

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia-Evans, Leah Eagan-Stoddard, Liz Evans, Concetta Ferguson, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Frank Housh, Pam Pollock, Matt Ryan

Trustees Absent: Catherine Herrick

Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director; Tom Burns, Auditor, Lumsden McCormack, LLP; Karen Burhans, CPA, Kirisits & Associates; Meyada Sadik, EVCS parent

Liz Evans called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

1. Liz presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no changes. **Approved.**
2. Minutes from the Board of Trustees Meeting held on September 21, 2011, were presented. **Matt moved and Concetta seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. Approved.**
3. FINANCIALS

Tom Burns presented the Auditors' Report. He stated that the audit had been an "easy one" with no management letter necessary. He suggested that there be written documentation of pay rates for each of the hourly workers. He also suggested that John have the Board officially approve his expense reports. He reported a \$416,000 increase in the bottom line, resulting from a better reimbursement rate from the district, which more than offset the loss of some grant revenue.

Matt moved and Pam seconded that the audit report be accepted. Approved.

Karen Burhans summarized the financial statements for July, August and September, 2011. She noted that the special education reimbursement rate for 2010-2011 had become confused due to a mid-year change. She is sending a revised bill to the Buffalo Board of Education for an additional \$15,000 of additional funding. She reported that EVCS currently has close to a 2:1 ratio of cash to liabilities which "is good". However, she reminded the Board that this will change when our acquisition of School #36 becomes final. **Frank moved and Mimi seconded that the financial reports for July, August and September, be accepted. Approved.**

4. DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

A. John is currently working on required reports due in the month of October. Included are; BEDS, Teacher Credentials, Revised Annual Report, Special Education and Revised Poverty Report for Title I. The Annual Report was submitted in two parts this year because State Assessment Scores were released after the initial due date. John will present the content of these reports at the November meeting.

B. Krista Vazquez, part-time special education teacher, will need to transition to full-time status to accommodate recently classified students. This position was included in the budget as full-time.

C. Baseline data for all students will be compiled using the new STAR Assessment. The reading assessment will be completed by October, 28, and the math by Nov. 4. Beginning of the year DIBELS testing was completed in September, and that data, along with State Assessment data and end-of-the-year Terra Nova testing was used to establish AIS groups. The STAR Assessment data can be used to test a student out of AIS if the placement was based on data other than State Assessments.

There are new requirements for the administration and grading of New York State Assessments. EVCS already meets most of the new requirements, including

outsourcing grading and security measures.

D. Technology is constantly being upgraded. Middle School student laptop lab, SMART Board, teacher computers, and phone systems in each classroom and office are now fully operational. Upgrades to the phone system at the main campus are also complete.

-As noted above, the new STAR Assessment is operational, and teachers are receiving training on this new program.

Castle Learning, a new on-line preparation for the upper grades, is not yet operational, but is expected to be ready for student use within the next few weeks. Teachers received training on this program during their professional development in August.

- All staff members will be participating in additional training on the use of the SMART Board for instruction at two faculty/staff meetings in November.

-Carol Veach, library/media specialist, will be participating in a full-day additional training on the use of the SMART Board for instruction. Lea Gladysz, office manager, will participate in two days of training on the new data recording and reporting requirements for the New York State Information Repository System. During the course of the year, staff participates in approximately fourteen hours of professional development on the use of technology for instruction.

-John is exploring programs other than the Buffalo Public Schools to provide food service to the school for the 2012-2013 school year. Options are limited due to the heavy requirements for the Federal School Lunch Program and by additional state regulations. Buffalo's policies and procedures, including requiring the charter school to pay for lunch, or deny a child lunch, if the child forgets his/her money, is contrary to the EVCS philosophy.

-John requested authorization from the Board of Trustees, to apply, on behalf of the EVCS parents, for student transportation to be provided by the Buffalo Board of Education during the 2012-2013 school year. Reasons are as follow:

- to give parents the option of alternative after-school care for children
- to reduce the number of students in before-care and after-care at EVCS to a more manageable size
- to minimize traffic congestion in a residential neighborhood.
- to reduce absenteeism and tardiness
- to accommodate families who may not be able to transport children to the new campus because it is not on a direct bus route
- to voluntarily comply with the new regulations that require all charter schools to provide transportation for students. (It has not yet been determined by SED whether EVCS might be exempt since our initial charter was granted prior to the new regulations.)

There are several factors which will impact on the cost of this service. New legislation requires that districts transport students for charter schools at the request of parents in the same manner that they transport non-public school students. Therefore, EVCS would not incur the up-front expense that was faced when opening the school. However, Buffalo will only transport on days when their schools are in session. Charter schools will be billed for any additional days, so there will be some additional cost to the service. The application for transportation must be submitted soon, if transportation is to be in place by September, 2012. If EVCS students are to be transported by school bus, the EVCS Board of Trustees will need to approve a new transportation plan and submit the plan to SED.

Frank moved and Matt seconded that John be authorized to apply, on behalf of the EVCS parents, for student transportation to be provided by the Buffalo Board of Education during the 2012-2013 school year. Discussion ensued. It was agreed that the application should be made in order to obtain the information necessary to determine whether transportation by school bus would be a viable option for EVCS students. **The motion was approved.**

5. OLD BUSINESS

Expansion/Facilities Update - John Kolaga has reported to the Board that all the necessary closing documents for School #36 have been given to the city. It is possible that the sale will close by the end of November. Four architects were given requests for a proposal. As of this meeting, all four have been returned. Liz proposed the following resolution to the Board:

“WHEREAS the Elmwood Village Charter School is expanding the grades it serves through 8th grade and is adding a second class at every grade level; and WHEREAS the Board of the Elmwood Village Charter School voted to acquire School #36 on Days Park for the purpose of housing additional students pursuant to the terms of the Agreement executed by both the City of Buffalo and the Elmwood Village Charter School and received by counsel for the Elmwood Village Charter School on September 19, 2011;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Elmwood village Charter School Board approves the purchase of former School #36 from the City of Buffalo for the appraised sale price of \$550,000.”

Frank moved and Concetta seconded that the resolution to finalize the purchase of former School #36 be approved as stated. Approved.

John reported that there has been some water damage to the former School #36 building and the roof may need patching immediately after the sale of the building closes. **Pam moved and Mimi seconded that the Facilities Committee be authorized to make decisions regarding the need for any immediate repairs. Approved.** Matt expressed appreciation, on behalf of the entire Board, to new Board members, Frank Housh and Leah Egan-Stoddard, who both stepped in immediately and used their expertise and their contacts to facilitate this acquisition and transition.

Board Training - Catherine recently e-mailed some Board development suggestions to members. As members have had insufficient time to read and digest these ideas, discussion will be held at a future meeting. However, several Board members will be attending the fall meeting of the New York State Charter School Association in Manhattan over Veterans' Day Weekend. This may yield some useful ideas for Board training.

6. NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

-The Nominating Committee re-iterated that a single seat remains open on the EVCS Board of Trustees. The suggestion was to strategically leave the seat open while assessing future needs of the school.

-The annual EVCS fund raising effort “Evening in the Atrium” was reported to have been very successful. Attendance was good. Approximately \$20,000 was raised for the school. Pam expressed, on behalf of the entire Board, thanks and appreciation to Amy VanKerkove and her committee from the EVCS Community Association, who worked so hard to stage such a successful and enjoyable event.

A motion to adjourn was made by Liz and seconded by Matt. Approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

Meetings at 6:00 p.m.: Nov. 16, 2011; Dec. 21, 2011; Jan. 18, 2012; Feb. 15, 2012 ; Mar. 21, 2012; Apr. 18, 2012; May 9, 2012*; June 20, 2012; Aug. 15, 2012

* 2nd Wednesday