

NORTH LAKES ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL
School Board Meeting Minutes
Saturday, April 27, 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, Susan Masterjohn, Cam Stottler, Sandi Hammersten, Jodie Witte, Jackie Saunders (ex-officio), Jan Jensen (ex-officio)

Board Members Present Via Technology: Jon Moberg (ex-officio)

Board Members Not Present: Shannon Froberg, Kerry Huset, Scott Maki, Tim Myers

Community Visitors: Andrew Brandt

I. Call to Order

Sandi Hammersten opened the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda

Susan Masterjohn motioned to accept the meeting agenda with a change to add Agenda Item #4b: Update on Facilities Committee Discussions. Cam Stottler seconded the motion. Motion approved.

III. Approval of Minutes of Board Meetings

Chris Stewart motioned to accept the Board minutes for 4/9/2013. Susan Masterjohn seconded. Motion approved.

IV. Community Comment

No Community Members were present at this 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

1. First Read of Existing Policies with Revisions

Policies discussed with changes included #305-Tobacco-Free Environment, #311-Student Attendance, and #605-Background Checks. Discussion ensued on the revisions made by the Policy Committee. Major changes include the incorporation of e-cigarettes into #305, defining unexcused tardies and altering how they translate into unexcused absences in #311, and how to ensure that guests can use existing badge/sticker systems while on either campus without a background check or an escort. Policies will be distributed to the community to collect comments.

2. First Read of New Policies Required by Statute

Policies discussed as new additions included #105-Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records, #324-Religious Expression, and #402-Visitors to School Buildings and Sites. #105 primarily addresses how to ensure students' records are protected, not how long we must keep them. Elements in #324 discussed included how to teach about religious themes as required by state standards without proselytizing, and how to handle requests for public prayer at events like graduation. New policies will be distributed to the community for comments.

3. Final Read of Existing Policies with Revisions

Policy #320-Field Trip Transportation was up for discussion and final approval in the absence of community comments. Changes suggested at the previous Board meeting were discussed. Cam Stottler motioned to approve the policy as amended. Susan Masterjohn seconded. Motion approved.

4a. Administrative Job Duties

No Board approval votes are required on these measures, as it is not the purview of the Board to determine how the Executive implements the role's responsibilities. All discussions about job descriptions herein should be treated as informational, not as Board directives. Documents including the in-progress job descriptions provided will be available to the public.

Sandi Hammersten opened by reviewing the purpose of this agenda item. The need for new job descriptions includes not only providing consistency in leadership in the event of a resignation, retirement, or new hiring, but also to clarify how our new administrative model determined by the School Board would operate in practice.

Jackie Saunders suggested that she had four challenges going into **Executive Director and Assistant Director** job descriptions including:

- 1) Executive's emphasis on community mission/vision, Assistant's on execution/implementation
- 2) A statement about shared decision making being codified into Directors' job descriptions
- 3) Requirement for resources committed to "softer" items in school (e.g. community outreach)
- 4) Demanding separation between "executive" responsibilities and building leadership roles

Jon Moberg joined the meeting via FaceTime at 10:08 a.m.

Discussion ensued concerning the similarities and differences between the descriptions provided by Jackie Saunders and those suggested by Jon Moberg. Overall, the proposals on the Executive Director descriptions were similar, and discussion pertained primarily to the need for an ethical chain of command between the two Director positions and all faculty/staff members in the district.

Additionally, gaps in day-to-day leadership will exist at the Executive's building because of his/role role as the "face" of the school. These absences should be addressed both with an administrative presence from the Assistant when necessary, but primary operational management from delegated positions like the Deans. These positions thusly need to be provided the capacity – specific to each building – to fill those holes.

Jon Moberg left the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

The final element of the Directors' roles discussed was their responsibilities during the summer months. Flexibility in the number of contracted days for these roles – in the interest of cost-containment – need to be codified into these descriptions before the summer months begin. Flexibility for our Deans need to be built in as well, which would be included in individual TOSAs for each role.

Sandi Hammersten suggested that a final draft for Board discussion of Director job descriptions would happen by the May 14th, 2013 meeting, with Dean descriptions by May 28th, 2013 if possible.

Sandi Hammersten announced a short unofficial recess at 11:03 a.m. Discussion resumed at 11:10 a.m.

Jackie Saunders began again with the presentation of her draft job descriptions for **Administrative Assistants**. Discussion ensued about the need for flexibility in these roles, as our current administrative assistants fulfill value-added tasks that may not exist in a job description. No additional funding would be allotted at this time and more information will be provided to the Board at a later date. Review the Agenda Packet for more information.

The **Finance Director** position, as renamed from Business Manager, was discussed. Jan Jensen offered insight about some of the duties that she does that would be redistributed to an Enrollment Coordinator position (e.g. MARSS reporting). Review the Agenda Packet for more information.

The **Enrollment Coordinator** position was also discussed. Jackie Saunders brought up the existing concern that having this position continue to personally organize the existing variety of fundraising initiatives may need to be changed, as they end up being a wash financially for the position. It was suggested that perhaps this fundraising be coordinated and/or overseen by this position, but organized instead by invested parent volunteers or staff who step up into this role. Review the Agenda Packet for more information.

Final discussion ensued how these positions fall in to our new administrative structure voted on in February, and our Executive's need for a formation of some form of cabinet that would include, but not be limited to, the Assistant, Enrollment Coordinator, Finance Director, building Deans, Technology Coordinator, and an Activities Director.

Sandi Hammersten motioned to take a formal 25-minute recess for lunch at 12:20 p.m. Cam Stottler seconded. Motion approved.

Sandi Hammersten called the meeting back to order at 12:44 p.m.

Community Member Andrew Brandt (teacher at Middle School) joined this meeting, and Jon Moberg re-joined via FaceTime at 12:44 p.m.

4b. Update on Facilities Committee Discussions

Jon Moberg offered a summary of the current situation with the discussion of the new Upper School lease situation with our current leaseholders (McCullough Properties). At present, discussion over the price per square foot and the size of the gym are being discussed with regards to the price North Lakes we can afford and the size of gym we need.

Jan Jensen offered some financial documents that helped to illustrate these issues (see the Agenda Packet). New possibilities include a triple-net lease (North Lakes taking on many maintenance projects at the building), forgoing current needs for maintenance projects for a more gradual process, and increasing a percentage cost increase by 2% each year. The school would then be provided potentially with a structure of a gym, a new parking lot, and major repairs (roofing and walls) not included in the net-lease agreement.

5. Teacher Pay Model and Systems

Sandi Hammersten and Susan Masterjohn reminded the Board as these discussions continue that we have number of staff members that would prefer to be grandfathered in outside of any new system and the fact that a previous Board resolved to "make it right" to staff members for previous and existing pay freezes.

Cam Stottler began discussion of a plan he created over the last year with consultation from other staff members. This model included three tiers of teachers with a "share" of the average FTE evaluated by a total salary budget divided by our total FTEs 5-12. At each tier, cost of living and education percentage-based increases would be available for three years at each level based on the total "pie" of enrollment-based financial available.

Placing staff members on these tiers and determining if individuals who desire to remain grandfathered in would have to include some sort of an evaluative process. Grandfathered steps and lanes would not apply until the new structure reflected similar increases (i.e. enrollment-based).

Andrew Brandt commented that with such an evaluative process, the new model would have to demonstrate an incentive to encourage individuals to join in a new system and pursue growth, balanced with an incorporation of showing how we value to the school.

Jan Jensen explained that we have to have a budget approved by the end of June, and committing to a new system would allow us to take a year to incorporate and determine the moving parts before full implementation. Jackie Saunders echoed these concerns.

Jon Moberg explained his own proposal that would include smaller base salaries on a step and lane chart with minimal increases. This would include a point-based system that would include increases tied to various value-added opportunities at certain dollar amounts. Deductions would also exist for teachers not fulfilling their expected job duties. He also emphasized the importance of valuing continuing education in a way that is focused on improving oneself as a professional, versus getting an advanced degree for the money tied to a lane.

The discussion moved to the need for criteria for a new pay system and be locked in so we can begin making specific decisions. These criteria need to have clarity and specificity so that any charge from the Board is meaningful, not repetitive.

Andrew Brandt left the meeting at 2:16 p.m.

The meaning of “make it right” was discussed, determining whether closing out the old system and moving forward was “making it right,” or if we have to restore past steps to do so. Grandfathering was also discussed to determine what that would mean if that system was chosen by an employee. The possibility of keeping steps frozen (not including across-the-board cost-of-living increases) as the “grandfathering” option was suggested to provide an incentive for an employee to adapt to a new salary structure to make the two choices comparable for existing employees.

Sandi Hammersten announced a short unofficial recess at 2:52 p.m. Discussion resumed at 2:57 p.m.

Chris Stewart motioned to, by May 11th, 2013, create a staffing salary structure proposal to present to the Board. Discussion ensued concerning adding responsible parties and deadlines for distributing this information to the Board members to provide time to discuss results with staff.

Chris Stewart motioned to amend his motion to read that, by May 9th, 2013, the Board create a staffing salary structure proposal to be distributed to all Board members for consideration at the May 11th, 2013 Board meeting. The volunteer Board members responsible include Cam Stottler, Jackie Saunders, Jon Moberg, Shannon Froberg (as nominated by Jon Moberg), and Susan Masterjohn, who will prepare that proposal on behalf of the Board. Cam Stottler seconded. Motion approved.

Additional discussion ensued concerning which criteria should be laid out for this new salary staffing structure. The Board-charged group would have to abide by these criteria while creating this new plan before May 9th.

Chris Stewart made a point of order that a vote was still required on his amended motion.

Susan Masterjohn motioned to approve Chris Stewart’s amended motion as written. Sandi Hammersten seconded. Motion approved.

Chris Stewart motioned that the new salary staffing structure created include the criteria of:

- 1) Evaluation procedures for at least 50% of staff duties and performance
- 2) A balance between individual vs. collective accountability and incentives
- 3) Procedures and deadlines concerning who evaluates the staff and when
- 4) A choice between “grandfathering” within current frozen salary schedule and the new model

Jodie Witte seconded. Motion approved.

VIII. Adjournment

Cam Stottler motioned to adjourn the Board meeting at 3:25 p.m. Chris Stewart seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher A. Stewart

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