

**Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School (BFCCPS)**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 27, 2014 7:00 pm**

**Attendance:** President: Don Tappin, Treasurer: Jerry Cimmino, Clerk: Katie Lepsevich, Kathy Urkevic, Joe Mullen, Lax Iyer, Ted Basile (remote), Sagar Kamarthi, Head of School: Heather Zolnowski, Assistant Head of School: Joe Perna

**Absent:** Mary Barton-Rau, John Williams

**Call to Order (7:05pm)**

Don welcomed everyone. Thank you for Board members who were able to attend the Enrollment Night evening. Read Across America on March 4th at 2pm, any Board Member able to participate please contact Don. Thank you Joe Mullen for refreshments.

**Open Comment Period (7:07pm)**

No Comments

**Recognition of the Month (7:07pm)**

Hannah Hinde for her participation and support to the Franklin Public Schools during the tragic events taken place in Franklin in January.

8th grade students presented their Capstone Projects to the Board.

- Shane Dowling: Collected donations for Foster children; specifically the need for backpacks/duffle bags for their belongings and other items for their personal use.
- Michael Jumas: Raised money for Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and participated in a walk-a-thon, as well as volunteered in the computer lab at the Boston Home that houses individuals with MS.
- Katie Mullaney: Raised money for Pan Mass Challenge and completed a 20 mile race in New Hampshire. Also, she created Beads of Hope (a nonprofit organization) with a focus on childhood cancer by providing 500 painted beads to patients,
- Harsha Prakki: Raised Environmental Awareness with three activities: a bottle drive, installed a solar panel at the school and provided educational activities for BFCCPS students.

**Clerk's Report (7: 25pm)**

**Motion:** *Jerry Cimmino made motion to approve January 9, 2014 BOT meeting minutes and Joe Mullen seconded it*

**Comments:** *Ted Basile abstains due to remote participation.*

**Result:** *Motion passes unanimously*

### **Treasurer's Report (7: 30pm)**

December financial report presented. Favorable balance anticipated through the remainder of the year, due to tuition reimbursement rate.

### **Head of School Report (7:33pm)**

#### **Facility:**

- Heating unit repair in 2 classrooms
- Modular Roof had a series of leaks. Repairs ongoing.
- Pothole repair scheduled
- February break cleaning
- Computerless Lab redesigned/Divider walls added- Coordinated Program Review rec.

### **7th Grade Science Fair:**

- 3 female students will be representing BFCCPS at the Regional Science Fair.

#### **Four Pillars:**

- Parents as Primary Educators: Parents have contributed to the filming of the video for Enrollment Information Sessions.; Many parents volunteered to serve as judges in the 7th Grade Science Fair
- Classical Education: Writing Assessment was given and currently being scored; FLEZ Exam (6th Grade National French Assessment) Administered Wednesday. Spelling Bee-
- congratulations to all of our spellers! A special congratulations to Shraddha Iyer, who was crowned our 2014 BFCCPS school champion. Shraddha will represent BFCCPS in the Regional Spelling Bee in March
- Community Service: Received a letter from the Franklin Food Pantry thanking us for our contribution of 1,203 pounds the last quarter of the year! Erin Lynch, Director, is thrilled with the amazing job we did. Capstone Projects presented- Attended by State Representative Jeffery Roy (see letter).
- Character Education: 7/8th grade students and teachers starting a Board of Positives, posted in the 7/8th grade hallway. This gives students an opportunity to recognize acts of good character in one another. 8th grade students- received a grant from an anonymous donor for doing an act of kindness and reporting on it. Students will continue to pass on acts of kindness during their Washington DC trip, and report back on them upon return to school.

#### **Department of Fine Arts:**

- You're A Good Man Charlie Brown was performed on Feb 7th and 8th at Horace Mann Auditorium. The Cast, Crew, and Orchestra did Fantastic job! A huge thank you to the parents and alumni who helped with every aspect of the musical, from layout and printing of the program, organizing and printing of headshots, organizing, making, and helping with sets, props, costumes and makeup, to monitoring backstage, selling tickets, and running the concession stands. Great job Mr. Benjamin, Mrs. Wolfe, Mr. Heater, Mrs. Monty and Mindy!
- March is designated as "Music in Our School Month"
- 2 students auditioned and accepted for MMEA Central District Orchestra on Feb 1

#### **Technology:**

- Edwin T&L prep, review state curriculum materials
- SIF/state reporting updates, ready to move forward with cloud based data backup with rediker
- Enrollment application, spreadsheet, lottery, and letters for informing families of their status n the lottery.
- SNAP- Health Office Management Software. A comprehensive medical documentation and tracking software that manages every aspect of student health related data.
- PARCC- Student data files submitted prior to deadline; teachers trained on student side of online

portal. Students trained on student side of On-line portal. Luke Callahan attended training in Northampton on Tuesday, February 25th and Heather Zolnowski attended training on Thursday, February 27th in Danvers on PARCC administration.

**BFCCPS Technology Curriculum DRAFT** (attached document)  
Implementation for school year 2014 - 2015

**BFCCPS Enrollment Video**

Posted on school website and presented at enrollment day/evenings in February. Thank you to Luke Callahan, Joanne Basile and Ted Basile.

**Enrollment Applications**

512 applications received 14'- 15', which is a 35% increase over last year. Thanks to the great efforts by the school community to market the school throughout the region. 14'- 15' lottery is Monday, March 3rd.

**School Calendar**

- Currently the school has used 4 snow days, leaving 1 more of the approved snow days. Need to be aware that a contingency plan if we surpass the 5 reserved days. The Board would like feedback from the Faculty as to their recommendation. Three choices: Go through June 30th, ½ days on Saturdays, or take away April Vacation days.
- 14' - 15' Calendar

**Motion:** *Joe Mullen made a motion to approve 14'- 15' School Calendar and Lax Iyer seconded it*

**Comments:** *Ted Basile abstains due to remote participation.*

**Result:** *Motion passes unanimously*

**HOS Profession Development Goal**

**Motion:** *Don Tappin made motion to amend professional development conference to relevant leadership event and John Mullen seconded it*

**Comments:** *Ted Basile abstains due to remote participation.*

**Result:** *Motion passes unanimously*

**Action Register** (8:40 pm)

Don Tappin read through action items. Jerry Cimmino recommended postponing the discussion of new Board member's required skillset from March to April, until the decision is received on the Charter amendments.

**Annual Appeal Update** (8:45 pm)

Don presented donations thus far equal \$6700, down significantly from previous years.

**Strategic Plan Update** (8:50 pm)

Update postponed until notification on Charter amendments.

### **Faculty Representative Update (8:51 pm)**

- World Cultures: The Research Team has finalized their research materials and has presented a document to FIT for dissemination to school community. The team has purchased books and DVDs through a PCO grant which are currently available in the school library. The research team has also solicited the support of student council which will make announcements about cultural events and celebrations in the morning.
- Alternative Compensation: This team is finalizing their research to be presented at the March BOT meeting.
- Professional Development: the research team had the opportunity to meet during the ½ PDD, and concluded goals. The goal of this research team will be to gather professional development hours offered at the school and create Professional Development Certificates for staff going back no more than 5 years. Kathy is working with Luke C to create a Google Doc survey which can then be mail merged to certificates. This is a huge undertaking and is slated to be done by the end of the year. The other recommendation of this team is that a stipend position be created to maintain the professional development certificates each year.
- Staff Culture: This research team has yet to meet, but will be headed by Heather Z. and Kathy U.

### **Committee Update (8:55 pm)**

Finance: Audit firm RFP issued for the coming three year period, due back in March.

Mission: Meeting cancelled due to weather. Next meeting scheduled for March.

Governance: 1st meeting January 14, 2014 and discussed policies to be reviewed.  
Next meeting in March.

Human Resource: No update, John Williams absent.

Facilities: Revised Feasibility Study requested by the Charter Association for our Amendments will be sent Friday, February 28th.

### **Other Business (9:05pm)**

An Employee Grievance was filed in January. The President convened a committee with one other Trustee and the Faculty Rep, in accordance with Employee Grievance Policy #0028. Outside Counsel was consulted and the formal Grievance process took 2-3 week. The Grievance Committee's determination: "The employee is working internally with resources to get her grievance resolved because the grievance did not impact the employee's ability to perform their duties."

- Issue 1: After being contacted by the employee, that Trustee followed up with the employee requesting additional documentation and a meeting. This contact came after the Board President, also contacted by the employee, informed the Trustee that he would handle the grievance.

After reviewing email documentation provided by the Board President, the Grievance Committee found "this behavior an absolute blatant overstepping of their role as a Trustee and an intentional undermining of the Administration's authority".

A discussion was initiated, however a Trustee suggested a further discussion not take place considering the Trustee was not present to share their version of the event.

- Issue 2: A Trustee directly contacted all Trustees after attending the Grievance Meeting and shared two concerns regarding their observations at the meeting.

The concerns: 1) The Board President has the option to assign a designee for an employee grievance, therefore the Trustee posed the question for discussion at the next Board Meeting on the unprecedented circumstances that the Board President has immediate family employed by the school. 2) The opening remarks stated the grievance was against the HOS, so the Trustee questioned compliance with Policy #0028 when the Asst. HOS remained for the closed grievance hearing.

The determination of the Grievance Committee was shared. The Grievance Committee found the Trustee was out of line contacting their Board Colleague's directly regarding their observations at the Grievance Committee. The Committee found the Trustee should have only contacted a member(s) of the Committee.

The Trustee had the opportunity to share their version of the event. The Trustee explained they attended the meeting originally expecting a family grievance. Once the meeting went into Executive Session, the Trustee referenced policy #0028 because they observed the meeting had 5 of 6 participants/immediate family employed by the school. The Trustee confirmed the Board President has the authority to assign a designee on their behalf and the policy doesn't mention the participation of the Asst HOS.

The Trustee expressed their surprise at the disruption this email communication caused 6 Trustee's (It was reported that number of Trustee's complained about the email communication within 30 mins of receiving the email) because the only contact the Trustee received was an email a week later from a Grievance Committee Member.

The HOS informed the Trustee a non-employee grievance does not offer a meeting. The Trustee acknowledged they were not aware of the difference between the two grievance policies.

A member of the Grievance Committee expressed concern that communication within the Board has been horrible the last few months, and encouraged phone calls, rather than email communication to eliminate wasting other Trustee's time and energy.

Members of the Grievance Committee expressed that all Trustees who verbally complained felt the tone of the email was inappropriate. In addition to members of the Grievance Committee, two Trustees stated they received the email with a poor tone and another shared they received the email with an "alert" tone.

The Trustee expressed, in their opinion, tone in an email reflects the readers state of mind and does not equate the author's state mind. However, acknowledged that the email was sent with an alertness tone.

The Trustee agreed to disagree on defining perception of tone in an email.

The Trustee offered an apology to each Trustee in attendance for causing disruption and wasting their time by raising the two concerns observe.

**Adjournment (9:55 pm)**

**Motion:** *Jerry Cimmino made a motion to adjourn and Joe Mullen seconded it*

**Comments:** *Ted Basile abstains due to remote participation.*

**Result:** *Motion passes unanimously*