



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Mezzanine Conference Room
Wednesday, June 30, 2009

Attendance: Keeana Saxon, Dr. Roger F. Harris, Lennitt Bligen, Carolyn Corbe, Karen Jeong, Nia Jacobs, Dr. Glover W. Martin III, W. Karl McLaurin, Daniel Mulhern, Harold Raymond, Edna Rivera-Carrasco

Also present were various members of the Leadership Team.

- I. Call To Order** – The meeting was called to order by Keeana Saxon.
- II. Approval of April 8, 2009 Board Minutes:** The Board voted to approve the minutes.
- III. Meeting Dates for 2009 – 2010 School-Year:** The scheduled dates were approved with one change. The September meeting will be changed to September 16, 2009
- IV. Public Comment** – There were no guests present for public comment.
- V. Committee Reports**

Building Committee – Mr. H. Raymond

Mr. Raymond presented the building committee update by sharing photos of the demolition of the new site. Several photos of different areas of the building were presented and explained. The first picture of the mill building is where most of the classrooms will be located. The upper floor, phase 2, is available space that could be developed upon submitting new plans etc. Mr. Raymond guided the committee through the photo tour providing details of the phase of the work.

Finance Committee – Mr. L. Bligen

Mr. Bligen reported that several meetings were held during the week.

The books closed today, June 30, 2009. The auditors have begun their work and the books will be finalized by the end of August. A letter was drafted to the DESE with a plan to address the issues and findings from the previous audit.

Mr. Bligen reviewed the 2009 -2010 budget projections and reported a projected surplus for this year. The year-to-date actuals as of June 16 show a surplus due to entitlements on grants and a reduction in some expenses. Referencing the 2010 budget, Mr. Bligen explained that the numbers are based on the enrollment reduction to 880. The Leadership department heads were asked to reduce their budgets by ten percent. The expenses and revenues match (balance). Dr. Harris reported the need to reduce the budget again next school year, indicating it presents a student/teacher ratio issue....fewer students, fewer teachers. Mr. Cherry reflected on the process to meet the reduction. Losing 1.1M in revenue, the finance committee looked at ways to reduce the budget, consultants, staffing, etc. Securing Federal stimulus money enabled restoration of staff on each level. The Superintendent's priorities were

identified, and we were able to maintain the existing academic models; 2 teachers in each classroom, literacy coaches, reading intervention tutors and specialists. Six K1, K2 classes and salary increases that board agreed upon to maintain teachers were maintained.

**Mr. Bligen motioned to approve the FY 2010 budget:
All voted in favor.**

Dr. Harris requested a supplemental budget for this year and next year with expense items to initiate new learning programs. A portion of the budget surplus for this year would be used to create a bonus pool for staff employees who have gone above and beyond their expected roles and responsibilities and to increase the discretionary account from nine to eleven thousand. A thorough discussion ensued in regard to the bonus pool. One or two board members expressed reservations about giving out bonuses in light of the relocation and possible needs for funds down the line and in light of DESE's concerns for the audit's repeat finding. The finance committee was asked to confirm whether it was totally comfortable with the bonus pool and each member present expressed that it indeed was.

A separate fund was also requested to fund a foreign language teacher and mentorship program using this year's surplus to fund three hundred and twenty one thousand for this year and next.

Mr. Bligen motioned to approve the FY09 surplus to be used to fund a bonus pool of seventy five thousand – one hundred thousand dollars and an additional eleven thousand for the discretionary account:

FY 09 surplus to be used to fund a bonus pool of \$75K – \$100K and additional \$11K for the discretionary account.

Mr. Martin seconded the motion. Marjority voted in favor, Mr. Mc Laurin and Ms. Jacobs abstained from voting.

Mr. Bligen motioned to approve programs for next school year; to fund the net asset balance of two hundred thirty five thousand dollars, contingent upon confirmation that additional funding of a designated net asset balance to cover future operating costs of \$235K, contingent upon confirmation that these additional expenses will not result in the violation of debt service coverage ratios constraints outlined in the bond covenants.

Mr. Raymond seconded the motion. All voted in favor

Executive Committee – No report

Governance and Nomination Committee Dr. R. Harris

In September 2009, Ms. Sinclair will be stepping down as chair, but will remain as a member of the Board until her term ends in November 2010. Time will be set aside at the September meeting to recognize Ms. Sinclair for her hard work and dedication.

Succession planning for the position of chair and two vice-chairs was discussed. A conference call with Ms. Sinclair was initiated to discuss the process. Ms. Sinclair suggested the Board move forward with the process of voting in the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Motion for current Vice Chair Keeana Saxon to serve as Board Chair was made by Dr. Harris and seconded by Dr. Martin. **All voted in favor.**

Motion to approve Dr. Glover W. Martin III as Vice-Chair was made by Mr. Bligen and seconded by

Ms. Corbe. **All voted in favor**

Motion to approve select Karl McLaurin as Co-Vice-Chair was made by Dr. Martin and seconded by Mr. Mulhern. **All voted in favor.**

Parent Advisory Board Update – Mrs. E. Carrasco / Dr. T. Martin Ms. Carrasco reported that the Executive Parent Advisory Board participated in a retreat at Franklin Park Zoo and reflected on their involvement in the school, and how they could play a more productive role in school activities, fundraising and in improving communications.

The Executive Parent Board met with the Primary School principal, to discuss communications between home and school and to identify the challenges teachers face and how the Parent Board may support them.

Dr. Martin provided an update on their recent fundraiser and their work on budget planning. He expressed the Board's intention to change their by-laws to allow for elections in March to enable the Board to be ready in September for the new school year. A treasurer was added to the Executive Parent Advisory Board.

Academic/Curriculum and Instruction Committee – Mrs. C. Corbe

Ms. Corbe and Ms. Jacobs met with Lori Likis and Mark Johnson to review the Root Cause Analysis, data and internal assessments to enable them to identify and document interventions that worked and to use it as a data point moving forward. CPI targets were met and a summary was provided.

MCAS scores for Math will be out in the summer.

Anticipating a reduction of tuition revenue from decreased enrollment, the Academic Curriculum and Instruction committee requested to be part of the process if the loss of revenue would cause programs to be cut.

Dr. Harris applauded the third-grade scores, outperforming the State again. Ms. Jacobs complemented the third graders who visited the Old South Meeting House as she received favorable compliments about the students who visited.

Dr. Harris attended the National Alliance of Black School Educators and the National Charter School conferences this past year and suggested that the school present and share its model at future events.

Human Resource Committee – Ms. K. Saxon

Superintendent's evaluation was conducted on survey monkey and closed at midnight on June 4, 2009.

Ms. Corbe shared a problem she encountered with the on-line site.

The Superintendent consistently scored between 1 and 1.85, "highest scores".

The next step is to analyze the evaluation and identify the goals moving forward. The goals will be voted on in September.

Ms. Saxon expressed the disappointment of the committee about the low number of participants. The committee has discussed ideas regarding how to increase participation next year.

Development Committee is in the planning process and brainstormed many ideas. Further discussions will take place over the summer.

VI. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Harris

Dr. Harris thanked the board for its support throughout the year, provided an update on the closing out of the school-year and professional development plans for August. The school will host a summer

school for kids and will pilot a day camp for kinder and primary school children with expectations to expand the programs in years to come.

Charter Renewal and Accountability: Dr. Harris and Mr. Pope presented the Charter Renewal application to the Board. The document is strong and makes an excellent case. Incorporating any edits from the Board, a vote is needed on both the Charter Renewal application and the Accountability Plan in order to meet the August 1st deadline.

Motion to approve the Charter Renewal application and the Accountability Plan with edits from the Board incorporated was made by Mr. McLaurin and seconded by Dr. Martin. **All voted in favor.**

Dr. Harris provided an update on the campaign. He has attended several events and meetings have taken place and are being scheduled with potential contributors or supporters. Suffolk Construction agreed to provide graphic designing and printing for the life of the campaign.

Due to mixed advice from our present legal counsel, interviews are being scheduled with several Boston law firms.

VII. Open Forum

Ms. Saxon applauded a former student who shared her experiences in a presentation at the groundbreaking and also paid tribute to Ms. Lee-Jones. After touring all day with students, the Voices of Renaissance performed an evening concert at the school on June 18th.

VIII. Motion to adjourn. at 7:30 pm.