

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

Attendance: Lori Clements, Rich Frongillo, Anna dos Santos, Thomas Viveiros, John Neas, Donald Tappin, Tim Tracy, Gail Trotin, Dr. O'Malley, Stephan Katinas (7:15pm), Nav Chander(7:25).

Absent: Poh-Lin and Cheryl O'Donnell

Call to order by Lori (7:00 pm)

Lori gave several updates. The ceiling damage at the Red Brick School was worse than was originally thought. The earliest we will be able to enter the facility is in early October. Our review of the Dress Code policy will begin next month. We should be prepared to discuss the purpose of having a dress code. Board members should email their comments on this topic to Lori by the Tuesday, Sept 29 and she will distribute them in the board packet. A meeting of the board officers to review and identify areas of the Strategic Plan that are being impacted by recent board decisions will be next month. Lori is waiting to hear back from Father Brian at St. Mary's to schedule a meeting for the lease negotiations. Trustees should review their online biographies and/or create one and send changes to Ben Benjamin. Lori thanks Dr. O'Malley for helping to lead a smooth beginning to the school year.

Recognition of the Month – Dr. O'Malley

Dr. O'Malley recognizes the four new staff members at BFCCPS. He states that they are working out well and is very pleased with the quality of staff the school is able to attract. Each of the candidates takes a minute to introduce themselves:

Dr. Sandra Perry (Latin & French Teacher): Dr. Perry talks about her vast teaching experience and mentions that 3rd to 8th grades are not new to her. Although she is stronger in French, her Latin is starting to come back strongly. She mentions that she lives nearby in Attleboro.

Lisa Langevin (Occupational Therapist): Lisa mentions that she comes from Millbury. She talks about her background as a non-traditional student and that she lived in Maine for about 17 years. She then mentions that she is accustomed to working with special needs children from birth to 5 years old. She went back to school in Utica, NY to get her BS in Occupational Therapy. Part of her experience includes a two-year stint in Leominster where she had to leave because of budget cuts. She mentions that she is VERY excited about the core knowledge piece at BFCCPS and she thanks the board for all of the hard work they do.

Kathleen Joyce (Math Specialist): Kathleen mentions that she splits half of her time @ BFCCPS and the other half at the Sharon Public Schools. She further mentions that part of her experience has included teaching adults to prepare for the GED. She ends her introduction by mentioning that she is happy to be here at BFCCPS.

Sarah Russell (Art Education): Sarah mentions that she has 2 years of experience teaching art. She comes from a family of artists and feels like she found her home at BFCCPS . She continues by mentioning that she is very excited to be here. One of her goals at BFCCPS will be to help encourage more creative thinking.

Approval of Board Minutes (7:15pm):

Rich makes a motion to approve the minutes from the board retreat. Tim seconds the motion. Passes unanimously.

Head of School Report (7:18pm):

Dr. O'Malley says that this school year has had the best opening since he's been here. The four new teachers "hit the deck running". They have been paired with mentors. He makes special mention of the efforts of Heather and Joe, who worked nights and weekends all summer to handle to workload created by the resignation of the Business Manager. He mentions that the school is more comfortable with the new math program now that it has been at the school for one (1) year.

We planned on an enrollment of 434 students, we now have 432 students; the most BFCCPS has ever had. When we recruit students for next year, we need to think strategically about being top heavy in the upper grades.

Dr. O'Malley thanked the trustees for supporting the summer workshops. Total attendance by the faculty was 135. The English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is close to being finalized. He thanks the Parent Community Organization (PCO) for their recent generous contribution of 10 MIMEOs to the school.

Our MCAS scores are out and will be distributed shortly. Dr. O'Malley discussed the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standard established in the federal No Child Left Behind law. BFCCPS continues to make AYP in English and Math. He gives a lot of credit for this to the parent culture. On balance, our MCAS scores seem to be stronger.

Swine flu is being taken seriously by the school. BFCCPS is part of a town task force which includes the Franklin Town Administrator, the Fire Dept, and other key town personnel. Information sharing has been common between BFCCPS and the rest of the Franklin public schools. One of the concrete ways in which BFCCPS has been handling the swine flu issue is to spread hand sanitizers throughout the school. Dr. O'Malley suggests that there are three rules of thumb we can all keep in mind to help BFCCPS better manage the threat of swine flu:

Wash hands frequently

Use proper cough etiquette (cough into your elbow)

Stay home if you are sick

BFCCPS has hired a new cleaning company for the building and they will pay special attention to K & 1 grades by sanitizing these rooms. Also, the floors are being cleaned with a multi-purpose disinfectant.

Assistant Head of School's Report (7:38pm)

Assistant Head of School Heather Zolnowski starts off by introducing MIMIO, a new educational technology tool that has been purchased with funds from the PCO. Heather gives the board a brief description and demonstration.

To date, there have been ten (10) MIMIOs purchased for use throughout the school (1 for each grade level and 1 "floater"). The technology acts as an interactive teaching tool.

Dr. O'Malley notes that 22 of our students have an EpiPen from their doctor. Eighteen of them have a nut allergy. There is only one classroom in the whole school without a nut allergy situation.

Annual Audit Report (7:58pm):

John Buckley of Alexander, Aronson, Finning & Co., P.C. reported on the annual audit.

The Foundation had a loss of \$16,000; John reviews the details. Their income basically covered the interest payments on the Washington St. land. This land could be a liability to the board if the bank asks for the loan to be paid and the Foundation can't cover the loan, even though the school is not a signer on the note.

The school had a \$230,000 deficit; the details were reviewed. John mentions that we should consider accounting for the fair market value of renting the Red Brick School in the future, depending on usage.

One of the biggest increases was in salary, but this was a planned expense. There are two significant deficiencies identified: the payroll review process and general ledger maintenance. There are also control deficiencies that need to be addressed.

John mentions that an emerging management trend is that companies are now developing risk assessment plans. He recommends that the Finance Committee identify our biggest risk and request management to come up with a risk mitigation plan.

A ratio sheet is distributed showing comparisons to other schools. Our numbers include the school and the foundation in the calculation. Our liabilities also have the Foundation land included within the calculation. We have an unbalanced dependency on state funds as a source of revenue since only about 1% of our income comes from private fundraising. John suggests that we focus more on private fundraising in the future. Our reserves are roughly equal to 6 months expenses.

Motion to accept the audit report, as presented (8:47pm):

Anna makes a motion to approve the Audit report. Nav seconds the motion. Passes unanimously..

Treasurer's Report (8:49pm):

Anna indicates that we should be fine financially. Our tuition rate has stayed the same as last year. We have budgeted at 434 students, but we actually have 432 so our budget will change

slightly to reflect the difference of two students.

Motion to accept an updated Corporate Resolution Document for RBC Dain Rauscher (8:51pm).

Anna makes a motion to accept the updated corporate resolution document. Rich seconds the motion. Passes unanimously.

Action Register (8:53):

Rich apologizes that the Action Register was not prepared for this meeting.

Dr. O'Malley suggests that the board refreshments should be nut-free if possible. Lori asks that Governance look at the bylaws and policies that are affected by the bylaws.

Faculty Report (8:56):

Gail reiterates Dr. O'Malley's comments about the opening of school going well. She also mentions that the summer workshops were incredible and allowed teachers to connect in a way that allowed the first day of school to run more smoothly. She mentions that the staff, as a whole, benefits highly from the workshops.

Parents as Primary Educators Document (8:57pm):

Anna gives an overview of the document. Gail mentions that there are certain phrases that may not indicate how inclusive we are. Rich mentions that the document is not an entrance requirement. John wonders whether we should look at this document in more detail instead of vote. Thom thinks we need to be selective in our wording so we do not mislead parents who do not agree with our school's mission. Lots of discussion occurred about the wording and how it may be perceived by parents. Dr. O'Malley suggests that all board members send their comments to Anna within a week from tonight so that we could vote on the changes next month.

Annual Appeal (9:26pm):

Lori asks if we want to have an Annual Appeal this year. The whole board agrees that we should. Lori will recruit a trustee to take charge of this, and will request that additional details be provided at next month's meeting.

Motion to Adjourn (9:30pm):

Lori makes a motion to adjourn. Rich seconds the motion. Passes unanimously