

**Park City Prep
Board Meeting
Bridgeport, CT
September 18, 2008
6pm**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Cheri Amado, John Bryk, Nate Kantor, Tiffany Johnson, Ron Muhammad, Bruce Ravage, Kristin Telles

Excused: Vince Galasso; **Absent:** Warren Blunt; **Guests:** Linda Simmons

Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm by Board Chair John Bryk. Board members and teachers present introduced themselves. School Director Bruce Ravage explained the policy of letting guests speak at the beginning of the board meeting to those in attendance. It was noted that 5 of 8 board members present constitutes a quorum.

Public Speakers

There were no public speakers at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes from June 12, 2008

The board minutes were reviewed. Spelling corrections were noted and it was moved and properly seconded to approve the minutes with necessary corrections. Motion passed.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

New Board Members

New parent representative Ron Muhammad introduced himself to the board and shared his numerous board experiences in the area. It was noted that the teacher representatives will be able to share a vote on the board.

New Staff

Bruce Ravage discussed turnover and changes made to improve instruction over the last year. It was noted that there are 6 new staff members for this year. The director assured the board that the school would continue to recruit from other school districts as needed. It was noted that the school has 2 new English teachers, 1 new Math & 1 new Science teacher, as well as a new Computer Technology teacher.

Mayor Finch Visit

Bruce Ravage announced that Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch will visit the school and teach an 8th grade Civics class on October 7th. It was noted that press coverage will be arranged.

New Classroom & Computer Lab

School Director Bruce Ravage reported that the school has a new 1st floor classroom and a new, second computer lab.

High School Process

The Director discussed high school dropout rates and the achievement gap in the Bridgeport area, as well as the need for PCP students to have viable high school options. It was noted that 75% of PCP graduates are attending private or public "choice" high schools and it is hoped that the number will grow to 85-90% this year.

Annual Report 2007-2008

The board will review and discuss the report at the next Board meeting.

Search for New Site/ Charter Schools Property Solutions

It was reported that the school has engaged CSPS (Charter Schools Property Solutions) to assist the school with finding a new site. CSPS will find the site and buy the property with lease options to buy. The Elias Howe school building is being looked at as a possible site and other options are being considered, as well. It was noted that the school needs a suitable outdoor area, a school auditorium and a gym.

Review of School Fundamentals (RSF): Corrective Action Response

The Director distributed and discussed the Corrective Action Plan that was submitted to the CT State Department of Education. He stressed the importance of the fiscal responsibilities of the board. It was noted that due to specific items identified in the report, new processes are in place to address these items.

2008 CMT Results & AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress)

Director Bruce Ravage discussed NCLB and reviewed with the board the results of the CMT scores in reading, math and writing for the school. It was noted by the director that our school did not meet the Adequate Yearly Progress and PCP has been designated as "In Need of Improvement." It was noted that certain interventions are required and that 10% of Title I funds must be spent on professional development. It was noted that our students should do better and should be measured on other things in addition to the CMT's and that a meeting focusing on the CMT's should take place.

Staff Handbook: Policies & Procedures

The draft of the staff handbook including the policy on absences will require board review before being approved as the final policy. It was noted that a draft of the parent handbook needs review also. It was noted that many of the policies in the staff handbook are mandated by the State of Connecticut and that some are in-house policies. It was noted that a policy committee is needed.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Linda Simmons gave a financial update and a formal report was not available. It was noted that the State will pay the school based on the student count as of October 1st and it was noted that the school has 220 students at this time. Linda reported that \$13,000 of supplemental funding, which we received last year, would not be available to us this year. This amount had not been included in the budget. Linda Simmons also reported that the 2nd quarter check was received in July 15th. It was noted that school funds would be placed into multiple banks to reduce risk. It was further noted that expenses are consistent thus far and that there are no large identified needs for the school that are known at this time. It was anticipated that grant funding from the State and Title I entitlements may be available and that certain known expenses will go up but revenue may not increase and the board would need to consider this. It was noted that school is now in the 3rd and final year of the startup grant for the school, this year amounting to \$173,000.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Membership & Terms of Office

It was noted by Board member Nate Kantor that the 1-2 year terms of office have been satisfied by most board members and that most positions are technically open at this time. Board Emeritus positions for the board were discussed for supportive board members that may not be able to continue to serve at this time and that 2-4 new positions for the board should be considered. It was noted by Bruce Ravage that the Bridgeport Rotary and Valerie Koch have been very supportive of the school and representatives from that group would be invited to next board meeting.

Calendar of Meetings

The board discussed the frequency of meetings and Bruce Ravage noted that the State Department of Education recommends having strategic meetings with work being done at the committee level.

Finance Committee

Nate Kantor, John Bryk, Bruce Ravage and Ron Muhammad agreed to serve on a new finance committee. It was noted that Linda Simmons is here on Thursdays.

Other Committees

It was noted that, in addition to finance and grant writing committees, a policies committee and a site committee should be established. It was further noted that parents are ready to be involved more with the school and that the Parent's Association should re-convene, as well.

Accounting Manual & Financial Controls

It was noted that an accounting manual exists and that financial controls are in place and that a formal finance committee will ensure proper financial controls.

Board Retreat

The board discussed having a board retreat offsite, and possibly overnight, to establish school priorities and future goals. It was noted that a governance consultant may be needed to facilitate the retreat and to assist in narrowing the focus of the activity. A future date will be discussed.

Director's Job Description & Evaluation Process

There was discussion that the board should establish a formalized protocol for evaluation. Teacher Tiffany Johnson offered to bring back data from a university professor that has information related to this type of evaluation.

NEW BUSINESS

Health Insurance Premiums: Discrepancies

Bruce Ravage passed out information regarding the medical plan change for the school and reported that the school saved around \$17,785. It was noted that the plan went from an age- banded premium to a composite premium structure resulting in some teachers paying disproportionately more than they were in the previous plan. The issue can be readdressed for the future, but for the short term, it was suggested that the finance committee use surplus funds to compensate staff until the issue is resolved.

Absence Policy

Director Bruce Ravage discussed the current school absence policy for teachers and staff, which is similar to other school systems in the area, and the need to have a written policy for our school, as well.

Board Visit to School

It was noted that board members should visit the school when possible to observe the students and school progress also. The Director suggested that the Board be invited to a special day of visits to classrooms.

It was moved & properly seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Cheri Amado
Board Secretary**