

**Independence Charter School  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
June 10, 2009 7:00 pm**

**Board Members Present:** Becky Baehr, Anyabwile Banko'le, Rona Buchalter, Eric Cramer  
Nicole Perkins Kilcullen, Rosina Miller, Kristin Nocco, Pam Prell, Pedro Rodriguez

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Jurate Krokys, CEO; Ramzy Andrawos, Director of Operations; Stephanie Bungard, Principal; Megan Steelman, Administrative Assistant; Leonora Cravotta, Development Director; Michael Farrell & Amy Leigh (Tr. Rep for meeting), teachers; Jerry Santilli, Santilli & Thomson; John Eagen, Cristina Vea (PTA Liaison), Tina Kluetmeier, & Elsie Stern, parents; Eli Lesser, Community Member; Robin Kohles, Owner's Rep (& Parent)

**I. Call to Order**

**Co-President Pam** called the meeting to order at 7:11pm. She noted that tonight is the Board's annual meeting and welcomed new Parent Seat Board member Elsie Stern, who will take the oath of office later in the meeting. She also recognized John Eagen and Eli Lesser who have been nominated for Board seats.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The May minutes were approved unanimously with two corrections; the Yom Kippur holiday date on the 2009-2010 calendar was corrected and the name "Stephanie" was deleted from the attendance list.

**III. CEO Report**

**Jurate** asked Stephanie to give a staffing update. Stephanie noted that the 3-day International Festival was so successful this year, giving the students a wealth of information. She reported that nearly all 2009-2010 positions are filled with qualified candidates for open positions. We are still scheduling demonstration lessons for Arabic and Swahili. Jurate has several leads and is following up on them. Three teachers will be leaving or moving to new positions; one is Maestra Leonor who has been selected as the World Languages Coach. Jurate noted that the national charter school conference is in two weeks. Pedro and Pam are registered. Pam noted that Rona and she may be sharing a registration. Jurate, Tr. Martha and Tr. Chris White will be presenting a workshop together. There are lots of good workshops offered. Today 8<sup>th</sup> graders accompanied Jurate and Dean Yerodin to the School Reform Commission meeting to receive recognition for ICS's receiving the Goldman Sachs prize for excellence in international education. Jurate was able to speak for two minutes; she was able to share information such as the high schools to which 8<sup>th</sup> graders have been accepted. The high school list will be included in the next newsletter. Jurate reported that the charter school community is quite concerned about several issues, such as the SRC's handling of opening schools, etc. Charter school leaders are working to address these issues effectively. Jurate thanked the Community Relations Committee for extending the International Festival. Representatives from consulates attended and we had fantastic performers. The fifth graders raised over 50,000 pennies for helping kids in Afghanistan; they will be taking them to the bank on Friday. The campaign was totally organized by students. Pam noted this is the first year that the fifth grade has studied Afghanistan and that they seem to have gotten deeply into the culture. ICS was also awarded a citation from City Council regarding ICS's receipt of the Goldman Sachs award. Pedro noted that he is concerned that the charter school group sometimes seems to be talking as if all public schools are wrong. Pam agreed that is sometimes true. Jurate stated

that although that can be true, charter schools also have to become less reactive, which is why the group is considering hiring a public relations firm. Anyabwile stated that he feels strongly that ICS be firm about the issue being the need for quality education wherever that is able to occur. Becky stated that the idea of a charter school coalition concerns her because charter schools are supposed to be independent. Pam suggested that it's important for the Board to be involved with the decision regarding how much time our CEO spends on these efforts, etc. Jurate suggested that the Board hold a pre-meeting workshop, as we have with legal responsibilities of the Board, etc. Pam asked Jerry for his input; he stated that the hope is for the charter school coalition to work on emphasizing positive developments of charter schools. Stephanie pointed out that here are some issues that first need to be reviewed regarding the self-defense parts of the workshop.

#### **IV. PTA Report**

**Cristina** highlighted several areas of the PTA report: the student talent show is on Friday night; the PTA will be helping with the summer book fair, the PTA is working on making summer reading books more accessible next summer, the Riversharks baseball game outing is on Father's Day, the Middle School Parents' group is recruiting for additional members. The PTA has been researching information about holding a safe travel workshop for students.

#### **V. Teachers' Report**

**Amy** reported that the year-end wrapping up is happening. The extended day program was a big effort this year and seems to have been successful. The first two field days have gone well. The first day (K-2) was "Plan B" due to the wet weather. Tomorrow is the third day. She reminded people to participate in the summer book fair; any purchase counts, except for university book stores and on-line. Teachers have questions regarding why they haven't received laptops yet and whether ICS is considering offering sabbaticals for staff after a certain number of years of service. There is also continued concern of ICS being aware to not only send out information on the list serve. Amy also read two concerns she received after the written Teachers' report was circulated. Both were regarding the handling of yesterday's pipe burst and confusion that was felt. The two writers voiced concerns about whether ICS has an adequate emergency plan. Pam stated that the Curriculum Committee will address the technology question and HR will address the sabbatical question. Pam asked Jurate to address the communication issues (both the non-list serve users and the plan for emergencies). Jurate stated that the administrative team met this morning to address how yesterday's situation was handled. She stated that we will start to have fire drills when kids are not in a regular classroom. Yesterday's fierce weather added to the fear that many students felt. Pam recommended that that information be communicated to staff as soon as possible. Rosina added that chain-of-command also needs to be clarified. Pedro asked whether we have emergency sheets. Jurate stated that we do have emergency plans. In this morning's meeting we come up with several items to change including key staff always having walkie-talkies and getting firsthand information. Pedro asked if we have video tapes we can check. Jurate stated that we do, and we've reviewed them and saw many people doing tremendous things. Stephanie also noted that by 9a.m. there was amazing calm throughout the school. Staff pitched in---making sandwiches since the cafeteria couldn't be used, helping clean up, and keeping the day as normal as possible for the students.

#### **VI. Development Report**

**Leonora** reported that our FLAP grant has been submitted. She thanked the Board members who have purchased and sold tickets to next Friday's wine tasting event. We now only have a \$748 development budget deficit.

## **VII. Construction Update**

No written report was circulated. **Robin** reported that there will be several summer construction projects. She circulated a construction budget sheet and noted that once those completed, the bond money will all be spent.

## **VIII. Committee Reports**

### **A. Finance**

**Rosina** clarified that usually the Finance Committee would have already reviewed the financial statements before bringing them to the full Board for approval. Rosina explained that the Finance Committee didn't meet last Friday due to recent information about the anticipated per student capita funding. In addition, more information is needed regarding federal stimulus money. She reported that the Board will need to hold a special meeting sometime before the end of June to adopt a budget before July 1<sup>st</sup> as required by law. Rosina asked Jerry to give additional information about this situation.

Jerry stated that the school district has never given less than a 3% per student increase. This year they are most likely only giving a 1.2% increase and less than one percent for students receiving special education services. Kristin asked if the School District gets the same amount as us per pupil. Jerry states that is not the case; there is a specific calculation used for charter schools. Jerry said this appears to be a directive from the state. Charter schools are considering hiring an outside person to double-check this calculation. This year the state has included pre-K and early intervention programs into the calculation. Pam asked what our recourse will be; Jerry said it will probably end up going to court. Jurate stated that earlier this year the state was contemplating giving less money for students who receive special education services. Jerry stated the Board may want to consider using its reserve funds to cover this, cutting the budget or re-thinking the use of stimulus funds. Rona stated there had been discussion in the past that we should spend some of our surplus. Jerry stated you need to keep 90 days operational money in reserve and funds for other contingencies. Jerry stated he would not recommend getting rid of the reserve fund. Rosina stated that her recommendation is to use those funds since this is an emergency contingent. She stated that the Finance Committee will discuss this further to give a recommendation. Pam and Rona agreed with that thought. Nicole stated she would hate to have to re-think the use of stimulus funds. Kristin we wouldn't want to continue doing that year-after-year; other Board members agreed. Rona stated this is the type of issue that needs to be communicated with staff to ensure they are in the loop with no big surprises. Nicole asked whether it makes sense to adopt a budget based on a 3% increase even though we know the increase is slated to be so much less; that might not put us in a strong position. Jerry clarified that it's state law that we can't revise a budget within 90 days of adopting it. Rosina noted that we try not to make many budget adjustments. Rosina stated the Finance Committee will meet soon; the Special Meeting to adopt the budget will most likely happen via phone. Pam stated it's important to circulate that information. Jerry noted we need call in capacity. Some people need to be at the school on speaker phone. Rosina agreed that we'd circulate the proposed budget, etc. ahead of time. It was noted that information would need to be made available early in order for it to be sent home with students and/or mailed out, in addition to it being posted on the list serve. Pedro asked what our legal obligations are in regard to posting meeting dates. It was agreed that at least 24 hours notice is

necessary. Anyabwile pointed out that in this case we could certainly justify the need to adjust the budget at a later date. Several members noted that the budget should be as conservative as possible. It was agreed that the Special Meeting will be held next Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 7p.m. This information will be posted immediately. Jurate will check with legal counsel regarding appropriate notice.

Jerry reported on the Food Service program. Jurate, Ramzy, Jerry and Linton staff met last week to straighten out the bookkeeping. Linton has not been cutting off their invoices on the last day of the month. We are currently anticipating a \$25,000 loss. Linton has had an average of a \$2,000 surplus per month; however, there is also the additional cost of ICS having a 75% staff person (more than originally planned). Jerry stated that as we move ahead, that will be taken into account. We need to look at whether or not we want to increase the price for full-priced meals. Families owe about \$5,000 on accounts; some of that might need to be written off. Jurate noted that we chose Linton due to the quality of their food and other things. She added that we are meeting regularly meeting with Linton. Rosina asked when we'll have all this data. Jerry said he hopes to have it by the end of the school year. Kristin asked to whom Linton gives information regarding what is thrown away. Jerry and Ramzy said that has not been shared with us. Jerry stated we are serving about 20% less students than we anticipated. Pam stated that there needs to be a reevaluation about promises that were made by Linton and how they are fulfilling their obligations. Jurate recommended we have an ad hoc committee to make decisions about the price of lunch, getting clarification on the services provided by Linton, etc. Kristin stated that we need put this out to bid for the 2010-2011 school year. Pam asked whether Kristin would agree to be on an ad hoc committee. Jerry stated there is a \$25,000 subsidy built into the Food Services program for next year, so the decision regarding raising the price or not does not need to be made right away.

Jerry reviewed the April financial statements. Jerry promised to have quarterly statements for Worlds of Opportunities next year. ICS's cash flow is strong and received several grants recently. Pam asked about spending by Worlds. Jerry stated those expenses include Board insurance, paying on the debt, etc. Pam asked what procedures are in place to e checks and balances; Jerry stated Worlds uses the same procedures as ICS. Budget variances are very small. Pam asked about line #68. Jerry explained that since we allow staff to sometimes use tuition reimbursement funds for conferences one line item has a deficit and the other ends up with a surplus.

Rosina asked the Board to review the April operations report. Rosina moved the expenditures motion; Becky seconded. Kristin asked whether any 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip expenses came out of the general operations budget. Rona asked why there would be money remaining in salaries. Jerry noted that there is a position that is vacant. The motion passed unanimously. Jurate agreed to bring the expense information about the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to the next meeting.

## **B. Human Resources**

**Becky** reported that the Employee Handbook should be updated by July. She reported that the Independent Professional Development plan is almost completed and will be ready for the next Board meeting. Becky emphasized that benefits will remain at the same level for next year. Jurate explained that there are some details of the 2009-2010 benefits are still being worked out and she will circulate the final plan once it's ready. Becky moved the hiring resolution; Eric seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **C. Curriculum**

**Pam** reported that she wants to table to Global Education proposal and wait until the next meeting. Pam asked for input on the draft. She noted that the document includes a lot of items administration and staff will need to do, as well as a charge to the Board. The Children's Literacy Initiative information will be included in the 2009-2010 budget proposal. Pam circulated the summer curriculum writing information. Pedro asked about item #7 on the committee's report. Pam stated Jurate brought a list of proposed positions that would need to be included in this process.

### **D. Board Development**

No report was circulated. **Pedro** reported that by the next Board meeting a new member's packet will be available. He also noted that there is a primer available via the internet. Pam asked that Pedro meets with her before the packet is completed to be sure we include information we get from the national charter school conference. Kristin stated that the two recent pre-meeting workshops have been great and we might want to do more of them. Pam stated that's something she wants to work on over the summer, as well as deciding whether or not we need to have some type of Board retreat.

## **IX. Public Comment Period**

**No one signed up for the Public Comment Period.** Jurate noted that Robin reminded her that we hope to erect the canopy near the gate. We had asked an ICS parent who is in that business to give us a possible price; Ken Roscioli stated that the total cost would be \$30,000. Jurate stated that legal counsel said he didn't have a concern about this. Pam asked why we wouldn't need to send this out to bid. Robin explained we would be buying this product for \$20,000 and the \$10,000 installation cost would be included in the cost of the playground completion. Pam asked how we know if it's a good price without bidding. Robin stated this is a unique product that we would not be able to get for less. Nicole noted that we would need documentation regarding all of these details. Pam asked whether CCRA has seen this. Robin stated CCRA hasn't seen it, but that zoning has approved it. Robin will make sure to notify CCRA. Pedro asked if any security cameras need to be moved; Robin said that will not be necessary. It was agreed that a resolution is not needed due to these expenses all being within the bond funding.

## **X. Old Business**

Pam asked Kristin to review the Parent Seat nomination process. The process that was used this year was included in the Board packet. Pam stated we don't seem to need a resolution because we may want to change it in the future. However, if someone has any issues with this process, they should voice concerns. Kristin and Pam noted that it's important to be able to track how voting is being done. It was agreed that we should not use two systems of voting (i.e., not Survey Monkey and paper ballots).

## **XI. New Business**

Becky moved and read the Founders' Designation resolution; Anyabwile seconded. The motion passed unanimously. All three nominees were applauded vigorously.

Pam nominated Eli Lesser for a Founders' Seat; Nicole seconded. Rosina nominated John Eagen for a Founders' Seat; Becky seconded. Both motions passed unanimously. Eli, John and Elsie took the oath of Board membership.

Pam thanked Anyabwile for his contributions to the Board, especially for his wisdom and balance. Nicole was also thanked for her enormous sacrifices she made on behalf of the Board. Pam recognized ICS Founding Board member Eric Cramer, who participated in writing the ICS mission and vision, as well as the bylaws. Eric moved our appeal through the state process, among a lot of other things. Eric noted how ICS is a testament to what committed people can do. He stated that teamwork of the core organizing group. He noted that the Board meetings are now “wonderfully boring” compared to some of the initial meetings when we were getting started. He noted further that the school gets created anew each year, which is really something special.

Rosina nominated Rona for President; Pedro seconded. Pam noted this would be the first time that a non-founding member will serve as President. The motion passed unanimously. Rona nominated Pam for Vice President; Rosina seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Becky nominated Rosina for Treasurer, Pedro seconded. Rosina nominated Kristin for Secretary; Becky seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## **XII. Adjournment**

**Anyabwile** moved to adjourn; Becky seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

### Handouts circulated at this meeting:

Agenda  
Minutes from the May 2009 meeting  
CEO report  
Teachers' Report  
PTA Report  
April financials  
Development Report  
Curriculum Committee Minutes  
Human Resources Committee Minutes  
Construction fund financial sheet  
2009 Parent Board Seat Nomination Process

**Independence Charter School**

**June 10, 2009**

**Resolutions**

**ADOPTED**

**1. April Disbursements**

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approve disbursements from the month of April 2009 in the amount of \$140,865.61 as presented to the Board.

**2. New Hires for 2009-2010**

Be it resolved that the following individuals be offered full time positions as listed for the 2009-2010 school year under the terms and conditions specified by the CEO and the ICS contract:

Eva Recio: Middle School Spanish Language Arts & Social Studies

Joshua Klur: Middle School Math

Annie Huynh: Mandarin

**3. Global Education**

Be it resolved that Independence Charter School adopt the attached Global Education Task Force proposal as a model for growth over the next 15 months. This proposal articulates a plan for integrating global education into the ICS curriculum and provides a theoretical framework for such integration. Implementation of this proposal will be supervised by ICS staff and the Curriculum Committee.

**4. Founders' Designation**

Be it resolved that Independence Charter School Board of Trustees recognize the following members of the ICS community who have contributed in exceptional ways to the formation and support of our schools, its mission and program:

Nicole Kilcullen, a board member of over three years who gave endlessly of her time and energy to guide our board and community through the process of moving to a new location.

Donna Sharer, a parent of three ICS students, who has served on the Curriculum Committee as well as the Global Education Task Force and the Middle School Task Force. In addition, Donna's has given her time generously to write Social Studies curriculum and support teachers when needed in implementing the curriculum and innovative programs such as National History Day. [Donna has also been a generous supporter through donations for various projects.](#)

[Krista Pfeiffer, a part of the original staff of ICS has fulfilled many roles at ICS: as Board Secretary, data input person as we prepared to open school, as Teaching Intern, later Teacher and finally as an on-call guest teacher. Krista has been a committed staff member who has gone beyond what was required for the sake of the students and the school contributing significantly in its most formative years.](#)

**Resolutions**

**DEFEATED**

**None**

**Resolutions**

**TABLED**