

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, December 16, 2009

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia-Evans, Liz Evans, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Concetta Ferguson, Kitty Herrick, Paul Marzello, Pam Pollock, Paul Souter

Trustees Absent: Shirley Courton

Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director

Liz Evans called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

1. Liz presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no additions. Approved.
2. Minutes from the meeting held on November 18, 2009, were reviewed. **Kathy moved and Paul M. seconded that the minutes be accepted as corrected. Approved.**
3. DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY

Personnel

a. John discussed the difficulty he has had finding a quality AmeriCorps volunteer for the vacant position. He recommended that the contract with AmeriCorps be amended to reduce the commitment by one position which would result in a saving of \$6000 to EVCS. He also proposed a change in status for a Special Education Aide position. This position would become 75% time Teaching Assistant and 25% time 1:1 Special Education Aide. It was his opinion that this change would best meet the needs of EVCS students. **Mimi moved and Kathy seconded that the recommended changes be made. Approved.**

b. John has been meeting with the school's insurance broker in preparation for insurance anniversary dates in March. He presented estimates from Independent Health Flex-Fit Select for single or family coverage.

Facilities

a. Fencing around the play area needs work. There is a sturdy fence on the left side. However, the fence at the rear is falling down. John has had an estimate of \$2150 to tear down and haul away the damaged fence and install 56 feet of 6-foot fencing made of treated lumber.

b. John proposed that EVCS lease a new color copier. The budget included \$2400 for a new copier and the cost of the color copier lease was estimated at \$1680. It was agreed that this seemed to be a prudent investment in that it would enable us to do some projects in house rather than paying a printing company.

Demographics

As of October 1, 2009, enrollment was at 173 students. Buffalo students numbered 169.

There were also 3 students from Lackawana and 1 from Kenmore. Additional demographic information follows:

Economically Disadvantaged	41%
Students on Public Assistance	15%
Special Education (IEP)	17%
Section 504 Plan	16%

Native American	5	(3%)
Black	42	(24%)
Asian	3	(2%)
Hispanic	21	(12%)
White	81	(47%)
Multi-Racial	21	(12%)

Terranova Discussions

John will be meeting with the teachers to discuss the students' performance on the test and to map progress to individual goals. A clear outline will be developed showing who is responsible for what (general education teacher, special education teacher, teacher assistant, etc.). He also plans to develop a program to assess progress at specific intervals. Anne Wechsler will be writing a grant proposal seeking additional funding for this project.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

No Treasurer's Report was available. **Pam moved and Kathy seconded that the Treasurer's report be tabled for a future meeting. Approved.**

5. OLD BUSINESS

New Board Member

Janelle Anderson has not yet formally submitted her name as a candidate for the Board of Trustees. Liz will follow up to determine if she is still interested.

Middle School Expansion

An assessment hearing regarding the decommissioned School #36 building is scheduled for Monday, December 21 , 2009. Representatives from EVCS will attend in an effort to highlight discrepancies between the high appraisal of \$750,000 and the low one of \$250,000 and to point out the considerable rehab the building will need. Both the Days Park and Allentown Associations are willing to be there to support us. Apparently the common council has some leeway to adjust the price.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Preparation has started for the Fifth Year Charter Renewal application. Marguerite, Mimi, Kitty and Concetta will draft a Five-Year Board Self Evaluation Plan with assistance from Denise Pasziewicz. They hope to have something ready for us to review at our next meeting. Concetta volunteered to draft a Five-Year Board Development Plan.

7. DISCUSSION

In preparation for future Board Development Training, we initiated a discussion of our strengths and weaknesses as a governing board. Highlights follow:

Weaknesses

- We have no prepared manual for new board members. Some members felt it took too long for them to understand their role and duties as Board members.
- There is not always clear reporting back from committees. There should perhaps be a policy and time-line for committee reports.

-Some Board Members (3/10) are also founders of the School. The question of the relative weight of the founders versus the remainder of the Board was raised.

Strengths

- John's representation establishes a direct connection back and forth between the Board

and the rest of the EVCS community.

-The Board conscientiously tries to consider the opinions of all the stakeholders of the school. Meetings are open to anyone. There is cross representation between the Board and the Community Association. There are regular surveys.

-All Board Members have demonstrated genuine commitment to the school.

-Board Members are open to an honest exchange of ideas.

-Board Members are committed to developing skills needed to be effective as a Board.

-Some Board Members are also founders of the School. Since they helped to write the original Charter, their unique familiarity with its content is a valuable resource to guide us as we strive to implement it.

The hour grew late and it was agreed that the group would need to do additional preparation prior to beginning workshops on the Carver Model of Board Governance.

A motion to adjourn was made by Paul and seconded by Liz. Approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

-Next regular meeting of the EVCS Board is Wednesday, January 20, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

- Future meetings: Feb. 17, 2010; Mar. 17, 2010; Apr. 21, 2010; May 12, 2010; June 16, 2010;
July - NO MEETING; Aug. 18, 2010