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PO Box 95, Cornelius, NC 28031 - 9200 Bob Beatty Road, Charlotte, NC 28269 -
704.236.9610

**Minutes of the Pioneer Springs Community School
Board of Trustees Meeting
August 8, 2016 - 6:06-7:27 pm**

Location: Pioneer Springs Community School Red Barn

In Attendance:

Board members present:

Abigail Jennings (Chairman)
Erik Giles (Vice Chairman/Treasurer)
Kristin Jones (Secretary)
Mark Barney
Peter Blumenfeld
Kim Champion

Others in Attendance:

Erin McDonald (Director of Advancement)
Randolph Lewis (Director of Facilities)
Clayton Berguam
Lynn Holloway
Kelley Hood
Sherry Atria
Mamie Barney
Stephanie Bush
Maggie Pozoroski
Philisha Orr
Kim Richards
Kara Smith
Kelly Holtman
Emily Cunningham

Established a quorum, Abigail calls meeting to order at 6:06.

Mark made a made motion to approve 7/19/16 Minutes, which were sent to board to review prior to this meeting, Kristin seconds, all in favor.

Financial Report

Erik noted that from now on he will be presenting the budget versus the actual numbers on a monthly basis. June was the end of the fiscal year. Erik presented the Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Sheet, and Cash Flow. Mark made a motion to approve the July financials, Erik seconds, all in favor.

Governance-Abigail

All board members signed their annual commitment to the Board Code of Conduct.

5 board members completed the Annual Board Self-Evaluation (the 2 new board members were exempt). The following discussion ensued:

- (1) **Board has discussions about the effectiveness of its performance.** Mark thought it might be good to do this more often and also at a committee level (quarterly).
- (2) **Board provides oversight and evaluates academic program to ensure that students are learning and that the school is meeting academic performance goals.** Everyone agreed we have come a long way in the past year. The Academic Committee has been a big help with this.
- (3) **Board properly manages and is accountable for public funds, ensures financial sustainability and has adequate resources.** All board member agreed we have done a good job with this.
- (4) **Board takes the time to learn about important issues facing schools through actions such as allowing teachers, students, and administrators to report at meetings.** Has not come up yet. Typically ideas are funneled through admin.
- (5) **Board questions administrative proposals, requiring the administration to defend or reconsider their recommendations.** Board had mixed reviews. Mark felt like by the time the recommendations get to the board they have already been discussed.
- (6) **When faced with an important issue, the board often "brainstorms," generating a list of creative approaches or solutions to the problem.** The board all gave very high marks with creativity.
- (7) **Before reaching a decision on important issues, board requests input from students or staff likely to be affected by the decision.** This would only be for issues that are board related, not operational issues. The board encourages the admin team to continue seeking input from the community on operational issues. When board related issues will have a community impact, the board will seek community input as well.
- (8) **Board shows an awareness of the impact its decisions will have on the community.** Once again all high scores, PSCS is a big part of the local community.
- (9) **At least once a year, board asks the administration to articulate their vision for the school's future and offer strategies to realize that vision.** This needs to be done, as State of the School Address would be a good platform.
- (10) **Board makes explicit use of long-term priorities of the school in dealing with current issues.** All members gave high scores.

Peter wondered if admin, staff, and parents can do an evaluation of the board?
Abigail said we can look at that opportunity. Erin said it was sort of included in the survey sent to parents last year but we can be more specific this year.

Strategic Planning:

2016-17 Board of Trustees Strategic Plan

Need SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely for each action item

Academic Excellence

Provide the Board with quarterly academic reports to monitor growth

Finance

Assist in planning and reaching fundraising goal of \$125,000

Create annual fundraising budget with income/expense goals for each fundraiser

Revise 5 Year Budget

Monitor Budget to Actual

Work with Facilities Taskforce on Facilities Budget

Find new financial sources (banks/private investors) for expansions and improvements

Governance

Board of Trustee Job Descriptions

Maintain clear roles for Trustees and Admin Team

New Board Member Recruitment

Succession Planning

Update and/or Add Policies

Build Committee's strength and functionality

Facilities

Define K-8 Facilities Plan for Croft Campus

Provide Finance Committee budget for new improvements

9-12 plan for new site

Turn lane and widening

Operational goals this year (goals mentioned in strategic planning, but are not within the board's governance role)

Creating technology and nature plan for 6th Integration

Project based learning

Critical thinking about internet

Collaborative projects with International Schools

Strong orientation for new and returning families

Academic plan comes to fruition

Community boundaries understood by all

Nature Program solid
Connections to higher ed - UNCC, CPCC, Davidson, Art Institute of Charlotte, Culinary Arts
Establish master calendar
Community events and offerings
Post daily master schedule

Kim noted that she reached out to Becky and Becky wants the Academic Excellence Committee to support the 3-year plan. Kim will be the one to present the Academic report at the board meetings. This year we will have data in order to comparisons and growth.

Mark commented that we need input about the School Improvement Plan from Becky and others. Abigail reminded that the School Improvement Plan falls into the realm of operations and not the board. The final draft of the SIP plan was approved by the board prior to its submission to the state, but that is the board's only involvement.

Abigail noted that the Board Contact form has been updated, along with the committee assignments. Board forms have been added to the Board Resource folder.

Mark questioned having subcommittees. Abigail said that in order for our board to work effectively, we need to recruit more board members to serve on the existing committees before we can add additional sub-committees.

Board reviewed the Non-Service Animal Policy, the draft had been sent out prior to the meeting. This policy is to formalize what animals are appropriate at school and the procedures to handle them. Most likely the assigned "zoo keeper" will be the Nature Director. Need to add about flea control and the animal being under the care of a vet to the class pet section. Most information has been taken from the NC school website.

Erin mentioned that last year most staff ends up doing the animal care over breaks and summer vacations. Volunteers often sign up, but then don't always follow through. Abigail said this is not policy but operational, however, the new policy should help with this as each animal now will have a responsible "sponsor."

Class pets will now serve an academic goal, students need to research before getting the animal. The Nature director has already started this process. Staff needs to follow the same procedures if they want to bring a pet.

Erik made a motion to approve the Non-Service Animal Policy, Kim seconds, all in favor.

Directors' Report (Becky, Erin, Randolph)

Facilities

- August 14th Project/Beautification Day beginning at 10am. Kids' activities will be offered as classrooms are put together. September 10th will be next Project/Beautification Day.
- Classroom set-up - ongoing
- Utility relocation for turn-lane
 - Last week met with representatives from Duke Energy, ATT, and Piedmont Natural Gas to start relocation process. Studied plans, and walked the site. Need final sealed plans before any relocation work may begin.
- Alarm panel lightning damage
 - Repairs still ongoing. Found out Annunciator in barn also needs to be replaced. That equipment is on order. Still a problem with back-up monitoring phone line. Vendor meet with ATT and Simplex scheduled for Tues 8/9 1:00 PM
- Don and Donny working on weeding and grading drives and walkways, in addition to mowing campus and Asbury.
- Coordinating fire inspections
- Fiber hardware update
 - Met with Mark Barney and Kevin Moderow from MCNC to discuss hardware needs
 - Mark sourcing the equipment
 - Planning for installation day
- Asbury update and contingency plan, requires a right of way

Advancement/Community

- 1st Fundraising Crew meeting scheduled for August 22nd at 2pm on PSCS campus (Davis picnic tables). This will be a brief meeting to discuss our yearly goal and a few of the individual events, dates and expectations of our fundraisers.
- Book leveling has continued and we are actively working to get all classrooms ready before the start of school, thanks to Mamie Barney and Kim Champion's willingness to coordinate and organize. Many new families are offering to help and appreciate the community experience this volunteering project offers.
- Communication of the new organizational chart, supply lists and other tid-bits has been sent to staff and families.

EC Update

- PSCS received a 611 grant for Exceptional Children funding which will cover \$33,000 of an EC teacher's salary this year. We are currently in the process of applying for the Risk Pool and Special State Reserve grants which may also be used to cover personnel salaries if funded.
- We are excited to report that we have an extremely strong new EC team in place for 2016-17. We can't wait for you to meet the team. Our team will be focused on **Professionalism**.

Some of the major pillars starting the new school year, building our professionalism will be:

- **Collaboration** with general ed teachers as well as being resources to the general ed teachers all in the name of meeting the needs of ALL of our students.
- **Communication** - another way the exceptional children's department aims to grow. By communication, we mean communication with school directors and the board as we have needs that impact students. By communication, we mean having daily/ weekly open lines of communication with parents and families so that they feel as though they are in the loop with regard to their children's educations. Communication goes hand in hand with collaboration, as open and constant communication across the school is essential to meeting the needs of ALL students.
- **Consistency** will be a goal for every member of our EC crew, each and every day, so that our team members know what we expect of ourselves, and so that others know what they can expect from us.
- **Prior Preparation** - means an assurance from this crew that before the start of each week, and each day, each teacher/ case manager has looked at the needs of each and every student that they serve, and has a plan for instruction and or remediation that addresses specifically IEP goals and objectives and what each of our students need to be successful accessing the best education they can and growing every day. We understand that growth will look very individual for different students.

We believe that these **4 pillars of professionalism** will begin to not only best meet the needs of our students every day, but help evolve our Exceptional Children's program into a model for others to follow, one that will help retain our current students, and attract new students to our school who know that Pioneer Springs Community School has an EC department that is 2nd to none!

Academics

Pioneer Springs Community School will achieve a 5 to 8 percentage point growth on the composite (baseline 2015-16) by defining and implementing common metrics across all grade levels and adopting consistent and pervasive instructional and operational practices.

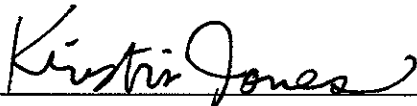
- The 2015-16 instructional team is in place, including most recent additions Cindy Etler (EC/ ESL) and Aaron Hirsch (5th grade). Teacher workdays begin August 15th. *Please join us for the closing staff luncheon on August 26th beginning at 12pm.*
- Performance Framework documents were submitted to the Office of Charter Schools August 5th. These include monitoring criteria measures including the annual board meeting schedule, the grievance policy and recent fire inspections.
- The 2015-16 NC State Report Card is tentatively scheduled for release on October 18th.

Abigail asked for public comments. None presented.

Next board meeting is scheduled for September 12th, 2016.

Mark made a motion to adjourn, Kristin seconds, all in favor. Adjournment at 7:27 pm.

August 8th, 2016 Minutes respectfully submitted by Kristin Jones.



Kristin Jones, Secretary