

Minutes for 11/22/10 Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

1. Call to Order: Lori Rudd called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM. Members in Attendance: Bill Buckley, Kathleen Crawford, Steve DiPrete, Reem Ozone, and Lori Rudd. Also in Attendance: Heidi Berkowitz, Ron Griffin, Dawn Hall, and Mark Logan.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - 2.1. October 18, 2010: Tabled until next meeting
 - 2.2. November 10, 2010: Tabled until next meeting
3. Special Reports
 - 3.1. Enrollment: Kathleen Crawford reviewed a chart showing current enrollment of 1182 by grade level. There are no vacant positions in Grades K through 6. Offers are out for one opening in Grade 7 and two vacancies in Grade 8; responses are due back by December 6, 2010. If the spots are not accepted, they will be offered to the next families on the wait list. The Enrollment Committee met on November 18, 2011. The committee plans to focus on analyzing enrollment, withdrawal, and waitlist trends by grade level and sending district.
 - 3.2. Finance: Kathleen Crawford summarized the market conditions that led to the decision to eliminate the taxable bonds and offer \$26.6 million in tax-exempt bonds. Despite rising interest rates and several volatile days in the market, the bonds were sold. At our request, Eastern Bank terminated our line of credit today. Closing documents for our existing mortgages will be signed on November 26, 2010. The Bond pre-close will take place the morning of November 29, 2010; the transaction close on November 30, 2010. Kathleen expressed deep appreciation for the solid financial foundation laid by Steve Steiner and Todd Hassett's work over the last several years to make this effort possible. She also praised the extraordinary teamwork of Todd and Mark Logan for many months that led to a positive outcome.
 - 3.3. Leadership Report
 - 3.3.1. Groundbreaking Ceremony: Mark Logan reviewed the plans for the Expansion Project groundbreaking on December 1, 2010. It will be a festive occasion, with many invited guests, parents, staff, and students participating. Mark highlighted several items from the summary in the board packet. Heidi Berkowitz discussed the media plan.

The meeting paused for dinner at 6:05 PM and resumed at 6:35 PM.

- 3.3.2. FRCS Professional Educator Standards: Mark Logan provided an overview of draft #8 and a brief update on the work of the committee, which is comprised of a diverse cross-section of FRCS teachers and administrators. Ron Griffin, Director of Teaching and Learning, stated the document captures the tangible and intangible qualities of excellent educators. He talked about the statewide initiative to develop teacher standards and expressed his opinion that FRCS is at

least a year ahead of the Commonwealth's effort. There will need to be a way to add metrics for the intangible attributes of good teaching.

- 3.3.3. FRCS Personnel Committee: The discussion shifted into how the standards will be used to support teacher hiring, evaluation, and compensation. The vision is for the formal evaluation process to expand with ILs and others conducting pre-evaluation-evaluation-post-evaluation cycles, augmented with informal "pop-in" classroom visits that could lead to more real-time coaching opportunities. Bill Buckley recalled that at the last board meeting we discussed student data and how it can be directly linked to specific teacher(s). He expressed a desire that such data also be linked to merit pay or some extra compensation for teachers who get the best results. Lori Rudd talked about the inaugural meeting of the "new" Personnel Committee, which took place on November 16, 2010. The general air of collaboration between teachers and staff struck her. Topics of discussion included differentiation of pay for science and math and upper-level grades, as well as focusing on total compensation packages, not just salary. Dawn Hall shared that this effort feels both broader and more aligned with teacher excellence and student learning than any other Personnel effort over the past five years.

4. Old Business

- 4.1. Facility Expansion: Bill Buckley and Mark Logan talked about the change in meeting schedule, now that the expansion is shifting into gear. Weekly meetings will take place on Thursdays at 10 AM in the construction trailer. The full committee will meet monthly to discuss big issues, including anything that requires a vote. Meeting minutes will be posted in the trailer.
- 4.2. Board Development: Lori and Kathleen reported on a board development session they attended at the Charter School Leadership Summit in Worcester on November 17th. They both came away with a broader view of what to look for in prospective board members. One piece of advice the presenter gave was to recruit people for committee roles first with an eye to growing prospective board members from that pool. The board discussed this idea a bit. There was general agreement that a seven-member board has worked well in the past; it should be our goal to grow back to that size. While not an emergency, there is a need to move forward since some attrition will likely occur in the next couple of years. One parent has applied; Kathleen will approach him for possible service on the Finance Committee. Other thought included looking to large local employers or community organizations. It was decided that Bill would facilitate contact to the ED of the YMCA for Lori and Mark to see if there might have any insights into other candidate pools.
- 4.3. Board Self-Evaluation: Lori included a summary of areas of expertise and professional skills that the current board members possess. More discussion will take place at a future meeting.

5. New Business

- 5.1. Board Officer Elections: tabled until December 2010.
- 5.2. By-Laws: Reem and Lori are revising the by-laws. Some input and review may be needed from others on a case-by-case basis. Once revised, the by-laws will need approval from DESE.

- 5.3. Board Committees: After hearing so much about teacher standards and student achievement, there was great board interest the possibility of an Academic Excellence Committee. Questions to consider: Do the ILs have a shared definition of academic excellence? How is the concept communicated to teachers, students, and parents? How is FRCS meeting the needs of gifted or high-achieving students, keeping them challenged and engaged? (Kathleen recalled that last question came up at the annual meeting a year ago.)
- 5.4. Flexible Spending Plan Resolution: Due to changes brought about by the Health Care Reform Act, material modifications need to be made to the FRCS Flexible Spending and Dependent Care Benefit Plan. Board members read through the language of the resolution and summary of material modifications.
VOTE: Bill Buckley made a motion to adopt the resolution. Steve DiPrete seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. All trustees signed and dated the resolution.
- 5.5. Executive Director's Contract: Lori Rudd and Reem Ozone will review Mark Logan's contract between now and the December meeting.
6. Items for Next Board Meeting: Second reading of adult anti-bullying policy, expansion project update.
7. Having no other business, Kathleen Crawford made a motion at 9:58 PM to adjourn. Reem Ozone seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.