

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School
Board of Trustees Meeting
APPROVED Minutes
Thursday, February 14, 2008 7:30pm
BFCCPS Library

Attendance: Trustees President John Neas, Vice President Lori Clements, Treasurer Anna dos Santos, Clerk Richard Frongillo (7:40), Faculty Representative Kevin Buckley, Chuck Mayo (7:45), Cheryl O'Donnell (8:15), Michele Pearl, Cathy Tomaso, Tim Tracy, Thom Viveiros; HOS Dr. Kevin O'Malley, Asst. HOS Heather Zolnowski

Absent: Jennifer Moccia, Poh-Lin Yeoh

Call to order, Comments by the Chair (7:32)

John welcomed Thom Viveiros, who has been approved by the Department of Education and may now vote. Jennifer is with her brother tonight in New York; Poh-Lin has the flu; the first alternate (Nav) is in Spain. The basketball with students/trustees/faculty game was fun. John noted that when we hired the new attorneys, he invited them here to meet rather than us going to their offices. The bill for that visit was recently received; it was just under \$850. John asked the board if there was any interest in a second "workshop" meeting in March for discussion purposes; by a show of hands all trustees present (7) supported a second meeting; one did not. John will schedule it. The Putnam grant presentation is being moved off the agenda for tonight as the check has not been issued yet.

Recognition of the Month (7:35)

Students in Mrs. Bergesen's class submitted entries to the "Best of 2007" contest run by the Parents and Kids publication; 4 students won:

Bailey Knous for her "Best Dad" (Scott Knous) entry; Luke Haigh for his "Best Brother" (Tim Haigh) entry; Kalen Hughes for "Best Teacher" (Mrs. Bergeson) entry; Sean Lockhart for "Best Teacher" (Mrs. Henderson) entry

Open Comment (7:40)

No comments offered.

Clerk's Report (7:40)

MOTION: By Rich/Anna to approve minutes of the 1/10/08 Board of Trustees meetings

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Treasurer's Report (7:45)

Anna discusses the latest financial statement and information regarding Fiscal Policies and Procedures Guide (Board Policy #25). A new version is distributed.

Anna discusses the expenditures related to the new (in 2008) math program. The Board had previously allocated \$80k for materials related to this program. The amount spent was significantly less due to online adjuncts to text and, therefore, less money required for text books.

MOTION: By Anna/Tim to redefine the previously-approved Math Program budget line item to include both math and social studies materials.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Cathy wonders why social studies (and not other topics) were set as a priority. Kevin recognized that there was an opportunity for improvement and the thought is to go for it. The text books for social studies would be for grades five through eight. Michele asks what was the delta between what was budgeted and spent for the math program. Kevin reports that \$35K was spent on math, freeing up \$45k. Cathy raised a concern that there may be families without computers or limited access. Kevin observes that "technology is here to stay" and we need to move in that direction.

Action Register (7:56)

Lori reviewed the Action Register including Strategic Plan, board calendar, board goals, and HOS goals.

Head of School Report (7:59)

Kevin congratulates Rich Frongillo on his being named as a Responsible Coach of the Year for soccer in 2007.

- Enrollment for 2008-09

The recruitment drive ended on 2/13. Applications submitted had increased 12%. Mrs. Schwab has done a wonderful job (and lost her voice in the process!). Lots of diversity noted in the applications. Upper grades were submitted in greater numbers than expected. John refers to the hard-copy report which shows numbers of applications as 6th grade (19), 7th grade (7), and 8th grade (4). John highlights the information packet given out to parents. Relatedly, BFCCPS has had one girl accepted to Bishop Feehan and a boy to BC High, both competitive programs. The latest Courant will be distributed on 2/15.

- Early Charter Renewal

On March 3, we will formally ask for early renewal, a six-year charter renewal.

- Miscellaneous Notes

Three grants were awarded by the PCO: Ed Callahan (technology support for 80 flash drives), Susan Davis (geometry quilt program), and Ann Anher (pilot study: island MCAS program).

BFCCPS may have most field trips of any school. Kevin references a recent Newsweek article about declining numbers of field trips.

BFCCPS students continue to achieve in music and chorus. Nine of sixteen were accepted at Central District auditions with a concert upcoming on May 3rd. Preparations for Aladdin Jr. are well underway with opening night on March 14th.

Madame Malouf recently earned US Citizenship and was recognized by a school-wide party!

- Research Action Teams (RATs)

Kevin notes that teacher empowerment is working in conjunction with the school. Recess RAT has produced a solution that is working; the Teacher Collaboration RAT is looking for ways to visit colleagues in ways not associated with evaluations; seeking more collaboration; the Discipline RAT will be reporting later in the year.

- Math Curriculum

Kevin seeks approval of the math curriculum from the Board. He notes that the school has taken a broad view of the math program and we need to keep looking back at it cyclically. Important ingredients: need to have consistency of program year on year; need to have a sequence of courses that are discernible; need to have a more rigorous curriculum. Heather has led the discussion with much input from the staff. She presents more information:

The intent is to have a regular curriculum (aligned with frameworks, normal course), an advanced curriculum (probably 12-14 students per year, not for everyone, enriched), and a remedial class (based on standards of the state). An optional geometry segment is being considered for those that exceed program. Considering that Advanced Placement (AP) is the highest high school curriculum, the school is striving to be a pre-AP school. Pre-AP is a "way of thinking", not a curriculum. Getting to pre-AP requires training of staff and students. Text books should arrive in a couple of weeks; a professional development segment will be presented on March 10. Beth Sharistianian and Artur Duque will be teaching fifth and sixth graders in each of two tracks.

Heather and Kevin responded to many questions: Anna wonders about the transition to the new curriculum; should not be difficult. How will students be placed in regular vs. advanced groups? Kevin notes a combination of elements including MCAS, tests in program, and

teacher evaluation and notes that movement between tracks is possible. Tom wonders whether the minimum knowledge offered already in K-4 will be effected? Kevin notes that there may be changes in how we teach, but nothing tremendously different. Cathy expresses significant concerns about (fixed) tracking of kids who come to math at different times and is concerned about the effect on character education and self esteem being lost in the math program including those on IEPs. Kevin believes that all can be handled respectfully. Tim wonders whether class size will be forced? No. John notes that the math program will be a positive response to Dept of Education (DOE) note about adding more differentiation in classes as well as offer a more rigorous program. Kevin B. notes that the staff is “on board” believing it to be a good step forward. Rich wonders how core knowledge is effect? Not conflicted; CK additions will continue where necessary. Anna wonders if parents can opt out? Yes. Rich asks if there will need to be remediation to get to new program? Yes, through professional development this will be addressed in the flow of the new program; some transitions will be easier than others. Tim suggests a “summer math list” to supplement reading lists.

MOTION: By Anna/Lori to accept math curriculum as presented by the Head of School.

RESULT: Pass (9-0-2, Cathy and Rich abstaining)

Report of the Salary Grid Subcommittee (9:07)

Lori presents an overview of the findings and recommendations of the subcommittee, noting first that the salary grid has been the responsibility of the Human Resources Committee. The subcommittee created and maintained an open dialogue and worked collaboratively. Current salaries of faculty were a significant concern. Many concerns were offered by the Faculty Input Team. It was clear that the solution would need to be equal and fair.

The subcommittee recommends doing something immediate with increases above the cost of living: 10% in year one, 7% in year two, 5% in year three. Approval is requested at March meeting.

Lori points to a faculty letter to Trustees and adds the view that we need to send a clear message in support of our faculty; the proposal has support of the Finance and HR Committees as well as administration. Rich points out that the projected budget distributed by Anna is not the approved budget, just a model. Anna and Lori note that the school’s financial reserves are a cushion of risk.

Recommendation from the Governance Committee to Vote to Repeal (9:34)

Tim reports that the Governance Committee has reviewed Policy 3 (School Operations), Policy 4 (Administration of School Rules), Policy 6 (Hiring and Employment), and Policy 11 (Auditing) and believe them to be old, obsolete, or redundant, and is recommending repeal

MOTION: By Rich/Cathy to repeal Board policies 3, 4, 6, and 11.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Lori hands out adjustments to Policy 17 (Head of School Performance Review) looking for approval in March.

Committee Reports (9:36)

John begins noting that the Annual Appeal continues to grow and is now beyond \$12K. A thermometer of progress has been built by Joe Perna and his students.

Elections: nothing to report

Enrollment: Michele notes that the issues are multidimensional and very difficult to unravel. She is seeking an extension until April to report.

MOTION: By Michele/Cathy to extend reporting date of Enrollment Task Force to April, 2008.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)

Facilities: Michael Egan (EMC) is looking for land for a performing arts center and possible joint venture; John is not sure if anything will come of it; Can a charter school own property in its own name? Lawyers say yes. Many express growing frustration with lack of progress on strip of land. Lori wonders whether we should proceed even without an answer from the Foundation. John

believes we should wait to the end of the school year. Anna believes we need information prior to the end of the year to make progress. John offers to pen a letter to the Foundation.

Faculty Representative: Kevin B. notes that the staff is looking forward to vacation.

Governance: 2/21 meeting is cancelled.

Human Resources: Lori states that staff performance evaluations of the Head of School will go out after vacation.

Mission: A productive meeting was held in January. RAT is looking at implementation of Character Education in school being more comprehensive; Deb Farmer Kris will return on 3/10. A parent night is being attempted, but a date is unclear. Looking at creating a survey that will be crafted in line with the Accountability Plan. Next meeting in March.

Nominating: Of the four Trustees coming to the end of their term, John, Jennifer, and Rich have expressed interest in continuing on. Michele is not intending to continue. The committee is seeking nominations for Faculty Reps to the committee. Lori, Tim, and Tom are Trustees interested in being on committee; two will be selected in March.

Public Relations: The PR brochures are going to real estate offices; Deb Schwab and Kevin attend the United Chamber of Commerce meeting and the school will be joining. The committee is trying to make a more simple process of getting public notice of ongoing events.

Adjournment (10:00)

MOTION: By Lori/Tim to adjourn.

RESULT: Pass (unanimous)