

NORTH LAKES ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

School Board Meeting Minutes

Saturday, May 11, 2013

Our Vision

North Lakes Academy will provide an environment in which middle and high school students will learn eagerly, extensively and deeply in order that they will be able to assume productive and satisfying roles in a global society.

Our Mission

We will provide a rigorous, liberal arts curriculum in a small, personalized, developmentally appropriate learning environment.

Board Members Present: Chris Stewart, Cam Stottler, Susan Masterjohn, Shannon Froberg, Kerry Huset, Sandi Hammersten, Jackie Saunders (ex-officio), Jon Moberg (ex-officio), Jan Jensen (ex-officio)

Board Members Not Present: Tim Myers, Jodie Witte

Community Visitors: Jenni Gaskill (parent), Andrew Brandt (MS teacher)

I. Call to Order

Sandi Hammersten opened the meeting at 9:25 a.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Shannon Froberg motioned to accept the meeting agenda. Kerry Huset seconded the motion. Motion approved.

III. Approval of Minutes of Board Meetings

Chris Stewart motioned to accept the Board minutes for 4/27/2013. Susan Masterjohn seconded. Motion approved.

IV. Community Comment

No Community Members were present at this point in the meeting.

V. Director's Report

No Directors' Reports were presented at this meeting.

VI. Finance Committee Report

No Finance Committee Report was presented at this meeting.

VII. Agenda Items

1a. Acceptance of Board Resignation

Kerry Huset motioned to accept Scott Maki's resignation from the Board, effective immediately. Shannon Froberg seconded. Motioned approved.

1b. Final Read for New/Revised Policies

Six policies – three new and three revised – were up for final approval in the absence of community comments. The three existing policies with revisions of intent included #305-Tobacco-Free Environment, #311-Student Attendance, and #605-Background Checks. The three new policies required by statute included #105-Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records, #324-Religious

Expression, and #402-Visitors to School Buildings and Sites. Please see the Agenda Packet for more details or to see the major revisions. Cam Stottler motioned to approve the policy as amended. Susan Masterjohn seconded. Motion approved.

2. Facilities Update/Lease Approval

Jon Moberg provided an update on the new lease discussions between North Lakes Academy and McCullough Companies (P.O. Box 337, Forest Lake, Minnesota 55025). As part of the currently negotiated and pending lease, the current Upper School space – located at 308 15th Street SW, Forest Lake, Minnesota 55025 – will have a 8,500 ft.² gymnasium space completed pending city approval by the end of the 2013-2014 school year, a resurfaced parking lot with exterior lights, and an expansion into the spaces currently occupied by Aspen Air Heating & Cooling and Northland Home Exteriors by September 1st, 2013. The reiteration of the triple-net lease (all interior repairs would be North Lakes' responsibility) was also revisited.

Discussion ensued about the negotiation process, the marketing boost that a new building (and rentable gymnasium) will provide, financing the current lease, and escape clauses that North Lakes Academy would have in the event of no city approval for the addition, lack in enrollment, or a worst-case scenario school closure. Jon Moberg also discussed ongoing negotiations with Dance Tech Studios and their relationship to North Lakes with the subleasing agreement.

Numerous other items are included in this lease and additional details for the community can be obtained by contacting the Facilities Committee, headed by Jon Moberg. Chris Stewart motioned to approve the lease with McCullough Properties as negotiated by the Facilities Committee for the property at 308 15th Street SW. Cam Stottler seconded. (Yeas – Chris Stewart, Cam Stottler, Susan Masterjohn, Kerry Huset, Sandi Hammersten. Nays – Shannon Froberg). Motion approved.

3. Teacher Pay Model Proposal

Cam Stottler provided a summary of the ongoing teacher pay proposal model, which would take effect for the entire 5-12 staff beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Providing a year for this model to be implemented will allow for portions to be piloted throughout the year and so that staff will feel more prepared to understand how the new model will impact them.

Priorities of the model included not reducing individual teacher base pay based on slowed enrollment, but the total FTEs (thus number of staff members or percentage of FTE) in such a situation. This would expand to the proffer discussions as well. Evaluation processes would include an intensive process of documentation that would also give staff members an opportunity to correct and grow.

Discussion moved to brainstorming priorities for additional categories and criteria for staff and school evaluation to be included in this pay model. These discussions kept in mind that evaluation of staff is already 50% dedicated to staff duties and performance (including student achievement) as per the Board's requirements for the models. Suggestions by Board listed (not required) include:

- Attempts to innovate & take risks
 - follow through with initiatives
- Common assessments with departments
 - data-driven decision making
- Student surveys of teachers
- Parent surveys of teachers
- All ideas are consistent w/ NLA charter
- School-wide goals
 - growth
 - normative grouping
- Peer-coaching of colleagues
- Self-evaluation (how often/how much)
- Community Contribution
 - perception

Sandi Hammersten motioned to take a 10-minute recess for at 10:51 a.m. Kerry Huset seconded. Motion approved. Sandi Hammersten called the meeting back to order at 11:00 a.m.

Chris Stewart motioned to set February 11th, 2014 as the deadline for the presentation of the final salary staffing structure to the Board. Kerry Huset seconded. Motion approved.

4. Unit-Based Growth Priority List

Chris Stewart reminded the Board that in the interest of urgency, at the special Board meeting on February 16th, 2013, the Board voted to create a unit-based budgeting, Board-created priority list by March 31st, 2013. This deadline was not met by the Board, as no priority list was finalized.

Based on previous notes, brainstorming of these final priorities with our current progress on salary structure, facilities, and administrative structure ensued. The final priority list was created.

Shannon Froberg motioned to create a Board list of budget priorities to include:

1. Closing out the old salary system (before new system)
2. Financing Upper School facilities beyond lease aid
3. Growing and focusing on budget/fund balance
4. Marketing/Communications department
5. Student Support Services (e.g. 504, District Assessment Coordinator, Reports, & Counselor)

Kerry Huset seconded. Motion approved.

5. K-4 Expansion Consideration

Discussion about the possibility of creating a K-4 expansion initiative based on parent and community feedback ensued. Benefits would include a “feeder system” and ensuring that we are remaining competitive with the local districts that are innovating in the size and types of programs they are offering. Issues with the process include the workload of the team responsible for exploring that process (committee needed), the coordination with Audubon Center of the North Woods (ACNW), the requirement for the further support staff, and the lack (and ultimate decrease from the state) of Special Education finance.

The consensus was that the Board needs to wait until we have a more stable environment 5-12 with staffing, facilities, and enrollment before mandating any sort of K-4 expansion. However, discussion with ACNW about how they view an expansion with regards to reauthorization and exploring if/how the process has changed to make such an expansion would be prudent.

No formal motions were made, but discussions determined that exploration of the current requirements and discussions with our ACNW representative will occur. Staff members and Board members will be surveyed to see who may be interested in participating in the discovery process. Jon Moberg volunteered to use his personal time to initiate this fact-finding process.

Cam Stottler motioned to take a 20-minute recess for at 11:54 a.m. Shannon Froberg seconded. Motion approved. Sandi Hammersten called the meeting back to order at 12:25 p.m.

6. 5-Year Strategic Plan Discussion

Sandi Hammersten clarified that this process does not need to stipulate specific objectives, but explain and describe our district’s “wish list” of goals for our organization to suggest that we have a vision for sustainability. Objectives discussed amongst the group suggested include:

- Meeting enrollment goals/targets for full capacity (500 students)
- Implement our sustainable K-12 school enrollment (with a waiting list)
- College readiness program developed and implemented
- Fully-developed sustainable attractive extracurricular opportunities
- School-wide developed & implemented environmental education program
- Implement replicable & sustainable teacher pay model (based on current decisions)
- Focus on a 20% fund balance on an annual basis
- Transportation supporting academics and extracurricular activities
- Technology integration and support throughout the district
- Meeting unit-based budgeting priorities annually (starting with current list)
- Establish and implement a strong, enrollment-friendly, and innovative programs
- Create an alumni outreach program and endowment fund
- 75% familial involvement agreement/covenant to promote ownership

- Student achievement goals for the district (e.g. top 10 in the state with comparable schools)
- Reevaluate school-wide fundraising goals and program design
- Establish a process for creating timelines for regular short-term action plans
- Develop and follow leadership transition plans (administrative team & Board members)
- Review and establish a Board leadership structure (teacher-majority board to be kept)
- Develop a collaborative relationship with surrounding schools and our communities
- Become a leader in the charter school community (MACS, politically, etc.)

These will continue to be pared down and grouped into more manageable categories to incorporate into a more formal five-year plan.

VIII. Adjournment

Shannon Froberg motioned to adjourn the Board meeting at 1:20 p.m. Kerry Huset seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher A. Stewart

North Lakes Academy Charter School
School Board Member/Secretary/Treasurer
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