



Charter School of Inquiry (CSI)

Regular Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2018

- 1. Call to Order.** The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of the Charter School of Inquiry (the “School”) was called to order by Helene Kramer, the presiding officer, on March 6, 2018 at 4:55 pm at the Charter School of Inquiry, 404 Edison Street, Buffalo, New York 14215.

Trustees Present: Peter Dow, Morgan Williams-Bryant, Betty Evans, Helene Kramer, Patrick Miner, Pamela Nicastro, Deborah Porter

Trustees Excused: Melissa Stadler

CSI Staff: Robert Fetter, Head of School

Board Attorney: Steven Polowitz

Prospective New Trustee: Stephanie Adams

- 2. Proof of Public Notice**

Pursuant to the Open Meetings Law, Helene Kramer shared a notarized affidavit listing the places where the Notice of Meeting held on March 6 were posted and a list of media outlets who were asked to publicize the meeting on their community calendars, in their print notices or broadcasts. This notarized affidavit will be kept on file.

- 3. Approve Minutes**

- a. Regular Business Meeting, February 6, 2018. A motion to approve minutes was made by Deborah Porter, seconded by Betty Evans and approved unanimously by the Board.

- 4. Announcements / Updates**

- a. NYSED – CSO Site Visit. Board debriefed about the board focus group with David Frank and Susan Gibbons from the CSO mid-term site visit on February 15.
- b. Upcoming School Events. Mr. Fetter announced upcoming school events, including the Spring arts event and Open House on March 21.
- c. Parent Rep, Jackie Roberson, Jr. Mr. Roberson transferred his son to another school. Due to the fact that the parent representative to the board is required to have a child in the school, Mr. Roberson can no longer serve on the Board. We are grateful for Mr.

Roberson's service to the Parent Association and the Board. Mr. Fetter and Mr. Bell are working together to recommend a new parent representative.

5. Parent Association – Robert Fetter

- a. Need to determine ways to engage more parents. Ms. Kramer reminded the Board that a key design feature of the School is an asset-based parent engagement model, and that last year the Board created guidelines for the Parent Association in line with the asset-based model. She suggested that Mr. Fetter organize a Parent Engagement committee to develop strategies to fully implement the asset-based parent engagement model. The committee, which is one of CSI's strategic initiatives, should include parents, teachers, and community members. Mr. Fetter will organize.

6. Instruction/School Operations Report - Robert Fetter, Head of School

- a. Dashboard Reports. Board members asked questions and discussed the data, particularly in the student discipline section.
- b. Academic Goals. Ms. Kramer reviewed the academic goals set for the school at the beginning of the school year. She noted that these goals were included in the Head of School evaluation.
- c. ELA and Math - tracking progress.
 - i. 3rd grade – one of the 2 teachers was formerly a Reading Teacher and is making good progress with the children, particularly in ELA; the other 3rd grade teacher reports that children are excited about learning, sees children's progress in reading but struggling with writing.
 - ii. 4th grade – Math is strength in 4th grade children. Teachers continue to work with them on ELA skills.
 - iii. BOCES
 1. data specialist administering practice assessments;
 2. working with teachers on pacing guide to make sure all curriculum aligned with Common Core is taught.
 - iv. Edocrina – getting free for the remainder of this year. Will allow teachers to collect data and get immediate feedback on student performance.
 - v. Test-taking skills. Children having fun playing 'detective,' i.e., finding words or items that can trip them up and discussing them.
- d. School Safety Plan. Last item to finalize for plan is to coordinate evacuation procedures with officials from Faith Bible Tabernacle church, across the street from the school. A meeting that was scheduled for Friday, March 2 was canceled due to a snow day and has been rescheduled.
- e. Other Issues. None.

7. Financial/Audit Committee Report – Patrick Miner, Board Treasurer

- a. Financial Statement for period ending January 31, 2018. Mr. Miner reviewed the financial statements. He reported that the financials, including the current ratio of 2.3,

continue to be favorable. A motion to accept the financial statements was made by Deborah Porter, seconded by Betty Evans and approved unanimously by the trustees. Ms. Kramer reported that the Capital Reserve Fund, with a starting deposit of \$50,000 has been set up at M&T Bank.

- b. Recast Budget. Kirisits & Associates developed a recast budget at our request to track the impact of the additional revenue generated by greater student enrollment than originally budgeted, and the additional expenses approved by the Board due to the increase in revenue, i.e., new positions, retroactive increases in salary for instructional staff, establishment of Capital Reserve Fund, new external lighting for safety, etc. A column will be added to our monthly financial reports to clarify and track these revenue and expense items.
- c. IRS 990 Income Tax Return for 2016. Lumsden & McCormick prepared CSI's 2016 income tax return. Kirisits & Associates vetted it. A motion to approve filing with the IRS was made by Pamela Nicastro, seconded by Peter Dow and approved unanimously by the trustees.
- d. Salary increases for instructional staff. Ms. Kramer distributed a chart detailing retroactive salary increases for instructional staff, including financial impact calculated by Kirisits & Associates.
- e. Contracts.
 - i. CVM Electric. Install new exterior lighting for additional safety/security at night, Also new premium efficiency LED luminaries will save electricity costs.
 - ii. AWP (Action Wall Pads). Wall pads for gymnasium to reduce risk of injury to students during physical education activities.Three bids were evaluated for each contract and vendor selected based on price and quality of service. Motion to approve contracts was made by Peter Dow, seconded by Deborah Porter and approved unanimously by the trustees.

8. Human Resources / Personnel Committee – Helene Kramer reporting

- a. New Hires. Motion to approve hiring a new Teaching Assistant for second grade was made by Patrick Miner, seconded by Pamela Nicastro and approved unanimously by the trustees.
- a. Revised Job Description – Head of School. Reviewed rationale for revising job description and explained revisions. Also reviewed change in qualifications, which requires a non-material revision with the NYSED – Charter School Office. Motion to approve resolution, pending CSO approval, was made by Morgan Williams-Bryant, seconded by Pamela Nicastro and approved unanimously by the trustees.
- b. NYSUT Union Negotiations. Ms. Kramer brought the board up to date on current status of negotiations. She shared a letter to staff, signed by Ms. Kramer and Mr. Fetter, and distributed March 5 which summarized current actions. She explained that CSI's attorney responded to the NLRB charges. While the union and CSI scheduled four dates to continue negotiations after the impasse over salaries, the union cancelled all of them. Ms. Kramer asked the board for consent for CSI to file a charge to bring the

union back to the bargaining table so we can continue to bargain in good faith toward developing a Collective Bargaining Agreement agreeable to both parties. The board agreed to allow our labor attorney to file the charge.

c. Confidential Personnel Issue (Executive Session)

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Ms. Kramer requested a motion to go into executive session to discuss a confidential personnel matter. Peter Dow moved, Deborah Porter seconded and the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session at 6:30 pm.

A motion to end executive session was made by Deborah Porter, seconded by Pamela Nicasastro and approved by the Board unanimously at 7:04 pm.

Ms. Kramer announced in Open Session that the Board discussed a confidential personnel matter.

- d. APA Solutions – Proposal for additional human resources consulting services. A motion to approve a proposal with APA Solutions for additional human resources consulting services was made by Peter Dow, seconded by Pamela Nicasastro and approved unanimously by the trustees.

9. New Business

- a. Revise CSI Bylaws. A motion to remove the word “ex officio” from Section 2.1 of the bylaws was made by Patrick Miner, seconded by Betty Evans and approved unanimously by the trustees.
- b. Board School Tour. Discussed board visiting classrooms to meet the teachers and allow the children to showcase the work they are doing. Ms. Adams shared a model that Buffalo Prep uses. Peter Dow offered to work with Mr. Fetter on setting a date, sharing the idea with teachers and working out a schedule of activities.

10. Old Business

- a. Strategic Planning Implementation – Status. Ms. Kramer reported that she was beginning to reach out to ELL populations, and had joined the planning committee for WNY Refugee Day in order to connect with the refugee community more directly. The Curriculum Committee continues to meet. The goal is to create an inquiry-based, interdisciplinary curriculum, infused with African and African-American history and culture. Committee members are meeting with all teachers to understand their concerns and/or barriers to implementation.

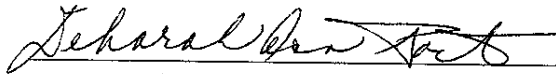
11. Next meeting(s):

- a. Regular monthly business meeting – Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 4:45 pm

12. Adjournment:

- a. Motion to adjourn the monthly board meeting made by Morgan Williams-Bryant, seconded by Deborah Porter and approved unanimously by trustees at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



Deborah A. Porter, Secretary

3/6/2018 Date