

THE ETHICAL COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL OF JERSEY CITY
95 BROADWAY
JERSEY CITY, NJ 07306

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2010

NOTICE OF MONTHLY MEETING

A monthly public meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Ethical Community Charter School was held on Saturday, November 20, 2010 at Ethical Community Charter School – 95 Broadway, Jersey City, NJ 07306. The Board met in open session.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT

“Pursuant to Section 4 of the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was advertised and posted.”

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Howard Radest, Board Chairperson, at 9:30am.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Roll call was taken, and the following (voting) Board Members were present:

- Howard Radest
- Ann Wallace
- Edward Goodall
- Fred Miller
- Funmilayo Brown
- Nicole Stratemeir

The following (non-voting) Board Members were present:

- Marta Bergamini, Principal
- Nick Puzo, School Business Administrator
- Jean DeSimone, Faculty Representative
- Jessica Adamo, Board Clerk

The following Board Members were absent:

- Elizabeth Phillips Lorenzo
- Hiral Patel

Guests:

- Marc Trzepla
- Rebecca Meah
- Neil Harris
- Craig Shere
- Dylan Cohen
- Rita Radest

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the October 23, 2010 meeting were approved unanimously.

Voice vote: Aye – 6 Abstain – 0 Nay – 0 Absent – 2

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The motion to move to Executive Session was approved unanimously, as moved by Ms. Brown, and seconded by Mr. Goodall.

Voice vote: Aye – 6 Abstain – 0 Nay – 0 Absent – 2

Public Session resumed at 10:10am.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Payroll Company Loss

Mr. Puzo discussed the payroll service loss, noting the amount that is owed, as well as the amount due to TECCS. He explained that the Social Security Office currently has all W-2's, and that all payroll details will be finalized with the IRS by December.

Board Training

Dr. Radest mentioned that the final board training session recently took place, which he and Mr. Miller attended. Dr. Radest explained that complete board training consists of a series of three parts – the first session in-person, and the following two sessions via distance learning (i.e. online).

Board Nominees

Dr. Radest explained that there are fifteen slots for voting members on the TECCS Board of Trustees, but only eight slots are currently filled, two of which may soon be vacant as well. Recruitment for additional members is imperative at this time. Several Board Members noted that they will follow up on leads they currently have. Dr. Radest stressed the need for diversity on the Board and noted that a second parent representative (besides Mr. Miller) will be required when at least ten Board Members exist.

The Sophie Case

Dr. Radest introduced a discussion about the case concerning the alleged misconduct of an after-school teacher, and opened it to public comments/questions from guests in attendance. Ms. Bergamini pointed out several matters of public record, including the arrest, media coverage, etc.

A discussion took place regarding the fingerprinting of all volunteers who work with the children in the school, which include parents, high school and college interns, and year-round college interns. It was recommended that the year-round college interns be fingerprinted, as well as parents who volunteer on a consistent basis. It

was decided that anyone volunteering in the school for at least three weeks will be fingerprinted.

A discussion took place regarding communication to parents about new or revised school procedures. Ms. Bergamini explained that increased communication (via letters to parents) can be implemented for notifications about school updates, such as fingerprinting procedures, security enhancements, and revisions to the after-school program. On this topic, it was suggested that the crisis management plan be reviewed and updated to include protocol for dealing with incidents like the Sophie case. It was noted that this situation is not unique to TECCS, so there are many resources available to aid in revising the school's crisis management plan. It was added that this incident was, and continues to be, a learning experience for all parties involved. Ms. DeSimone will add the revision of the crisis management plan to the agenda of the School Leadership Team.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Ms. Bergamini provided information about staff returning from maternity leave, an upcoming visit by Schomburg Charter School to TECCS, an upcoming workshop to be attended by Ms. DeSimone and Ms. Tomasko, updates about the Math Consultant, and an upcoming visit by the Department of Education to evaluate the Math program.

Ms. DeSimone (the Faculty Representative) provided information about the recent meeting of the School Leadership Team on Nov. 5, the development of new curriculum for grades K-8, and plans for the creation of sub-committees in each subject area. A discussion, prompted by parent inquiries, took place regarding differentiation of students at TECCS. Ms. Bergamini comprehensively addressed all parent concerns as they were presented.

The following resolution was approved unanimously, as moved by Mr. Goodall, and seconded by Ms. Brown:

- Approval to refuse NCLB Title III and Title II funds

Voice vote: Aye – 6 Abstain – 0 Nay – 0 Absent – 2

SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Puzo provided the November Bill List, Check Register, Bank Reconciliation Statement, the audited FYE 6/30/10 financial statements and final Board Secretary Reports, and the most current financial information for TECCS.

Mr. Puzo gave an update on employee health benefits, noting that there is currently a \$52,000 budget deficit for health insurance costs in the 2010-2011 year due to rate increases charged by Horizon Blue Cross. He explained that there are several proposals currently open to TECCS, but the most attractive and cost-effective plan at this point is to wrap HRA around the current plan. Mr. Puzo and Ms. Stratemeir will

work together to develop a proposal to be recommended to the Board at the December meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Fundraising

Dr. Wallace reported that Ms. Brown will reschedule her fundraising event and forward the details to the Board when they are finalized.

FSA

Mr. Miller reported that the upcoming Pancake Breakfast will take place on Dec. 4 at 11:00am. He also noted that TECCS is currently raising funds through Amazon.com via a link on the school's website. He encouraged individuals who plan to do holiday shopping through Amazon.com to visit the site through the link on the school's website (under "Giving"), after which a percentage of the purchase price will go directly to TECCS.

Technology

Ms. Bergamini spoke about the purchase and use of MacBooks and iPads in TECCS classrooms.

Strategic Planning

Mr. Miller reported that a meeting date will be established soon to discuss the strategic plan. It was also reported that the school's Mission Statement will be revised to reflect one concise statement about TECCS. It was suggested that the language be "simplified" so that even students can understand it.

NEW BUSINESS:

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Trustees Meeting was scheduled as follows –

Date: Saturday, December 18, 2010

Time: 9:30am

Location: Ethical Community Charter School at 95 Broadway, Jersey City, NJ

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was unanimously adopted. The meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.

Voice vote: Aye – 6 Abstain – 0 Nay – 0 Absent – 2