

Beacon Academy Charter District 4124
 Board Meeting Minutes, December 10, 2008 6:00 p.m.
 12325 Highway 55, Plymouth, MN 55441

CALL TO ORDER Tam Harken called the meeting to order to at 6:04 pm.

ROLL CALL (present at time of meeting unless otherwise noted)

Board Member	Present	Absent
Cathy Burke	✓	
Bob Zarriello	✓	
Tam Harken	✓	
Kalin Farrell	✓	

Board Member	Present	Absent
Scott DesBles	✓	
Jordan Ford (ex-officio)	✓	
Gretchen McQuillan		✓
Candace Newman	✓	

Board Member	Present	Absent
Anne Ingvaldson	✓	
Lori Karcz	✓	
Anne Marie Roder	✓	
Terese Corey Blanck	✓	

ADVISORY MEMBERS Janet Carlson, Keith Johnson, Sean Koster

MISC. ATTENDEES Grant Carlson, Paul Larson, Christina Holmes, Lori Berning, Eric Born, Bill Johnson, Shawn Hartzel, Karen Cieminski

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT *(choral reading) "To provide Twin Cities' families with a proven, rigorous and content-rich curriculum integrated with sequential Spanish language instruction. The School will create a results-driven small learning community built around a culture of positive character development and committed parental involvement."*

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA: Forwarded by Ann Marie, seconded by Kalin, unanimously approved. Agenda has been amended to include the 1st reading of the Attendance Policy 503 by the governance committee.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES 11-12-08: Kalin forwarded motion to approve; Candace seconded it, unanimously approved.

11-18-08: Terese forwarded motion to approve; Cathy seconded it, approved by all except Scott DesBles. He abstained since he was not present at the meeting.

12-3-08: Terese forwarded motion to approve; Kalin seconded it, unanimously approved.

Open Floor Comments: None

Treasurers Report-Bob Zarriello-(see handout)

- *Bank Balance as of 11-30-08: \$797,839.48, with a projected fund balance at 19.7% for 6-30-09.*
- *We are currently at 372 students, which is what the budget is set at.*
- *We have spent about \$67,000 from the \$80,000 Walton Grant.*
- *The audit report has been completed and Dennis Hoogevand will be at the January 14th meeting to present findings from the audit.*
- *The lease numbers will be presented later in the meeting. Those numbers will reflect lease costs at about \$534,000, which is \$4,000 over our budget. We are coming in \$3,000 more than the budget for operating costs and the costs for heating and electrical in the portables will be additional.*
- *The current budget for technology is \$25,000 and we are already over budget in this area.*

Motion:	To approve the financial report.		
Made by:	Terese	Seconded by:	Scott

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Discussion:			
Vote:	Yea: all	Nay: none	Abstain: none
Decision:	passes		

Jordan sent out a memo from MACS today regarding the state budget deficit. MACS suggested reducing next years' budgeted revenue and expenses by 5% so that fund balances do not start to shrink. Lease aide to charter schools may also be at risk because of the state budget deficit.

Thank you to Keith for the 5 year budgets that he put together. These will assist us in planning for the future. (See handouts)

Principal's Report(Jordan Ford):

1. Enrollment Report (see handout) *Beacon Academy currently has 372 students and has waiting lists in Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade.*
2. Technology
 - IT position – The Technology Committee will elaborate on the position. They have received numerous applications since it was posted as a full-time position in the Star Tribune last Sunday.
 - Block of Time (50 hrs for \$5,000) – Ricoh agreed to offer another Block of Time at the reduced rate of \$100/hr.
 - Downstairs copier (see attached memo from Crabtree) – We used it heavily during the first 2 months of school and having a second copier is really necessary. *Jordan would suggest renting a copier for the rest of the year. He estimated it would be about \$99 a month with a per sheet fee as well. It will probably be less than \$1,000 for the rest of the school year. Jordan will obtain a current quote and will forward the information. The current copy count from August 20th through the middle of November is about 280,000 sheets. The copy codes for teachers and office staff will be monitored in an effort to reduce the number of copies.*

Motion:	To approve money to rent one copy machine from Crabtree at a cost of \$99 a month plus the per sheet cost.		
Made by:	Anne	Seconded by:	Terese
Discussion:			
Vote:	Yea: All, but Scott	Nay: Scott	Abstain: none
Decision:	passes		
There was discussion on whether we should make this decision now or wait until January when we have final numbers. Jordan thinks we will have a better rate if we do this before the end of the month.			

3. Open House Invite – you are invited to our first Open House on Thursday, Dec. 11th from 6-7:30 PM
4. Portables- *Third grade is moving to the portables and music and Spanish will be moving to the 3rd grade classrooms. Jordan would like to put LCD projectors in the music, Spanish, and 5th grade classroom. This money will come out of the Walton Grant.*

5. *Contract for Erin Ross (Special education teacher) The special education team is overloaded with their current case load. Ninety percent of the salary of the new teacher will be reimbursed by state special education funds. There are currently 15 students, mostly middle school that are set to work with this new teacher.*

Motion:	To approve contract for Erin Ross (special education teacher)				
Made by:	Terese	Seconded by:	Cathy		
Discussion:					
Vote:	Yea:	all	Nay:	none	Abstain: none
Decision:	passes				

6. *Air Quality Testing –Jordan would like testing done to ensure the health and safety of all staff and students. Janet thinks that doing testing is a good idea, but does not think we can blame the building as a source until the tests have been completed. It was clarified that there was no statement blaming the building, but it is incumbent upon the board to assure the health and safety of staff and students.*

Motion:	To give Jordan permission to spend up to \$4,000 for air quality testing with IEA.				
Made by:	Candace	Seconded by:	Anne		
Discussion:					
Vote:	Yea:	all	Nay:	none	Abstain: none
Decision:	passes				
Terese wants to make sure that the experts give us some direction and that we are as shrewd as possible with spending the money. The testing should be done before the holiday break.					

Assistant Principal’s Report (Sean Koster):

1. Student Conduct

- 328 students did not earn an office referral!
- We had 134 referrals this past trimester – 2.3 a day.
- 49 students earned all of those 134 referrals.
- 30 of those 49 had only one referral.
- In other words, 19 students earned 104 referrals.

2. Middle school incentive plan

- December 19th the Middle School teachers are rewarding students

3. Hallway Behavior Program

- The Middle School teachers, support staff, and administration have been monitoring the hallways extensively and building relationships.

4. Behavior/Incentive Plan

- We have taken the 6 students who have earned 44% of the referrals in the school and created individualized behavior incentive plans for them.

5. Behavior Processing Room

- It is still my hope with the advent of the Portables that we can carve out one of the small rooms for a behavior processing room to help students who are not responding to our Responsive Classroom/Developmental Designs approach.

Dean of Student's Report (Janet Carlson):

1. Gifted and Talented

The second annual Kids College event was an exciting and successful event on Nov. 13. Twenty one different courses were offered for our 1st-8th graders with each child enrolling in 2 courses. This event was sponsored by the GLO committee and would not have been possible without a great deal of time, effort and help from Rachel Parnes, Karen Cieminski, Laurinda Romportl and Karen Callis. We also appreciated Ann Marie's help in recruiting volunteers for each of the courses, and help from student council with signs, snacks and thank you notes.

Enrichment/Review blocks began this week in grades 1-5 and a note was sent home to parents explaining the program and logistics. I also held the first 2 meetings of writing club as part of the enrichment options for 2nd graders.

Book clubs during lunch and recess for grades 1-5 are being organized with planning meetings in December and book club meetings starting after winter break. Forty nine students have elected to forgo recess in order to participate in book clubs.

Inventor's Fair and Geography Bee after school meetings have begun for events and competitions occurring after winter break. (Thanks to Cathy Burke, Michelle Thyren and Rainey Miller.)

2. Assessment

Report cards were mailed home Monday with the fall NWEA report for each child.

I have ordered the EXPLORE test for 8th graders to take in the spring. This is commonly given to 8th or 9th graders in other districts to prepare for high school registration. It includes a career interest inventory as well as achievement questions. The MN Dept. of Ed is underwriting the cost of this assessment this year. It is also a predictor of how students might perform on the ACT tests in high school.

3. Professional Development

Candace, Anne and Lori Karcz had the opportunity to attend the National Core Knowledge Conference in late November and will be sharing tips, ideas and info. with faculty Wed. morning. (Maybe they'll share a few highlights at the board meeting too.)

Teachers have completed the first round of Q Comp peer observations.

I am serving on a committee to plan the state wide Quality Compensation conference scheduled for January 30, 2009.

Teachers participated in a JMC training session with Jeanette Olson and Scott DesBles to prepare for using the system starting at the beginning of the 2nd trimester. The next round of report cards will be entered via JMC.

PAC Report: No report

Board Chair Report (Tam Harken): Lease Update

Tam sent the board an updated copy of the lease today. The landlord is requesting a security deposit of \$15,000. This is the first time that the building owner is requesting a security deposit from Beacon Academy. Ann Marie questioned why this is coming up since we have been good tenants in the building for 5 years now. Bob said that is standard practice in most lease situations to have a security deposit. Kalin and Ann Marie are concerned that we are going to be charged with small things that were present in the building before Beacon Academy inhabited it. Ann Marie pointed out that we are not the only ones that use this facility and we are not responsible for what happens on the weekends and in other areas of the building. Grant pointed out that Clint is mostly concerned with things that might happen to the building during the move out process.

Terese asked Bob and Tam if they have done everything they can in lease negotiations and if they are comfortable with the current lease. Bob said that he is okay with the security deposit, but he is uncomfortable with the rental rate being maxed out with the exact number of students that we currently have. If the state does not approve all of the lease aid or if we lose even a few students, the difference will come out of the general fund.

Here are the lease rates that Beacon Academy has paid:

*2004-2005: \$12.50 per square foot
2005-2006: \$12.60 per square foot
2006-2007: \$14.29 per square foot
2007-2008: \$15.61 per square foot*

The rates in the most recent draft of the lease for the 2008-2009 school year are \$17.40 per square foot, which is an 11% increase from last year. Grant said that the lease number is higher this year to pay for some of the building improvements that Beacon Academy has benefited from. Ann Marie said that Beacon Academy never asked for an addition and that when we told Clint that we were planning on leaving next year we gave Clint the option not to do the parking lot and expansion.

Bob pointed out that the building improvements have a long term life in them and should not raise our prices on a short term lease. Jordan asked if the other tenants in the building had a security deposit and if they were also paying an increased rent because of building improvements. Grant did not have an answer to this.

Terese asked if there could be language in the lease that says if the state does not give us the full amount of lease aide, then we could renegotiate. Terese appreciates all of the work that Bob, Tam,

and Jordan have done on the lease but is very concerned that it is putting the school in risk. Cathy and Scott are also concerned that if the state does not approve the full amount of lease aide that we will have to dip more into the general fund.

Bob also mentioned that we have to sign off on the lease that we are in line with a national asbestos plan and that we are ADA compliant. We have a letter from Quantum Development that they received from a third party testing organization that the building is asbestos free and because the building has a ground level entrance on both floors, we are considered ADA compliant. We have a letter from the City of Plymouth that the building is compliant with state statues and codes.

So far this school year we have paid Clint \$100,000, which is to be applied to lease payments. We have not paid him any other money. We need to have a signed lease and it must be approved by MDE before we can begin receiving lease aide. Currently we are operating on a month to month status off of last year's lease, and there is language in this lease which would allow the landlord to charge us double of last year's rates, which would be \$31.22 per square foot.

The appraisal that was done last year on the building supports lease rates between \$11 and \$14 per square foot.

Since the board has been verbalizing it's concern with the numbers, Tam has asked for direction from the board as to how they should continue in lease negotiations with Quantum Development. The board would like:

- To see a comparative analysis of other schools in the metro are and what rates they are paying per square foot*
- To see if the appraisal from March 2008 can be updated*
- To ask the building owner for a decreased rate based on 385 WADMS instead of 400*
- To get a security deposit decreased to \$5,000 and/or get language changed to reflect damages that occurred only in the 2008-2009 school year directly related to Beacon Academy usage*
- To seek binding arbitration if a negotiation cannot be reached*

The board is not prepared to vote on this lease tonight, so Tam, Bob, and Jordan will do more work on the lease and will get back to us. We will probably have to have an emergency or special meeting regarding the lease in the next week or so.

The lease on the portable is going to be held off until there is approval on the building lease with Quantum Development. The concrete is ready to be poured and then the portable can be ready in 2 weeks after that. The portable is on hold until the leases go forward, so moving during the break is probably not going to be a possibility.

Friends of Beacon Update (Bob Zarriello): *Report will be tabled.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

■ **STANDING COMMITTEES**

- a. **Governance (Ann Marie)** – *Attendance Policy 503 – The second reading will take place at the next meeting and it will be up for approval.*
- b. **Executive (Tam Harken)**- *No report*
- c. **Finance (Bob Zarriello)**-*No report*
- d. **Technology Committee (Scott DesBles)**- *The position was in the paper but there was not a salary noted. Members of the IT committee are reviewing resumes. Scott recommends that we do not increase the block of time with RICOH currently.*
- e. **Curriculum (Lori Karcz)**- *The next meeting is January 20th at 6:30 to discuss student support services.*
- f. **Marketing and Public Relations (Cathy Burke)**-*No report*
- g. **New Building (Ann Marie)**-*No report*
- h. **Transition (Gretchen McQuillan)**-*No report*
- i. **Transportation (Tam Harken)**-*No report*

■ **ON CALL COMMITTEES**

- a. **Fundraising and Grants**-*No report*
- b. **Long-Range Planning**-*No report*

Board Correspondence and Communication- *The staff responses in regard to the building situation are on file and will continue to be reviewed. He will notify the board via e-mail about the visit.*

Old Business-

Elliot School-Jordan will go over to Elliot School tomorrow to look at the inside of the school. He will get a sense if this is a viable option for next year.

Maple Grove Option-Cathy, Andrea, and Sean went to the site yesterday to get a sense of what the classrooms were like. This is a church and the classrooms would be shared with Sunday programs. There are 18 rooms that are slightly smaller than the current classrooms at Beacon Academy. Some have windows and some do not. Some have portable walls that can be removed for bigger spaces. There is an eating space that is separate from the gym. There is a very neutral sanctuary that could possibly be used for assemblies and programs. There have been discussions of the church finishing

off a space which would allow for the middle school to have an area separate from the younger students. They have their own custodial services that we could pay our share of and have access to. Kalin wondered about sharing sites and how much rearranging would have to be done between the times that we were using the room and when others would be using the room. There are locked cupboards, whiteboards, and sinks in every room. Cathy thinks this would be a feasible option but that teachers would have to be flexible and willing to share their space. There are 1,800 parking spots. There is an art room and a room that could be used for a computer lab. There are small rooms that could be used for special education. Sean mentioned that the building is gorgeous and there is green space for the students to play outside. Leadership at the church has talked about the possibility of putting in a playground. This site has a meeting tomorrow with their board to see if they want to continue negotiations with Beacon Academy. They need to get city approval for an amendment to their PUD to accommodate a larger number of students.

Scott thinks that we need to look at all options as a 2 year commitment. We cannot build for next year and we probably should not rush into the building for the following year. Tam thinks that we should look into a 1 year lease with the option to renew for the year after. Scott doesn't think that we should expand the number of sections per grade level until we have a building big enough to support us. Telling the Maple Grove site that we are looking into a 2 year agreement might help them to make decisions on the building improvements that they have been talking about.

Tam forwarded the board a letter from Grant with 3 options if the board chooses to say in the current building (see handout).

Cathy says that we need to be honest and up front about our plans for next year. Terese reminded the board that the recommendation from long range planning is that the current building is not feasible as a long term site for Beacon Academy.

Grant officially introduced himself to the board as Janet and Clint's son. Clint has stepped back from the project and Grant has stepped up to work with us. The letter that he submitted to the board came from him and did not come from Clint. The options are time sensitive because they do involve construction options. If we do want to stay at this location, Grant would do what he can to make the building ready for us. He is coming in as a fresh face and is excited to work on this project if that is what we so desire.

Anne thinks that from reading through the staff e-mails that there was a consensus that most of the staff thinks that we should be somewhere else next year. Kalin thinks that we should look at the new options that were presented by Grant and look into staying here next year. Lori agrees that wherever we chose to be it does need to be for at least 2 years. Lori doesn't think that it makes sense to move from one old building to another old building.

Terese thinks that Beacon Academy needs to move to start fresh next year. Ann Marie and Candace agree. Kalin thinks that having to share a room would be very stressful. She does not want to have to worry about things being ruined.

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Scott thinks that we need to rely on the opinions of the teachers and the separation of the lunchroom and a gym continues to be a huge problem. For Terese, the close proximity to Highway 55 and the dangerous entrance and exits is a huge problem. Sean and Scott do not think that we can continue to stay in the location without the classrooms that the other tenants currently occupy. Ann Marie and Terese have a hard time looking into staying at the current location when we still have not seen a viable lease from Quantum Development for the current school year.

There was a consensus that the board has spent way too much talking about long term plans and lease negotiations. The board needs to make a decision and move on to focus on more important things like the education of the students.

Tam appreciates the building options that Grant presented at the meeting, but feels that they are very vague and she needs more details to feel comfortable. Tam thinks that the board needs to set a date as to when we are going to make a decision.

Motion:	To move to find a new location for the 2009-2010 school year.				
Made by:	Terese		Seconded by:	Ann Marie	
Discussion:					
Vote:	Yea:	All, but Scott, Lori and Kalin.	Nay:	Scott	Abstain: Lori and Kalin because they do not want to get rid of an option without having another viable option.
Decision:	passes				
<p>Terese thinks we owe it to the kids and to the parents to find a good space for next year. Kalin does not like the 2 options that we have in front of us right now. Cathy thinks that we will lose staff members if we chose to stay here next year. Jordan thinks that it would be possible for more staff to visit the Maple Grove location to see if they think it will be feasible. All communication that Jordan has had with them has been very positive, but it depends on the number of students that can be in the facility. Jordan thinks the location in Maple Grove is a better option because of the close proximity of the land that we have a purchase agreement for. Janet thinks that the board should not vote to get rid of a viable option before we have an option that we know is going to be feasible for next year.</p>					

Motion:	Beacon Academy board of directors to meet on or before January 31 st 2009 to make a decision of a facility the school will occupy for the 2009-2010 school year.				
Made by:	Scott		Seconded by:	Candace	
Discussion:					
Vote:	Yea:	all	Nay:	none	Abstain: none
Decision:	passes				
<p>Kalin hopes we are presented with as many options as possible and wants to be informed of those options before we have to decide. Everyone on the board needs to be involved with finding new options and board members/teachers need to be looking at these sites. Janet says if we need to meet with boards and occupancy permits, it is unlikely to be able to accomplish this before that date. It is hard to be able to make promises to parents until we have solid options available.</p>					

New Business- None

NEXT MEETING IS JANUARY 14TH AT 6:00.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NEXT MEETING AGENDA

MOTION TO APPROVE FORWARDED BY , SECONDED BY, PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn forwarded by Anne, seconded by Ann Marie. Approved unanimously.
 Meeting adjourned at 10:21 p.m.

Approved on _____

Anne Ingvaldson, Secretary
Beacon Academy School Board

APPROVED