

**Independence Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2015 6p.m.**

Board Members Present: Rashidah Andrews, Mike Barsanti, Rebecca Clothey Brigitte Daniel, Barbara Dundon, John Eagen, Susanna Greenberg, Tre Johnson, Krista Pfeiffer, Gloria Shabazz, Sheila Simmons, Elsie Stern, Claiborne Taylor, Gregory Turlington

Board Member(s) Absent: George Awad, Dana Twyman

Others Present: Thomas Scheid, CEO; Kristen Long, Middle School Principal; Kareem Thomas, Lower School Principal; Ramzy Andrawos, Director of Operations; Amy Leigh, Staff Representative; Cody Smith, IT Helpdesk Assistant; Michael Danyo, Santilli & Thomson associate; Debora DeVaughn, parent; Ebru Erkut, parent; Marc Hensley, parent; Rob Pandolfo, parent; Cynthia Kwan, parent; Jenny Hoedeman-Eiteljorg, Family & Community Partnerships Liaison and ICS Parent; Marc Hensley, Parent; Calvin Zimmermann, PhD candidate; Alejandro Gac-Artigas, Springboard Collaborative; John Hayes and Daryn Edwards, Blackney Hayes Architect; Megan Steelman, Compliance Manager

Call to Order

Gloria called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. and explained that the board members will go into an executive session for a few minutes to discuss confidential matters.

Executive Session

The board members returned from the executive session at 6:13p.m.

Approval of Minutes

John moved to accept the February meeting minutes, Barbara seconded. The motion passed. Susanna moved the March 15th Special Meeting minutes; Barbara seconded. Elsie, Rebecca and Mike abstained. The motion passed.

Public Comment

Debora DeVaughn (parent of 3 ICS students)- She explained that she is here to advocate on behalf of her 6th grader, whom she feels is a victim of the Zero Tolerance policy. She noted that the School District of Philadelphia recently did away with that policy and asked whether there have been any conversations about this amongst the board members regarding ICS considering abolishing that policy as well.

Gloria noted that the board will respond to all public comment concerns, but will not be doing so during the meeting.

Jenny Hoedeman-Eiteljorg (parent-)- She reported that the PTA wants to be sure that the board ensures that the Parent Board Rep job description is accurate before we start recruiting candidates for this year's open seat.

Amy Leigh (ICS Staff Rep)- She recommended that the Staff Rep job description also be reviewed that and asked that the Board make sure that the staff has elections for next school year.

Marc Hensley (PTA officer)- He expressed support for Jenny's concern about the Parent Rep seat having an accurate job description. He also voiced his concern about the Board

having executive sessions at the beginning of meetings, instead of at the end; he stated that having them at the end would make it easier for everyone to manage their evening.

Rob Pandolfo (parent)- He stated that he would like to learn more about the summer program being funded under the 21st Century grant. Gloria noted that Tom will be talking a little about that in his CEO report.

Finance Report

Gloria asked Mike to review the financial report. Mike pointed out two typos on the cover page, check 10842 for Ned's Metropolitan was for \$15,000--- not \$150,000 and the revenue over expenses is \$294,327---- not \$269,326. Other than the typos, Mike reported that the financials are fine. Mike noted that the Philadelphia School District did their reconciliation in February, but there was not much financial impact. He said ICS' special education population is growing and getting closer to the budget assumption. He noted that the psychology line item is over budget and will be adjusted in the next round of budget adjustments. In addition, on page 5, line 152 is over budget, because we had to increase our computer back-up capability. Line 177 shows \$294,000 revenue over expense, so we are on track with our budget. The food services program is doing better and starting to break even for the year. Krista asked what the development expense is; Mike said we use that as a placeholder for grants and appeals. John moved the January disbursement resolution; Elsie seconded. The motion passed. John moved the February disbursement resolution; Sheila seconded. The motion passed.

CEO Report

Tom reviewed his PowerPoint presentation (attached):

Tom explained that the Finance Committee met with the Principals, Assistant Principal and Director of Operations to discuss next year's budget and they will have a follow-up meeting this Friday to discuss plans for next year's budget and that a Special Board meeting is scheduled for April 29th to discuss the budget. In addition, there will be another Special Meeting on May 13th to approve the budget. He noted that there will be a Finance Committee meeting sometime between this Friday and the 20th. John is working on finalizing plans for that.

Summer @ ICS 2015: Tom explained that some parts of the summer program will be funded through the 21st Century grant. The summer program will include:

-literacy

-Techgirlz access for girls to STEM & Algebra I prep for 7th graders. He noted that passing the Keystone Algebra test at the end of 8th grade usually lets students skip Algebra I in 9th grade and then students have time to take additional higher math courses.

-theatre (3 weeks)

-music (working on extending the program that has been happening after school)

The 21st Century grant allows us to pay for an administrator, which then allows us to add additional programs that will benefit students. Tom stated that if we don't purchase the Springboard program, then we will have to develop our own program. He noted that in years two and three, 90% of the cost will be paid by the 21st Century grant.

Tom introduced Alejandro Gac-Artigas from Springboard Collaborative, who gave a presentation, highlighting that a lot of the achievement gap seems to stem from summer learning gaps (copy attached). The presentation noted that research seems to show the need for parents, students and schools to be communicating in order for students to be successful. Springboard coaches teachers and provides on-going parent workshops. The program would benefit students at Pre-K to end of third grade reading level, no matter in what grade the child is currently enrolled. The program includes an on-line library and three professional development sessions for teacher training. Teachers do home visits

before the program starts. There is also one hour of weekly coaching for each teacher. A question was raised: Is there continued support over the school year? The model is meant to be continuous. They are starting a “lite” version for students who don’t need the intense program, but just need some support in order not to regress over the summer. Another question: What do we do about transportation? Tom noted that we have found that transportation hasn’t been a big problem for most of our families and that for those who need support with that, ICS would assist.

Elsie asked how students for the summer Algebra class will be selected. Tom said they will be identified by teachers.

Tom introduced Calvin Zimmermann, a third year PhD student at the University of Pennsylvania. He is interested in looking at race and gender issues, starting in kindergarten. The other half is that he’s interested in starting a mentoring program with fourth grade boys. Gloria said she thinks this is the first time we’ll have a research project that directly involves students; she wants to be sure that the board is clear in regard to the extent of direct intervention there will be with the students. Calvin clarified that he would be a classroom observer and would not have specific interactions with the students. He said he is looking at student behavior in general, as well as students’ and teachers’ responses. Eventually he will start tracking a smaller group of students.

Charter Renewal: Tom announced that the School Reform Commission will vote on the renewal on 5/11/15 at 4p.m. All are welcome to attend.

ICS-West: Tom stated that the charter for ICS-West needs to be signed by May 31, 2015. By then we need to have a building, a management agreement, board members and enrollment figures. He reported that several board members, the Director of Operations and Tom have toured the site of a closed parochial school at 56th & Chester Avenue. He said he has contacted an architectural firm that has done some work at this site previously. The building is currently owned by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The architects gave a presentation, showing the current site and potential plans for the future. It was noted that this location is accessible by the trolley. Mastery Charter used the space for a little while, then moved out because the School District of Philadelphia offered them a building in the area. Tom clarified that we included this building at our second hearing for the new school application. Alternate plans could be to rent some retail space in the area or we could do new construction. Brigitte asked what the enrollment will be; Tom said the new school’s enrollment will be 800 for K-8 and room for growth. Tom said we’re working on two different budgets- one based on new construction and one for renovating the Chester Avenue site. Elsie asked if Mastery had any problems with crime or anything while they were there. The architects said they were not aware of any specific problems while Mastery was in the building. Gloria noted that we would need to secure the unused spaces safely. Tom stated that Jefferson University Hospital leases one of the buildings for a single mothers’ program. He said that ICS-West would be renting the building from the developer. Gloria clarified that we have no commitment to the developer if we decide not to pursue this building. Even though we wouldn’t be using it until the 2016-2017 school year, we need a lease before May 31, 2015. Elsie asked if we can get financing even if we are just leasing the property. Tom said that we will be receiving some outside funding and will pursue other funding sources. Tom is hosting guests from the Reinvestment Fund tomorrow; they might have some funds available. Mike noted that ICS-West would not be eligible to get bonds until we are up to full enrollment and would need to get bridge funding or some other type of funding until that time. Gloria noted that paying rent was built into the charter application. Tom noted that we asked for 500 students for the first year; however, the SRC approved the new charter application for 300 students for the first year. Tom said he and the board are working

with the SRC regarding the enrollment issue. Krista asked whether the plan is feasible if we only get approval for 300-400 students for the first year. Tom stated the hope is that after the first three years of the charter, that we would be renewed and get an increase to 900 students. Gloria clarified that funds from the current ICS will not be used for the site. Tom noted that we now have an extension to June to complete our 5-year strategic plan to submit to the Philadelphia Schools Partnership. Tom asked for a 3-person task force, made up of board members, to be set up very soon. The new school's board needs to be set up soon also. We are looking for a start-up board with a few members and then some ICS-1600 board members who are rotating off in June will hopefully become board members for ICS-West. Mike asked whether it is this current board that makes the decision for the new school or if it's the new board of the new school. Tom clarified that the SRC wants the current board involved in this early phase. He stated the management agreement is key. John recommended looking to potential ICS-West parents (possibly use the current ICS waiting list) as potential board members. Tom thanked Rebecca, John and Gloria for their hard work through this process.

5-year Strategic Planning Process for ICS: Tom stated that there has been one planning session so far that included board members, parents and administrators. The consultant met with the teachers on March 25th. Teachers, board members, parents and administrators have been invited to the next session on April 19th. At least one more session with only teachers will also be planned. Gloria clarified that we have received planning funds from the Philadelphia Schools Partnership and, of course, we wanted to do a strategic plan. Tom noted that we also are at the mid-point for our Middle States review process, so the planning ties into that report which is due on May 1st. Rashidah asked whether the potential new board members are being invited to the remaining strategic planning session; Tom said he will work on this.

2015-2016 Calendar: Tom noted that the School District of Philadelphia is closing on Friday, September 25th due to traffic expected with the pope's visit and that the 2015-2016 calendar will be voted on at the special board meeting on April 29th.

Resolutions

John asked if we have the budget figured out to pay for the Springboard summer reading program that wouldn't be covered by the 21st Century grant. Tom said that for the first year the grant will pay for about 80% of the cost. He clarified that the amount that we pay teachers is included in this amount. Tom asked the principals if there are interested teachers; the principals said they hadn't been asked to recruit teachers yet, but that the program sounds amazing and they anticipate many teachers will be interested. Tom noted that Wissahickon Charter School uses the program and they are very happy with it. Tom said stated that it's a 4-hour a day program and that we are looking at including 90 students. Tom suggested changing the resolution wording to approving the contract with oversight by the Finance Committee. Resolution amended: "contingent on receiving approval from the Program officer of the 21st Century Program." Brigitte asked if the parents in the 21st Century program are already on board. Tom and Gloria noted that is an area with which Springboard will assist. Tom noted that there will be twenty incoming kindergarten students included. Tom hopes to start the new program with the incoming kindergartners very soon. Mike said he has heard positive feedback about the Springboard program. Elsie asked how Springboard clusters; no one was sure how that is done, but Tom will ask. Elsie moved the amended resolution; Rashidah seconded. The motion passed.

Gloria asked if there were questions about Mr. Zimmermann's project. Rebecca clarified that Tom had sent the information to her for review and she feels it sounded fine and she confirmed that he will not be having direct interaction with the students. Rebecca

moved the motion; Barbara seconded. Gloria stated he would be at ICS two days per week. The motion passed.

Adjournment

Gloria reminded everyone that the next Special Meeting is April 29th at 6p.m. She said she would like as many people to attend in person as possible. The meeting was adjourned at 8:27p.m.

Independence Charter School April 8, 2015 Resolutions

ADOPTED

January Disbursements

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approves disbursements from the month of January 2015 in the amount of \$361,123.33

February Disbursements

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approves disbursements from the month of February 2015 in the amount of \$263,859.92

Summer Reading Program Contract

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approves the 3-year contract for the amount of \$75,950.00 PER YEAR with Springboard Collaborative to implement a summer reading program in each of three years, contingent on receiving approval from the program officer of the 21st Century Program such that at least 80% of the cost can be paid through those funds.

Calvin Zimmermann Research Project

Be it hereby resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees approves the influences of gender and race longitudinal research project by University of Pennsylvania PhD candidate Calvin Zimmermann.

Resolutions DEFEATED: None

Resolutions TABLED – None