

Board Spotlight – April 2016

Greetings Beacon Community,

Following is a recap of this month's board meeting to help you stay informed. Please read to the end for a special invitation to an open house to tour the land and property that Beacon Academy has plans to purchase and renovate.

The Finance Committee recommended we adopt the tiered pay structures for office and support staff originally brought to us by the Employee Retention and Compensation Committee in February. The most notable difference to this structure is that office and support staff will be on a tiered system with a pay increase every two years to recognize their years of experience. The current system does not include all office staff members, and those that are recognized in the pay structure are given a pay increase every six years. At the committee's recommendation, we also voted to increase our IT Administrator's salary so it is more in alignment with the myriad responsibilities of the job.

Mr. Koster discussed current enrollment numbers. It is looking quite comparable to other years at this time. We have 37 on the wait list for what remains of this current school year and 98 on the wait list for next school year. He shared some of the current marketing efforts with the development of a new website and a brochure that will be ready for some local city expos where Beacon hopes to have a presence this summer.

Mr. Achter updated us on the 4-5 Academic Proficiency plan and also the Trimester 2 referral data. He praised the teachers for the difference they are making by providing extra academic help and also working to turn student behavior around.

The Curriculum Committee presented much of the process they have experienced during their review of math curricula. We are on a ten-year cycle and math is due to be evaluated, which is both daunting and very exciting! The survey work the committee conducted revealed that almost all teachers are currently supplementing and re-teaching concepts. Some of this is due to the curriculum nearing the end of its life expectancy, and some of it is due to the fact that the word problems and heavy spiral-style review is not conducive to average and reluctant learners. After countless hours of research and study, the committee is recommending Math Expressions (K-5) and Big Ideas Math (6-8), both published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. To review the curriculum or discuss any aspect of the recommendation, please contact committee chair, Matthew Goodman (social studies teacher) at mgoodman@beaconacademy.com. While we are near the end of the research process, no final decisions have been made.

The Facility Planning Committee is moving things forward on the school expansion in Crystal. A "fit plan" is being worked on and revised continually. The purchase agreement has been executed and the sellers have been helpful and cooperative. In addition, the FPC has been preparing documents and information for the final Crystal City Council approval. Anyone who

would like to show their interest and support for our school's new location is encouraged to attend one or both of the next public city council meetings in Crystal. For details about these meetings, contact Heidi Sheard at hsheard@beaconacademy.com or Rob Kalinsky at rkalinsky@beaconacademy.com.

Finally, please mark your calendars to attend an open house at the new location on Saturday, May 7th from 1-3 p.m! Pending final approval from the City of Crystal in May, this will be the first in a series of open houses during the upcoming school year where you will be able to follow the new construction and renovation efforts firsthand. Come anytime during these hours, take a tour, see the outdoor green space, and view the most current fit plan and drawings. The address to the building, currently occupied by Cornerstone Church and Lionsgate Academy, is 3240 Nevada Ave N, Crystal MN 55427. Please park and enter the school on the Louisiana side.

On behalf of the Beacon Academy School Board,
Heidi Sheard, Board Secretary