



Meeting of the Board of Directors

Minutes – November 3, 2009

Present: Frank Mitchell, Wendy Battles, Kim Futrell, John Jessen, Arthur Latimer, Mike Doolittle, Ben Gardner, Joel Tolman, Liz Cox

Welcome: Chair mentioned several scheduled events and opened a brief discussion of the citywide climate on charters—referencing the NYTimes and other national coverage of the NHPS teacher’s contract. How should we proceed as the city welcomes charter providers and prepares to cede some schools. If we are not a political charter or an entrepreneurial charter then what?

There was brief update on the Yale SOM Board Fellow process—2 fellows identified and met should be joining meeting in new year. There was a brief reminder of the pending state board of education visit to Common Ground for the charter renewal as well as the forms, details, and paperwork updates that might still be needed. There could be a call regarding some detail in the next week.

Board Representative update: Angela Watley and Jen Burke agreed to serve as the parent representative and the teacher representative to the board. John Jessen moved a motion to accept and Ben was the second. The board voted to approve Angela Watley and Jen Burke.

Minutes: Members reviewed the minutes and Ben made a motion to accept. Arthur’s was the second voice, and the board approved the October minutes.

School Profile: Liz distributed the profile for district and the school as required by the state. Members read thru noting spending information i.e. the per pupil in the district, our lower budget. Also noted that we are not that far behind on staff line regarding turnover and education. Changes to highlight on the profile included AYP on the CAPT and NCLB proficiency. This year we might focus on or consider the state goal and even moving beyond it, an increase in money we can spend per pupil, physical fitness for the students, higher level skills in courses, benchmark assessment aligned with CAPT 10th grade ideally move toward 2 tiers for higher levels, more SAT concepts into process, issues of obesity, move from band 3 to 4 but physical activity is a curriculum need. The profile is an interesting guide and we may return to it regularly.

Administrative: Mike presented the auditor’s report, which was positive. There were two questions: a check that could have required double signature and bookkeeping methods that would make it easier to produce evidence of accrual accounting. Betsy was able to produce those details and their concern over the issue is now a management letter recommendation. They offered some ways to handle large continuing expenses like the insurance payment. Moving to nonprofit Quickbooks for software was another suggestion (would require rebuilding several years of records) and the auditor is willing to make a separate report at a meeting. In a similar professional services category, it might be time to engage a new lawyer/law firm.

Program: Community programs have high enrollments based on good scholarship/funding support so there is great diversity, especially for afterschool, creating some programmatic challenges around levels of preparation/student readiness. School field trips are booked through the end of the year and the end of

open farm day season is coming. Rebecca had a nite hike that evening. The Calhoun visit generated ways to engage for meaningful partnership and some fee for service work: a grade visits for weekend experience with environmental ed activities as fee for service, exchange work between campus clubs that are site based who engage via email, teacher visits for professional development around farm and forest.

School: The School report is due Friday and site visit is 10 days later. Rob Kelley emailed out the agenda and the list of visitors. There is a Swine H1N1 alert, 1 confirmed case, and there is some technology training planned i.e. web 2.0, wiki...

Budget: Members reviewed budget snapshot and there was some discussion of the school/program private contributions category.

Individual giving: Joel distributed a chapter from Asking in preparation for Thursday's training session. Members reviewed contact lists.