

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, August 21, 2013

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia, Jennifer Bernacki Smith, Roy Clay, Leah Eagan-Stoddard, Concetta Ferguson, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Pam Pollock, Matt Ryan

Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director; Becky Vincheski, CEO Boys and Girls Club

Concetta Ferguson called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

1. Concetta presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no changes. Approved.
2. Minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on June 19, 2013, were presented. **Mimi moved and Leah seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. Approved unanimously.**

3. BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

Becky Vincheski, CEO of the Boys and Girls Club addressed the group regarding some difficulty funding start up of the after school program in September. Boys and Girls Club received notification that they had been awarded a 21st Century Grant to fund the EVCS program.

However, the actual money is not expected for at least 60 days. They are unable to begin the program until they have money to pay their staff. This delay would be a hardship for many EVCS families. Ms. Vincheski proposed that EVCS make the Boys and Girls Club a short-term loan of \$13,500 per month, for two months, which would allow them to pay seven staff members to run a program for sixty children. EVCS would be repaid when the grant money arrived. There was considerable discussion about how this might work. Consensus seemed to be that admission to the program be based on need, using the free and reduced price lunch data as criteria. It was also felt that the youngest children should remain on site and that, if necessary, older children could be taken to a nearby site. **Matt moved and Mimi seconded that the Board approve a line of credit of up to \$13,500 per month, for up to three months, with the stipulation that John adjust the memo of understanding and that admission to the program be need based. Approved unanimously.**

4. FINANCIALS

Concetta reported that revenue is slightly lower than expected as enrollment is not yet full. However, EVCS continues to maintain a favorable balance of assets. **Matt moved and Pam seconded that the financial report be approved as presented. Approved unanimously.**

5. BOARD RETREAT

The EVCS Board Development Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 7, 2013, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The speaker will be Kirsten Pryor from the Center for Governmental Research. The Event will be held at the offices of Merrill Lynch on the 7th floor of the Key Tower at 50 Fountain Plaza.

6. NY STATE COMPTROLLER'S AUDIT

The only suggestion was that EVCS mechanically verify the residence of students. John

sent a letter acknowledging the suggestion and formulated a corrective action plan to be implemented by a team. **Marguerite moved and Pam seconded that the corrective action plan be implemented as John described. Approved unanimously.**

7. NYSED FULL SITE VISIT REPORT

Visitors saw what EVCS is doing well and reported it with evidence as cited on page 5 of the report. They made a number of good observations. There were no citations and no corrective action plan required. The Board expressed appreciation to John and the faculty and staff for their excellence, dedication and attention to detail.

8. EXPANSION/FACILITIES UPDATE

Requests for Proposals were sent to three city architects (TRM, BHMT, Carmina, Wood, Morris) and three responses were received. Requests for Proposals were also sent to three construction managers, but only one response was received. All three architects will be interviewed beginning the first week of school. Full occupancy of the expanded facility is expected for fall, 2015 or possibly, fall, 2016. The decision regarding an “owners representative” was tabled, as some of the plans may not require it. Because construction will likely begin while children are in school, a safety plan will be necessary.

9. DIRECTOR’S REPORT 0

New York State Assessment Results

1. There is not yet much useful data from the 2013 State Assessments in ELA and Mathematics. There is no data for individual students, line-item analysis, or disaggregated data. Since these are secure tests, no copies of the assessments are available to peruse in order to identify trends or student deficiencies, John is monitoring nyStart (the testing and accountability website) for updates to the school’s data.
2. NYS is treating 2013 assessment results as a new baseline. Therefore the scores cannot be used to track individual student growth or growth among cohorts.
3. The only standard of measurement available is a comparison of EVCS results with the state-wide passing average, the Buffalo District passing average and the passing averages of other high performing schools and districts:
 - EVCS surpassed the NYS passing average in ELA by 8% and in mathematics by 21%
 - EVCS surpassed the Buffalo School District passing average in ELA by 28% and in mathematics by 42%
 - EVCS surpassed the passing average of all other charter schools in the Buffalo area at all grade levels in both ELA and mathematics.
 - In most areas, EVCS results surpassed the passing averages of high performing public schools and suburban districts (see spreadsheet for comparison with individual high performing schools and high performing suburban districts).
4. Because of the changes in the assessments, EVCS did not meet the Absolute Growth Goals identified in the Charter. However, all comparison goals were met.
5. Using comparison data, deficiencies in sixth, seventh and eighth grade ELA were identified.
6. In the absence of useable data from the NYS Assessments, EVCS is using data from other sources for planning purposes (STAR, DIBELS, Running Records, Program Assessments, etc.)

Addressing Deficiencies

1. Using money from RttT (Race to the Top), all teachers were paid a stipend to work

with Anne Wechsler on curriculum alignment in July. Further work with curriculum alignment will be done during professional development during August.

2. Grade level outcomes were identified, and progress monitoring systems were developed and included in every teacher's growth plan for the 2013-2014 school year.

3. Professional development on the Common Core Standards will be ongoing throughout the year. Teachers are studying the Common Core Modules on Engage New York as models of effective Common Core lessons. EVCS will not be teaching from these modules.

4. Schedules were constructed in such a way as to give grade-level teams four common planning periods per week; teachers will be required to plan together at least twice each week.

5. Members of the leadership team will join teachers at grade level planning meetings throughout the year.

6. EVCS is conducting a thorough review of the sixth, seventh and eighth grade curricula and the following changes will be made for the 2013-2014 school year:

- Sixth grade will return to the Open Court *Imagine It* program. Efforts are being made to better align this program with Common Core Standards. Adjustments are being made to the scope and sequence to maximize the effectiveness of the program in a departmentalized setting.

- EVCS has been researching programs to complement ELA instruction in seventh and eighth grades. Materials from the Glencoe Common Core Bundle will be introduced. The collection includes appropriate literature and relevant non-fiction and has strong, integrated skill instruction in literary analysis, literary elements, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary.

- The school will continue to use Junior Great Books on the sixth, seventh and eighth grade levels only during the fourth week of the month.

- AIS for sixth, seventh and eighth grade will be modified and more closely aligned to classroom instruction. Instead of using *Successful Reader* for AIS, components of the ELA programs will be used. *Successful Reader* will be used to support IEP reading goals. AIS in sixth, seventh and eighth grade will be structured in such a way as to allow for more push-in rather than pull-out.

- With the addition of the Operations Manager, it has been possible to eliminate the outside mentor for sixth, seventh and eighth grade teachers. Anne Wechsler and John Sheffield will fill that role to ensure that teachers are meeting goals and effectively following the curriculum.

- The leadership team is working with the middle school team to develop a comprehensive plan to support ELS learning objectives across the curriculum in all content areas. This will be monitored through weekly lesson plans and classroom observations.

State Assessment and Teacher/Principal Evaluations

There has been guidance from the State Education Department on how to use and how not to use the assessment data in teacher and principal evaluations (see letter from Commissioner King).

Posting Annual Report

EVCS received notice from SED today that the Annual Report should not be posted until further instructions are received from the authorizer.

Professional Development

Professional development began Monday, August 19, for all members of the instructional staff. This included goals for 2013-2014 based on data; health and safety policies and procedures; training on positive psychology; training on Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs; training on Brain Gym, special education procedures and goals, and speech and occupational therapy strategies for classroom use. All teachers will work collaboratively under the direction of Anne Wechsler on curriculum alignment. The middle school team will work collaboratively with Mr. Sheffield and Mrs. Landrigan to develop a plan to more fully support reading and writing goals across all content areas.

Personnel

-Johanna MacDonald, fifth grade teacher, resigned her position due to family obligations.

Pending Board approval, Jennifer Ryan, who was lead candidate identified by the hiring team for the third grade position, has been hired to fill this post. Ms. Ryan holds a Master's degree in elementary education from the University of Buffalo, and a Bachelor's degree from SUNY Fredonia. She has eleven years of experience as a classroom teacher in fourth through sixth grades, including at South Buffalo Charter School.

-Pending approval of the Board, Melissa Bak, a long-time teaching assistant and long-term substitute Title I reading teacher at EVCS, has been hired as a Title I Reading Specialist. She will be replacing Lisa Berk, who was a Title I teaching assistant. However, Ms Bak will have expanded duties that will include pushing into classrooms for reading and math instruction. Melissa Bak holds a Master's degree from Niagara University, and is certified in elementary education and literacy. She meets federal requirements as a reading teacher funded by Title I.

-Pending Board approval, Stephanie Krentz has been hired as part-time Spanish teacher. Ms. Krentz holds a Master's degree and Bachelor's degree from SUNY College at Buffalo. She is certified in elementary education. She has an undergraduate concentration in Spanish and has studied Spanish in Spain. She did one of her student teaching placements at EVCS. She is fluent in Spanish and has translated for EVCS. However, she is not certified in Spanish.

-Pending approval of the Board, Kristy O'Connor was hired as teaching assistant for first grade. Ms. O'Connor holds Bachelor's degrees from SUNY Fredonia and Medaille College. She is certified in elementary and special education.

-Pending Board approval, Kimberly O'Connor was hired as office assistant and Transportation coordinator. Ms. O'Connor holds an associates degree from Niagara Community College. She served as a main office secretary and Transportation Coordinator at Community Charter School and South Buffalo Charter School. Ms. O'Connor will be replacing Ms. Dortch, but with expanded duties.

-Kathleen Stanek, teaching assistant, resigned her position due to family obligations.

-The cafeteria position held by John Seitz (Mr. Jack), was eliminated for the 2013-2013 school year. We were able to secure a second worker from the Buffalo Public Schools Food Commissary at no cost to EVCS.

-The clerk/receptionist position held by Pamela Dortch was eliminated in order to create the position of office assistant/Transportation Coordinator.

-Kathy Skora, dance teacher, was budgeted for four days per week. Her actual schedule turned out to be an extra half-day. John proposed that her position be increased to a full five days to allow her to serve as arts integration teacher.

-John requested a pay increase of \$.50 per hour, as supported by the 2013-2014 budget, for part-time custodians, James Graham and Leroy Horne. This increase would be retroactive to July 15, 2013 and would raise Mr. Graham's salary to \$10.50 per hour and Mr. Horne's salary to \$9.50 per hour.

-At the request of Building Engineer, John Grabowski, John proposed a change to the employment policies allowing for regular, part-time employees to receive paid legal holidays (identified in the employment manual) equivalent to one shift.

-The school is in the process of selecting three more teaching assistants. Final determination will be made this week.

-John requested that Liz Evans, Operations Manager, be designated by the Board of Trustees as Records Access Officer for FOIL requests.

Mimi moved and Concetta seconded that all previously stated personnel actions be approved. Approved unanimously.

There was no further business.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mimi and seconded by Concetta. Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

-Board of Trustees Professional Development: Saturday September 7, 2013. Details fo follow.

-Meetings at 6:00 p.m.- Sept. 18, 2013; Oct. 16, 2013; Nov. 20, 2013; Dec. 18, 2013; Jan 15, 2013; Feb. 12, 2014*; Mar 19, 2014; April 9, 2014*; May 7, 2014*; June 18, 2014

*2nd rather than 3rd Wednesday