing done on the facility. The school's water quality was tested and the results turned out favorable. The air quality was tested in the basement, and 1st and 2nd floors and the results of those tests also turned out well. The stage will need to be taken down and cleaned underneath during spring vacation. We do have an air-exchange problem here. The air-exchanger is particularly an issue in the summer months.

Dr. O'Malley informs the board that Franklin High School visited us yesterday (March 10) and they appeared to be impressed with our school. Dr. O'Malley mentioned that any high school would be lucky to have our children.

Dr. O'Malley reminds us that Surabhi Iyer is our spelling bee champion. She qualified to compete on Jeopardy! Kids. She is not allowed to share the results of her competition until the show airs on July 5th of this year.

Faculty Report (Gail Trotin) (8:17 pm):

Nothing to report except that the school is "humming along".

Treasurer's Report (Anna dos Santos) (8: 18 pm):

The school has a modest surplus at a moment. So far, we have not heard about any reductions to our tuition from the state. The Finance Committee will be working on the Fiscal 2011 budget this month. The committee will be meeting in the library from now to the end of the year instead of in the Head of School's office.

Action Register (Rich Frongillo) (8:20 pm):

Rich asks that all members complete and submit their financial disclosure reports. Rich references e-mail sent to Trustees regarding Board tasks for March and April.

Annual Fund Update (Nav Chander) (8:21 pm)

Receipts from the fund are up to \$13,383. So far, there are 9 people on the board who have donated. Lori mentions that she would like to have the board participation rate up to 100%. Poh-Lin asks how much the mimeos (goal of the Annual Fund) would cost for the whole school. The answer is about \$20,000 for the whole school to be fully equipped.

Workshop Follow-up Discussion (8:25 pm):

John came with a list of ideas on next steps for a facility. He passes out a one-page handout with a list of 6 specific actions that he believes should be addressed in the meantime while we decide on how to pursue a new building. Board members mentioned that we should create a requirements document first. Poh-Lin suggests a mini task-force to come together. Dr. O'Malley volunteers to work on four of the six items with permission from the board. He says he will have answers at the next board meeting. Stephan suggests that we should plan on having ad-hoc Saturday meetings moving forward if that's what it takes to answer some of the important unresolved questions; most members agree. Thom suggests that we need an action timeline that the board approves to make sure we have a rough plan on how to proceed from here. Thom will have a rough draft of a plan for the next board meeting.

Meeting Adjournment (9:33 pm):

Vote to adjourn:

COMMENTS: none.

MOTION: Rich initiates and Poh-Lin seconds a motion to adjourn at 9:33pm.

RESULT: The motion passes unanimously.