

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia-Evans, Shirley Courton, Liz Evans, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Concetta Ferguson, Kitty Herrick, Paul Marzello, Pam Pollock
Trustees Absent: Paul Souter,
Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director

Liz Evans called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

1. Liz presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no additions. Approved.
2. Minutes from the meeting held on October 21, 2009, were reviewed. **Marguerite moved and Paul M. seconded that the minutes be approved as presented. Approved.**
3. DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Academics

a. Fall Terra Nova Results: The fall administration measures skills that the students are not expected to have mastered until the end of the year. In June, the same test is administered to track the progress of individual students and cohort groups as a whole. Fall tests are used as an early indicator of academic strengths and weaknesses; it is one of the evaluation tools used to identify students in need of academic intervention. Test results are broken down and scrutinized for patterns that can indicate gaps in the curriculum or instruction. The data also shows teachers what learning objectives may still need to be met by the class. For example, if 15 students scored below the mid-average range on measurement, the teacher knows that measurement is a skill that still needs to be developed. The national percentile shows the percentage of students nationwide who scored below our students. For example, if the NP is 75%, that means that 75% of the students scored below our students. If an individual student falls below 50%, he/she is put on a "watch list" and given some extra support in the classroom. If a student scores below 35%, the child receives Title I services which may include small-group pullout as well as in-class support. After the test results are received, each teacher meets with the director to review the data for two purposes: to identify students in need of intervention and to identify whole-class patterns for the purpose of planning instruction. John also meets with each teacher to review the results for the students he/she taught the previous year to look for gaps in instruction.

b. Social Studies Assessments: Fifth Grade NYS Social Studies Assessments were administered this week. At EVCS 84% of the students scored in the target 3 or 4 range. Four out of 5 students who receive special education services scored in the 3 range.

c. At EVCS 67 students in grades 1-6 currently receive Title I AIS, either through pull-out services, in-class support, or intensive monitoring. The presence of two Title I teachers this year made it possible to raise the bar in order to provide more preventative intervention.

Personnel

a. At the beginning of the school year one AmeriCorps volunteer was assigned to assist in each classroom. The individual assigned to the third grade class left for

- personal reasons. John is currently interviewing to find a replacement.
- b. John is also seeking a 1:1 Special Education Aide to be assigned to a particular student whose IEP requires one.
 - c. EVCS teaching staff participates in the NYS Teacher Retirement System. John is looking into possible retirement programs for the non-instructional staff.

Facilities

- a. Fencing around the play area needs work. There is a sturdy fence on the left side. However, the fence at the rear, which is on the neighbor's property, is falling down. John is seeking estimates for replacement of the fence.
- b. The new copier has been subject to frequent breakdowns which results in disruptions of school operation. Western NY Imaging has promised to provide the school with a second copier at no additional charge. It is hoped that by reducing the load, both copiers will function effectively.

Charter Renewal

John has been working on the retrospective piece. Anne Wechsler has been working on the "strikethrough" version of the original charter, based on charter amendments. The next phase will be the prospective piece. This will require more committee work and will involve members of the Board of Trustees.

Enrollment

- a. Two kindergarten students have moved, one to Kenmore and the other out of Western New York. This leaves two openings in kindergarten which will be filled from the extensive waiting list.
- b. There are still two vacancies in sixth grade with no waiting list at that level.

Finances

John distributed drafts of the financial statements for the four months ending October 31, 2009. We currently have a \$75,000 favorable variance. We were budgeted to have spent \$593,075 by this point and actual spending has been \$518,028. It is expected that this favorable variance will decrease as the year progresses: Title I funding may decrease due to a dip in EVCS percentage of economically disadvantaged students; We need to hire a special education aide that we expected to eliminate; We have more students receiving related services this year than last year; We replaced an AmeriCorps teaching assistant with an employee of the school; there will be one-time expenses related to the Charter Renewal process. On the plus side, John expects to receive \$23,000 in stimulus fund money through Title I and special education revenue will be higher than budgeted. The current favorable variance suggests that we are on track to remain within the projected budget.

4. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Denise Pasziewicz from People Incorporated presented an Introductory seminar on John Carver's Policy Governance Model. This model was designed to help Boards develop effective management strategies and avoid the common pitfalls of trivia, micro-management, rubber stamping, etc. Basic principles of the Carver method include:

- The Board is a subset of the ownership (stakeholders).
- The Board speaks with one voice.
- The Board focuses on 4 areas; Ends, Executive Limitations, Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation.

-The Board should focus on the broad issues, the long term results.

-Details should be delegated to management, but monitored.

Using the Carver model would enable the Board to develop consistent written policies and to monitor those policies on a pre-determined schedule. This would result in keeping the Board informed while easing the decision process. The Carver Model has been described in numerous articles, books, and audio and video-tapes. It is used by many Boards in Western New York and around the world. *See handout for additional details. Trainers bill at figures in excess of \$2000 per day. However, our speaker has agreed to donate her time as a community service. **Kitty moved and Pam seconded that the EVCS Board explore using the Carver Model of Policy Governance, next month exploring strengths and weaknesses. Approved.**

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

No Treasurer's report was available. However, current financial information was covered in the Director's Report.

6. OLD Business

Middle School Expansion

EVCS has not heard from the city regarding the bid to purchase the decommissioned School #36 building. Sam Savarino has submitted a competing proposal to purchase the building and to lease it to the proposed West Buffalo Charter School. His proposal is contingent on the West Buffalo Charter being approved. An e-mail was sent to Brian Riley setting forth various points in favor of the EVCS offer and requesting a meeting with the city real estate department. Both the Days Park and Allentown Associations are willing to meet with us. If we are able to purchase School #36, it is likely that we will be operating two sites as we will be unable to leave the 124 Elmwood building vacant.

New Board Member

Janelle Anderson has agreed to submit her name for consideration as a board member. She has experience in financial matters and is willing to serve as Treasurer should she be approved.

7. NEW BUSINESS/announcements

No new business was discussed. Marguerite suggested that we have a holiday celebration at the December meeting. "Bring a treat to share and come hungry."

A motion to adjourn was made by Marguerite and seconded by Concetta. Approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

-Next regular meeting of the EVCS Board is Wednesday, December 16, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.

- Future meetings: Jan. 20, 2010; Feb. 17, 2010; Mar. 17, 2010; Apr. 21, 2010; May 12, 2010; June 16, 2010; July - NO MEETING; Aug. 18, 2010

