

New City School, Inc.
Board Meeting August 11, 2015
New City School

Present: Linda Crawford, Gary Crawford, Vince Esades, Marcy Myers, Melissa Johnson, Barbara Glaser

Also Present: Jitendrapal Kundan, Director, New City School and ex-officio member of Board; Todd Bartholomay, Principal, New City School, Blair Jedinak, Teacher, New City School.

The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m. with a quorum of 4. Vince Esades and Barbara Glaser arrived at 5:15.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the June 3rd special meeting convened for the hiring of Cushman Wakefield were unanimously approved as written. (Vince Esades moved approval; Marcy Myers seconded.)

Agenda

The agenda of this meeting: Budget, Board Training, Director Evaluation, State of the School – Board Report, State of the School - Director’s Report, Gifts/Donations/Fundraising, Partnerships, and Board Meeting Calendar for SY 15-16. The agenda was unanimously approved. (Vince Esades moved approval; Melissa Johnson seconded.)

FINANCIALS

Balance sheet, and Preliminary 14-15 Financial Statement, and Budget for SY 15-16 have already been reviewed and approved.

Check register 4/21/15 – 8/11/15

Total amount of checks issued: \$448,215.06

Total amount of checks voided: \$ 247.00

Board reviewed checks written and asked for clarification of some vendors/payees and amounts. A motion to approve the check register was made by Melissa Johnson, seconded by Marcy Myers and unanimously approved.

Journal entries 4/21/15 – 8/11/15

Grand Total of entries: \$970,957.66

Melissa Johnson moved approval of the journal entries; Gary Crawford seconded; unanimously approved by the board.

Line of Credit

A motion to approve renewing New City School’s line of credit was made by Gary Crawford, seconded by Barbara Glaser, and unanimously approved.

Board Training

A question came up earlier in the year regarding the appropriateness of attending a board meeting and speaking via skype or phone. By the open meeting law, a board member can attend, speak, and vote by skype or phone. Visitors can attend a meeting by skype or phone, but may not speak.

In an emergency (e.g. a snow emergency) all members must be able to hear and there would be a roll-call vote for any decisions made by the board.

Non-public information regarding a student would close the meeting to visitors.

Director Evaluation

In May 2015 board members received a document containing Director Kundan's reflections on six of the twelve essential aspects of the job of school director. Mr. Jit chose six elements to comment on for this year: Relationship with parents, Relationship with teachers, Relationship with students K-8, Relationship with other educators and educational institutions, Cultivating a vision of academic and social success for all students, Physical plant oversight and planning (includes expansion).

In May each board member read the Director's comments and added his or her own questions/comments under each element. Some specific questions asked by the board in their comments:

- How much time does the director spend communicating with parents each day by phone/email? Approximately 90 minutes.
- How can a board member know when workshares are happening so they might attend? Workshares are posted on the school calendar on the school's website.
- How many times a year do teachers get feedback from the Director? Three times a year; twice formally, once informally. The feedback is constructive and valuable to instructors.

Comment: We are fortunate to have an educator leading the school who is skilled in so many diverse areas. True evaluation comes in the daily contact staff have with the director.

All comments made by directors have been relayed to Director Kundan.

State of School, Annual Report

A motion to approve the annual report was made by Vince Esades , seconded by Melissa Johnson, unanimously approved.

Discussion

- This year we're adopting a writer's workshop curriculum and testing a reader's workshop curriculum.
MCA's: testing by computer caused the school's scores to take a hit. Until the 14-15 school year, NCS students haven't had the experience of testing by computer, and in addition, breakdowns in the computerized testing system were problematic (e.g. the system went down and when returning to the test

taking, some students couldn't re-focus). This affected our math scores, since the breakdowns occurred during the math testing.

- 2015-16 school year we will use "Achievement Net" every 6 weeks as practice. This program can also be used as a diagnostic – we need better diagnostic information about what students know and what they don't know. "ANet" looks at State standards and will help us fill in the gaps.
- The board had a discussion about how teachers at NCS provide depth in learning and teach students how to think for themselves. Points included frequent questioning of what students think about a topic and what evidence they have for their thinking.
- At the next board meeting an agenda item will be looking at the discrepancies in learning between students of color, students who receive free/reduced lunch, and students who are white and/or middle class.
- Question: why are middle school students slated to receive increased technology when the number of students grades 3 – 5 outnumber those in middle school?

The annual report was approved as revised in this meeting.

Director's Report

There is an opportunity for NCS and Director Kundan. Our director has been offered a part-time special assignment as Director of Origins, a local staff development organization. In exchange, NCS may have the opportunity of professional development from Origins' consultants. The collective wisdom of both organizations creates an opportunity to advance both organizations. Director Kundan's assignment at Origins is for one year, working full time in the summer and part time during the school year.

Contract Approval

A motion was made by Melissa Johnson to approve the re-hiring of vendors from last school year for the 2015-16 year. Marcy Myers seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

New Hires

A motion was made to approve the hire of ELL staff, Nick Pearce, by Vince Esades. Melissa Johnson seconded; unanimously approved.

Returning staff

A motion was made by Vince Esades to approve re-hiring returning staff, seconded by Melissa Johnson, unanimously approved.

Note of appreciation

The Board wishes to thank teacher Amber Krygiel for her service to the School. Amber worked with special ed students and her knowledge and skill will be missed.

Growth Plan Update

Cushman Wakefield has found 3 buildings with potential to provide space for NCS: One site Thorp Building, which we have looked at previously, a smaller site in north Minneapolis for a pre-k – 3rd grade campus, and a third site in south or southeast Minneapolis.

Gifts/Donations

New City School received \$90,000 from an anonymous donor. Sara and Todd Olsen continue to give \$195.12 quarterly.

Melissa Johnson made a motion to approve the donations, Marcy Myers seconded the motion; unanimously approved.

Board Meeting Calendar SY 15-16

The proposed dates for meeting are: 10/13/15, 12/8/15, 1/12/16, 4/12/16, 6/7/16 and 8/16 or 8/23 2016. All meetings begin at 5 p.m.

Vince Esades moved to approve the calendar and Melissa Myers seconded the motion. Passed unanimously by the board.

Marcy Myers made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vince Esades seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously by the board. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

NOTICE: New City School Parent event Friday evening, September 18: The New Standards: All Children Left Behind.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Glaser, Board Secretary
Linda Crawford, Board Chair