



# Charter School of Inquiry (CSI)

## Regular Monthly Board Meeting Minutes

**December 5, 2017**

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 December 5, 2017 at 4:50 pm at the Charter School of Inquiry, 404 Edison Street, Buffalo, New York 14215.

Trustees Present: Peter Dow, Betty Evans, Helene Kramer, Patrick Miner, Pamela Nicasastro, Deborah Porter, Jackie Roberson, Jr., Melissa Stadler, Morgan Williams-Bryant

CSI Staff: Robert Fetter, Head of School

Board Attorney: Steven Polowitz

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 December 5, 2017 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, November 7, 2017. A motion to approve minutes was made by Morgan Williams-Bryant, seconded by Deborah Porter and approved unanimously by the Board.

4. **Announcements**

- a. **NYSED CSO – Notice of Concern.** The NYSED Charter School Office informed us that they were concerned about CSI’s student proficiency rates for the 2016-17 academic year. They noted that we were slightly below the BPS average in ELA. Mr. Fetter prepared an improvement plan, which he shared with the Board during his Instruction/School Operations report (see below). He is also working with the Charter School Office to determine why they are reporting that there was no data for economically disadvantaged students in ELA and Math when our review showed that there was data.

- b. **Summary of Thought Leaders Discussion, November 9, 2017.** Ms. Kramer summarized the Thought Leaders discussion about charter schools organized by Business First and hosted at Hodgson Russ. Six charter schools were represented, along with Dr. Kriner Cash, Superintendent of Buffalo Public Schools. There were many common concerns and a discussion of the need for more collaboration among charter schools and between charter schools and the BPS. Dr. Cash said he would organize 3 meetings a year with the charters, each with a specific topic, to continue and build collaboration.
- c. **Holiday Concert & Art Show.** Scheduled December 21 at 1:30 pm.
- d. **Strategic Partnership with Daemen College.** A formal announcement about the partnership between CSI and Daemen College is scheduled December 6, 2017.
- e. **Spelling Bee and Spaghetti Dinner.** Sponsored by Parent Association. Will involve teachers, parents and students. The date is being determined.

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

- a. **Dashboard Reports.** Reviewed highlights of the dashboard reports, including new hires, and addressed trustee questions.
- b. **School Culture and Behavior Improvement Plan.** Presented plan with strategies to improve classroom management and student behavior. Instructional staff visited Elmwood Village Charter School to see full implementation of the Responsive Classroom model. Drs. Knapp and Patrone, professors who teach Applied Behavior and Classroom Management in the department of education at Daemen College, have been observing 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms and have developed a plan to shift teacher language from negative and redirective to more positive language. Other strategies include the addition of behavior intervention plans (Tier 3) for high needs students developed by the Student Support Team (SST). hiring a Student Support Coordinator, and aligning disciplinary policy, progressive discipline policy and Response Classroom.
- c. **2016-17 Academic Outcomes Report and Plan for Improvement.** ELA and Math scores on the NYS assessments for 2017-18 were reviewed, along with benchmarks in the Charter School Performance Plan. Strategies to improve 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade ELA math outcomes was shared with trustees. The plan was also shared with Susan Gibbons, CSI's liaison at the Charter School Office for her review. The importance of improving ELA outcomes in particular this year was stressed.
- d. **School Safety Plan.** An update on the status of the school safety plan was reviewed. The automated School Messenger system was implemented; the first automated calls to parents regarding attendance will begin on December 7, 2017. Text messaging will be next stage. The final safety plan will be submitted to the Board of Trustees at the February 2018 trustee meeting,
- e. **Other Issues.** None.

**6. Human Resources / Personnel Committee – Pamela Nicastro, Chair (Helene Kramer reporting)**

- a. **Personnel**. New hires approved included two 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, one of whom was new to CSI and the other who had been a long-term sub in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Motion to approve made by Pamela Nicastro, seconded by Patrick Miner and approved unanimously by the trustees.
- b. **NYSUT Union Negotiations (Executive Session)**
- c. **Confidential Legal Issue (Executive Session)**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Ms. Kramer requested a motion to go into executive session to discuss the status of confidential NYSUT negotiations and a confidential legal matter. Deborah Porter moved, Melissa Stadler seconded and the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session at 6:02 pm.

A motion to end executive session was made by Deborah Porter, seconded by Melissa Stadler and approved by the Board unanimously at 6:43 pm.

Ms. Kramer announced in Open Session that the Board discussed the status of confidential negotiations with NYSUT and a confidential legal matter.

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

a. **Financial Statement for period ending October 31, 2017.**

Mr. Miner reviewed the financial statements, including current ratios, for period ending October 31, 2017 and reported that everything was in order. Ms. Kramer asked for a motion to accept the financial reports. Melissa Stadler approved, Peter Dow seconded and the board approved the motion unanimously.

- b. **Resolution to Close Parent Association Account at M&T Bank.** In order to better manage Parent Association funds without incurring monthly bank fees, a resolution was introduced to close the M&T account and have Kirisits & Associates, CSI's accounting firm, handle the transactions through internal codes in the school's accounting system. Jackie Roberson approved the resolution, Betty Evans seconded and the board approved the motion unanimously.

**8. Parent Association – Jackie Roberson, Jr., President**

- a. **Parent Association.** The Parent Association met on October 30; it was a good meeting. Although there were still concerns about classroom management and teacher turnover, there were reports of improvement.

**9. New Business**

- a. **Policy; Allegations of Child Abuse by School Personnel and Volunteers.** Motion to approve was made by Pamela Nicastro, seconded by Morgan Williams-Bryant and approved unanimously by the trustees.

- b. **Policy: Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Policy.** Motion to approve was made by Pamela Nicastro, seconded by Jackier Roberson and approved unanimously by the trustees.

Trustees recommended that the policies be posted on the CSI website, communicated them to parents and included in the 2018-19 Family Handbook.

- c. **APA Solutions 360 Assessment Proposal.** A motion to approve a proposal from APA Solutions to conduct a 360 assessment of Head of School was made by Pamela Nicastro, seconded by Melissa Stadler and approved unanimously by the trustees.

**10. Next meeting(s):**

- a. **Regular monthly business meeting** – Tuesday, January 9, 2017 at 4:45 pm (this meeting was originally scheduled for January 2, 2017)

**11. Adjournment:**

- a. Motion to adjourn the monthly board meeting made by Melissa Stadler, seconded by Morgan Williams-Bryant and approved unanimously by trustees at 7:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
Secretary

Deborah Porter

12/5/2017 Date