

Rhode Island School for the Deaf Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2009

Location: RI School for the Deaf Cafeteria

Trustees Attending: Travis Zellner, Suzanne Goldenberg, Neil Leahey, Richard Dickson, Mary Wambach

Excused: Mary Bird, Kat Ellis

Administrative staff attending: Lori Dunsmore, Wayne Hannon

Teaching staff attending: Dinaz Adenwalla, Kristen Flynn, Amy Lupica

Sign Language Interpreters: Carol Fay, Jon Henry, Maureen McEntee

Teaching staff comments:

Dinaz Adenwalla requested that the teachers' union be given a copy of the Director Lori Dunsmore's contract and also a copy of the evaluation tool to be used to evaluate Lori. She asked if the Board had seen Lori's response to the letter from the teachers to the board last fall and whether the Board planned to respond to Lori's response. She stated that the teachers wish to be involved in future plans for the school.

Travis responded that the Board had received the letter and that the Board will respond.

??? “Response letter has not been seen. ??? There were no further comments.

Review of Minutes: The minutes as written by Suzanne Goldenberg were reviewed and accepted pending some changes to the minutes.

Reports:

Chair: Travis reported that he has been working closely with RIDE, and that the department wants to see the new school filled to capacity. Travis recommended Heather Parker as a facilitator to assist the Strategic Planning Committee. He will forward her website and resume to Board members. Some individuals not on the Board, Steve Florio, Mary Pendergast, and Tina Thompson, have expressed interest in serving on the Strategic Planning Committee. The committee currently has 5 Board members and 2 members from RIDE. The committee wants to meet every Tuesday and Thursday (???????) We want to propose the overall process including goals, timelines, and who the decision-makers are. We will discuss bringing in parents and teachers.

Director: Lori reported that she has implemented consistent administrative team meetings and that weekly updates are made by email (to whom?) There is a great deal of administrative activity coming up with the budget and the new school project.

Lori also discussed placement of staff and the need to make sure all are qualified with proper certification. PBGR (?) will find out what the

standards are and Lori will meet with the review team.

There are a number of grants to be worked on with Wayne, including Title I, II, IDEA Grants and C.R.P. federal funds. Mary Smith and Mary Pendergast will provide professional development for the staff and include teacher involvement in the area of Title I grants for literacy. Grants and federal funds can be used for staff and other areas in the budget.

Lori commented that the groundbreaking ceremony was a success. There was a discussion of how long student records must be kept in regards to what records must be stored and moved to the new building.

Lori announced that there will be an Open House on March 23 from 6-8 pm. It will be an open forum in the gym to display assistive technical devices to assist families and their children. It will be an opportunity for parents to see what assistance is available to them. Another event in March will be student participation in the Deaf Academic Bowl in Long Island, New York, March 20-26. James Smith and John Dunsmore will be coaches. We hope to sponsor the Academic Bowl in 2012.

Committees:

Policy: Mary Wambach presented page 3 of the policy manual, which is a summary of major emergency policies, which the committee had reviewed and modified to be consistent. She asked the board to approve the emergency protocol page. Travis Zellner made a motion to approve the emergency protocol as presented and Suzanne

Goldenberg seconded the motion. The motion carried and the protocol was approved.

Communication: (I need clarification on these notes):

(from notes: Delegate and develop more clarified roles; will review at next policy meeting; review only; no action taken; it's protocol, not policy. Lori's documents are protocol for communication. Developing action plans-templates; results statement; re student learning behavior-needs for communication. IEP teachers continue working w/Mary P in understanding IEP process. Full time SLP resigned-we have two part time and looking at another. SLPs are hard to recruit-Michele Florio and Robin Henderson back on school team.

We are documenting behaviors-progressing nicely, support team working well-lots happening w/transitions.

Dickson asked about staff assignments, re highly qualified teacher requirements. How many are not appropriately certified and how many not qualified for subject they are teaching? Lori will have answers at next meeting.

She handed out previous strategic plans (put in book)

Personnel Committee: haven't met – interpreter booked. Mary Bird and Neil: format standard report next month. James Hockhousen is interested in board, lot of experience in finance.

Budget and Finance:

Mary Wambach raised the question as to what are the legal

mandates for the Medicaid Global Waiver and what is expected of us. Richard Dickson reported that the committee had its first meeting but has not had a second. Wayne reported that he will put the 2009-2010 Budget on the secure website. He noted that the budget is subject to submission to the governor's office.

Other:

Travis asked that the board keep communication open and transparent. Travis asked for a motion to go to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters, collective bargaining issues, and litigation issues. Mary Wambach made a motion to go into Executive Session and Neil Leahey seconded the motion. The motion passed. The Board went into closed session at 7:44 pm.

Richard Dickson made a motion to re-open the meeting and Suzanne Goldenberg seconded it. The motion carried and the meeting re-opened at 8:25 pm. The agenda was set for the next meeting to include: budget approval, personnel and policy committee reports, report on composition of the strategic planning committee, report on certification of teachers, and to discuss shredding of documents.

Neil Leahey made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Suzanne Goldenberg seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.