

Neighborhood Charter School
Board of Directors
Meeting minutes April 16, 2008

Board Members present: current board members: Cheryll Booth, Amy Jeffries, Kelly McNally, Keith Rouse, Terry Roth, Margaret Jones, Curtis McHardy, Tammie Mitchell, Teresa Lee, Kole Camp, Anita Downing, Steve Rothman and William Teasley

Guests: Peter Ernst, Maya Jenkins, Veleta Greer, Elizabeth Swern, Carol Keller, Kelly Dennis, Lisa Roberson, Heidi Lance, Christine Mann, and Allison Corbally

Meeting was called to order at 6:40 by Cindy Cahalan.

Terry moved to approve meeting minutes from March 12. Teresa seconded. All voted to approve the minutes.

Cheryll made a motion to approve the agenda. Kelly seconded motion. All voted to approve the meeting agenda.

No Public Comment.

No New Business:

Special reports:

Curtis McHardy updated the Board on the Retention Task Force. He has run into some difficulty finding the contact information for families that have left. Teresa suggested that the teachers may still have contact information for old families. Curtis talked about the possibility of interviewing families that are thinking about leaving with a different questionnaire and also meeting with parents whose children are not coming back next year.

The Board was given the update on Registration. There were 12 applicants during Phase II registration. The wait list numbers are as follows: Kindergarten 18, First 5, Second 7, Third 1, Fourth 2, Fifth 0. Anita suggested sending out a letter of intent next year after Phase I registration.

There was no update on Charter Inc. because the meeting was rescheduled.

Christine Mann presented a Building and Grounds update. She showed the updated site plan to Board members and is waiting to hear back from teachers and parents before the plan is finalized. She requested \$50,000 at the Budget meeting on April 1, 2008 for next year so that she could start implementing the plan. Steve asked for the top priorities. Two were given: drainage issues by the kindergarten classes and playground safety issues.

Unfinished Business:

William mentioned that he and other board members are calling other schools to inquire about their management structure. He is also contacting two foundations regarding charter school management.

Action Items:

Tammie presented the idea of creating a Development of Fundraising position on the Board. This person would be accountable to the Board and would work with the Board and the Principal to develop a fundraising plan. Below is a brief description of the position:

Development/Fund Raising – Work with the Board and Principal to develop and implement annual fund raising plans/goals. Recruit and manage Event Chairs for annual fund raising events (Fall Fling, Low Country Boil, Golf Tournament). Recruit and manage grant writing team. Keep on-going records of development activities and report regularly to the Board.

William motioned to change the Bylaws to make Development of Fundraising a board committee. Amy seconded. All approved.

Amy, Tammie, and Terry Roth volunteered to be a task force to create the verbiage for the bylaws. They will come back to the Board before the next PTCA meeting to get approval. It will then be voted on by the PTCA.

Margaret updated the Board on Bylaws review. A task force read over NCS' Bylaws, the Board Operating Procedures and the Georgia Open Records (Sunshine Laws). The task force came up with some recommended changes and then sent those to Mike Nations for his review. He stated that our Bylaws are in compliance with the Sunshine Laws and therefore no changes were needed. He approved of the suggested changes to the Board Operating Procedures. The changes are in red below:

Executive Session may be entered by the board to discuss personnel, real estate related issues, or attorney / client legal issues only. The board must vote to enter and to leave executive session.

Discussions may be held during executive session, but no votes may be taken. Staff members of the board may be excused from the discussions during executive session if conflict is possible due to personnel discussions, however they should return after executive session to participate in the vote on all issues. All votes on issues discussed during executive session must be made through the normal public voting process of the board. The chair must sign an affidavit after leaving executive session affirming the discussions were limited to personnel, real estate transaction discussions, and/or attorney / client legal issues only. This affidavit is to be filed with the board minutes.

This paragraph will be added to the Communication section of the Board Operating Procedures:

Called Meeting – A meeting can be called between scheduled Board meetings with notice, of date, time, and agenda, at least 24 hours in advance. Notice will be given via email blast or courier. An emergency meeting can be called to address the following issues – real estate, personnel, and/or attorney / client legal matters. Emergency meetings may be called without 24 hours notice due to the closed nature of these meetings and are governed by the Emergency Bylaws.

William made a motion to adopt the changes as presented above. Terry seconded. All approved.

Interim Principal/Executive Director's Report

Margaret Jones presented report.

Kathy Andrews is still working diligently on the modular classroom issues. The erosion control department needs to inspect and then someone from the city needs to inspect to obtain our Certificate of Occupancy.

We are in negotiations with Gay Construction to repair all skylights on the 3rd floor. They are leaking and damage has been done to classrooms on both the 3rd and 2nd floors.

We will enter into another contract with Michael Thelwell of the Roaming Chef for food services for next year. Details of the contract will be presented to the Board at a future meeting for approval.

The following staffing increases were recommended for next year: 1). Another full time Special Education teacher to meet the growing needs of the department, 2). An Americorps volunteer to help with coverage of the front desk and related arts, and 3). The Art Teacher position to be increased to 100% to include Yearbook Staff coordination and additional art exploration classes during the recess/lunch hour.

Margaret has realized that NCS does not have a procedure for Due Process after handling a disciplinary issues last month. She has suggested that such a policy be put into place and will review the APS policy and then meet with Lesa Hope and Cindy Cahalen to create a bring a proposed procedure to the May board meeting.

Through Carla Smith's office, NCS fifth graders have been invited to participate in a water conservation program entitled "My Neighbor the Operator". The entire NCS student body has been invited to participate in an art contest to support this water curriculum.

CRCT testing begins on April 22nd and ends on April 28th. Results will be available in early June.

Teacher evaluation conferences will be held beginning May 1st. Teachers are currently completing their self-studies and self-evaluations.

Teachers have been examining the Georgia Performance Standards and revising the curriculum maps to reflect the new standards. The maps with details will be completed during the summer, ready for the 2008 – 2009 school year. Teachers have also been working on revising the writing curriculum and assessments to reflect the new Georgia Writing Assessment expectations. A small group of teachers is making a proposal to our Individualized Professional Development team for a stipend to complete this important work over the summer.

Steve motioned to approve the staffing recommendations as laid out by the Principal / Executive Director. Keith seconded. 11 approved. 1 abstained.

Tammie presented an Annual Campaign update. We are currently \$52,000 short of our \$125,000 goal for the school year. She would like to reach out to parents who are getting tax money back to see if they will make a donation to the school by mailing a follow-up letter to the direct mail piece that went out in March. She also reminded the Board of their commitment to raise 10% of the \$125,000. Amy and Cheryll volunteered to help Tammie mail out the follow-up letter.

Personnel Committee

Tammie presented an update on the committee. 3 candidates will be at the school April 18th – 19th for interviews with staff, parents, board members, and search committee members.

Finance Committee

Keith Rouse presented an updated budget and also presented a preliminary budget for next school year. It was mentioned that there was no money allocated for a Board Retreat for next year's board to attend at the beginning of the year. Keith will present a finalized budget for next school year at the May board meeting.

Parent and Family Involvement

Dena gave an update. Teacher Appreciation Week is May 5th – 9th. A notice was sent out in the courier with some of the details.

PTCA

Anita returned the traveling trunk to the Atlanta History Center. Ritmo Blue, an art performance group, is performing for the NCS student body in a couple of weeks.

New Business

Board Nominations: the Nominating Committee met on April 14th. Four parents were selected for the slate. Tammie is still in the process of contacting the four people and will let the Board know the slate after all four have been contacted.

Announcements were read.

Terry motioned to adjourn meeting. Kelly seconded motion. All voted approval. Cindy Cahalen adjourned the meeting at 9:13.