

**NEW ENGLAND LABORERS'/CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CONSTRUCTION CAREER ACADEMY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

April 11, 2013

12:00 P.M. Executive Session

Public Session Immediately Following

4 Sharpe Drive

MINUTES

This meeting of the NEL/CPS Construction Career Academy was held on the above date in the conference room and called to order at 12:00 p.m. with the following members present: Chairman Traficante, Dr. Lundsten, Mr. Santangelo, Ms. Oberlander, Mr. Sabitoni, Mrs. McFarland and Dr. Leone. Absent were Mr. Rampone and Mr. Cardi.

There was no executive session.

This meeting was called to order; the roll was called. It was noted there was a quorum present.

Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) Approved – February 26, 2013.

Moved by Mrs. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Santangelo; all were in favor.

Public Acknowledgements/Communications – none.

Chairperson's Communications – none.

Executive Director's Communications

Update on Focus School Status/Diagnostic Screening

Mr. Curran stated – We are going to spend a little time this session just reviewing where we are with our Diagnostic Screen as well as an update on our Focus Plans. As you know we have been in discussion with RIDE to complete that plan for a number of months now. It goes back to the fall. This is a new process for RIDE as it is for us and any schools that are in the focus plan are going through this for the first time so I think both on the RIDE side and on our side we have been working through the mechanics of it to be sure that all the i's are dotted and the t's are crossed. This has been a process and it is one that has been rather lengthy and again I am going to say we started this in the early fall with RIDE and we just completed, last week, the final submission to them and we did receive notification and the plan has been completely accepted by RIDE and believe it or not in one month they want a quarterly report on the plan. We're not sure what that progress report is going to look like since we really only have had only about three weeks from the acceptance of the plan to the first report but I think what is happening here is, my opinion, is that RIDE is catching up with their timeline, that they have been behind in hitting their markers and one of their timelines was quarterly reports in May from the schools. We are the first school in this process to have been accepted. This is the time crunch we are in. The good

news is the plan was accepted and that means we can enact it as it was written. Carolyn, our consultant, is going to review that with you today briefly. This topic is not going to go away. It is important for you to understand that. Next year we are in our recharter process and we are really in the first year of implementation of a focus plan. This topic is going to stay on our agendas all the time and we really need this board to be conversant with the topic because when RIDE comes and does their site visit to us next year for the recharter, they are going to want to meet with the board and they are going to want to know the board is knowledgeable about these topics and so we can't give you surface information it's just not going to work for us so I'm almost apologizing for going into this topic every meeting but it's that important that we need to have it on each agenda. So I am going to ask Carolyn to give us an update now on that plan that was accepted last week.

Carolyn stated – this is a two part reform plan (See handout #1 – School Reform Plan - on file in the superintendent's office). It has our interventions attached and this is pretty thick insofar as the information is concerned. As far as we are concerned this is their new tool and we basically are following the step process of it so it is written in the way RIDE would like to see it and the interventions and strategies that are attached were accepted the first time around. The next piece of this is the implementation piece and that is what the quarterly reports will speak to and we are just waiting to hear from our district delegate. She'll come down and speak with us so we can

move forward with that piece. This supports the focus plan. As you know we are also getting rechartered; we are in that process for next year so we kind of have the perfect storm working where we have two initiatives sort of that we are kind of serving. So in order for you to get a grasp of what those look like I created a diagram of each one and if you hold them side by side you can see where they start to overlap so that the indicators, as they move out, (see handouts #2 and 2a on file in the superintendent's office). As we are moving forward with the focus we obviously had the recharter hanging out there and that we needed to address this year. Having the focus put on top of us did, I'd like to pull the positive side of it, with the rechartering we haven't even heard from RIDE at all this year and that is our biggest focus so to speak is the recharter. They are just putting a person in charge of the charter schools. He is from the Transformation Office so that has been a very quiet...we haven't heard anything so in essence because we have been put into focus and right now that is what they are concentrating on insofar as the tools that they use and this is coming under the Race to the Top money. They are putting all their eggs into this basket and that's where they are concentrating. For the sake of the focus schools, we aligned the interventions with what we had to do for rechartering so that we weren't having to serve two different things and put all of our efforts into two different ones. We wanted to have them cross over so we could use the flex model time line and what they want us to do and use it for the rechartering. In essence the rechartering is the more significant piece of these two but the focus is where they are

and that's what we need to adhere to those pieces. Providing we stay in line and they tend to line up we should have no issues. We have reached out to RIDE, called, inquired, but they don't have that information yet. They have a new person in place to take Bill Clark's place but he's not going to be on board for a couple more weeks. Once that happens then I would assume then we are going to hear from that part of RIDE. The focus piece of the reform is not working in a vacuum but there are only three schools going up for recharter this year. Not to my knowledge have the other two schools heard anything yet.

Mr. Curran further stated – I did communicate last week with RIDE about knowing that three schools were going to be in that process next year, we were one of the three. I asked them if they would certainly consider us to be a spring visit. I appealed to them based on the fact that because we are right now concentrating on focus and the other two charter schools are not, they are only doing this piece, the rechartering. So that is why I am asking them to do the visit in the late spring that way we have the first half of the year to do the focus work and also try to match them up together so by the spring when they do their visit, hopefully, we will have accomplished both of these tasks. If they set us for a fall visit, that's going to be very problematic because we are just really going to be getting underway with the focus plan interventions and we can't accomplish both of these masters at once. It virtually impossible so I thought I would be proactive and before they set the calendar for the three schools, I asked that they please consider us for the spring visit. We wanted to present this graphic to

you and also our staff so that we can see that we are not working at cross purposes here. I said to the staff, we've got a lot of work to do here being selected as a focus school and we also have a lot of work for the recharter and we don't want to be spinning our wheels twice and we want to be sure that none of these efforts are at cross purposes so this graphic really shows you and as Carolyn says if you put them up against each other and working in from the ends we're going to accomplish these efforts and the goal ultimately is to complete the focus work and also get rechartered. I think this is a great graphic that she presented to us to show our staff who are doing the work that this is all going to make sense and it's going to take time but there is a logic to the pattern and we will accomplish both of these goals next year.

Mr. Curran stated – next year we will be inviting members of the Board of Regents to this school so they can get a feel for what our school is all about. We also have been contacted recently by people from the House and the Senate who want to come and visit the school this year to learn more about us. The Senate Majority leader of the House, the chair of the Senate Education Committee, Senator Gallo, after vacation Mayor Tavares, Education officer, want to come to the school because we do have students from Providence here. We have also had communication with the governor as well. We are getting some attention from politicians in the area and I think that will help us in getting the word out about our school. Carolyn stated – what we also do in supporting that very topic beyond just educating those out

there on the boards, we wanted to start in-house too so we started with the staff and having them know all of this information inside and out. On Monday we will be having an administrative retreat here to go from here into a more in depth action plan and from there what we want to do is also have a retreat for the board at some point so we can spend some time really getting into this so you do know this pretty well. We are looking to do a retreat with this board probably in August.

Mr. Curran referred to handout 2a – Is the School’s Educational Program an Academic Success and stated that is totally looking at NECAP. That is the only consideration in that box. They will look at the NECAP scores for this year and next year to see if we are moving in the right direction and if we are hitting some of those marks. Right now, as I have previously showed you at a board meeting – we’re going in the right direction. That is good news. Hopefully next year we will see the same kind of result. The bottom box – Is the School a Viable Organization? That is looking largely at our financial status as a school. Do we have the finances to continue operating and we’re in good shape with that as well. The last time they did a visit they didn’t have complete vision of that question because we didn’t have an independent audit of our books and as you know at that time the audit for this school was done in conjunction with Cranston Public Schools and RIDE made it clear last time that we needed to segregate that out so now we have taken on an independent audit and we have recently finished that audit so we will be good in that box as well. The

middle boxes are really the site visit, that's where they come and look at the school. So is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success? When they come for that site visit they will be here for about three days, team of about 4 or 5 people from RIDE and they will be looking at those questions in the blue boxes; curriculum, what kind of instruction do we have going on here, what is the human capital of the school, how do we deal with community and family engagement, and what is the school climate. Some of that is data driven, they will be looking at such things as Survey Works (which is a survey that is done by students, parents and teachers) and then some of it is interviews that they do at the school maybe with the board, certainly with teachers and students and they also spend a lot of time in classrooms during those three days. I think the most important piece for this process is a tough one, they say in their documents for planning for your site visit, although the site visit will take a lot of time and a lot of preparation, it's not the most significant part of the process. The top one is – what are the results. You can have all the great things in the world in terms of some of the boxes but if they are not seeing the results that they want to see that's going to be the number one factor.

Dr. Lundsten asked – how is it determined. I hear you say the top box is heavily weighted; do they tell us how it's heavily weighted?

Mr. Curran stated – they have an algorithm for this that I can share with you (see handout #6 on file in the superintendent's office) I can't explain it. It is public knowledge but I could not tell you how to interpret it. They have made it very clear that it is your outcome that

makes the most difference on whether you get rechartered or not.

Mr. Santangelo stated – it is set up by statisticians that she hired, presumably from Texas, where most people are hired from and they've come in. They've done this algorithm, they used it the last time we were reauthorized here, we couldn't figure it out then and I am sure we won't figure it out now but it's basically they put the numbers in and the algorithm allows them to be able to manipulate numbers in order to get a particular result. It's such a heavily statistically based thing that they just bring in all these different statistics, they put them into that algorithm and they come up with a solution. But again they manipulate what happens by what is put into this statistical...

Dr. Leone asked – how could they manipulate this?

Mr. Santangelo stated – it depends on what they put in. What they choose to put in.

Mr. Curran stated – a future meeting, maybe at the retreat that Carolyn spoke of, I'll bring the performance review handbook to the table which is about 70-80 pages long and that's the menu for the renewal visit and the whole renewal process.

Mr. Santangelo stated – keep in mind the method is very subjective so what they put into that statistical formula is how they go about finding that information.

Mr. Curran stated – the only thing we can do is to continue to improve as we have been for the past couple of years. I think the action plans that we have set up here are going to get us to that place. Ultimately the commissioner will have to make a recommendation for the

renewal, one way or the other. But it's still up to the Board of Regents to have that decision so if the recommendation of the commissioner were contrary to continuing the charter, then obviously it would fall on the Board of Regents to support that recommendation or not. In recent history, some of those recommendations have not been approved by the Board of Regents. So I think there is a history there that the Board of Regents supports charter schools, wants to see them remain open, in fact just this week chartered two new charter schools, one in Central Falls and the other in Providence.

Dr. Leone stated – all the statistics aside, all the methodology aside, it all depends on how we do on NECAP?

Mr. Curran stated – I can't say it's all about NECAP but certainly that is the major part of it.

Mr. Traficante asked about the status of the Program of Studies booklet for the Cranston High Schools (Mr. Curran had made some changes to it last year and had given them to Dr. Sullivan and for some reason they did not get into the revision for this year. It was brought to her attention and she is going to be sure that they happen now even though the document has been published and then next year we can print out that document once the changes occur for RIDE to look at.)

Mr. Curran stated – Dr. Sullivan and I have to bring it to the curriculum board for those revisions to occur and then she told me she would have the curriculum board approve those changes, it won't affect the publication that just happened but it will be in force next

year and we can use that when RIDE is looking at our documents.

Suggestion was made to have members of the Board of Education tour the charter school.

School Brochure

Mr. Curran stated – we revised our brochure (see handout #6 on file in the superintendent’s office) which I think represents us quite well and we thank the Public Relations Department for The Laborers’ for working with Carolyn on this and also printing it for us which was a nice savings. Last week we mailed this brochure to all 8th grade parents from Cranston with a cover letter from me and we already have a number of applicants based upon the brochure. It is a good public relations tool for us.

AEP – (See handout #5 on file in the superintendent’s office).

Ms. Dzekevich read from her report. She also explained the new regulations from the Board of Education regarding the GED Program (also attached to handout #5).

Recruitment

We have 22 students signed up for next year and are ahead of last years’ numbers.

A motion to accept these reports was made by Dr. Leone; seconded by Mrs. McFarland. All were in favor.

Board Members Communications – none

Public Hearing

a. Students (agenda/non-agenda matters) – none.

b. Members of the Public (agenda matters only) – none.

RESOLUTIONS

No. 03-01-13 – Be it resolved that the Board of Directors approve the Third Quarter budget adjustment as reported on the attached 2012-2013 budget analysis.

Mr. Traficante spoke about the budget in the absence of Mrs. Corcelli and explained the increases and decreases.

A motion to approve this resolution was made by Dr. Leone; seconded by Mr. Santangelo. All were in favor.

Public Hearings on Non-Agenda Items – none.

Announcement of Future Meetings – May 21, 2013.

Adjournment – A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Santangelo; seconded by Mr. Sabitoni. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Traficante, Chairperson

 

PROPOSED	OPERATING	BUDGET	2013	-
2014	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	PROPOSED	

REVENUE	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	VARIANCE
STATE AID	1,649,333	1,255,888	1,226,472	-2.34%
CRANSTON CITY AID	839,536	689,316	752,046	9.10%
OD REGULAR EDUCATION	485,153	603,500	657,000	8.86%
OD SPECIAL EDUCATION	79,675	80,000	80,000	0.00%
ADULT ED REVENUE	156,496	120,000	120,000	0.00%
CONTRIBUTION RESERVE/OPEB	0	0	30,000	0.00%
REIMBURSED EXPENSES	105,739	105,739	105,739	0.00%
TOTAL REVENUES	3,315,932	2,854,443	2,971,257	4.09%

ACTUAL ACTUAL PROPOSED

EXPENDITURES	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	VARIANCE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	85,462	101,000	103,020	2.00%
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	2,271	87,411	89,159	2.00%
RECR/ASST TO EXEC DIR	40,999	40,000	40,000	0.00%
PROGRAM COORDINATOR	21,952	0	0	0.00%
FISCAL MANAGER	60,769	60,000	61,200	2.00%
JOB PLACEMENT SPECIALIST	73,710	73,900	76,117	3.00%

SCIENCE	132,379	110,969	117,984	6.32%
MATH	160,429	183,718	193,359	5.25%
SOC STUDIES	113,540	130,382	136,789	4.91%
NURSE	30,789	0	0	0.00%
ENGLISH	157,067	140,096	176,462	25.96%
ART	48,886	41,650	55,447	33.13%
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	110,894	102,688	86,509	-15.76%
TECHNOLOGY	55,446	75,698	77,998	3.04%
REIMBURSED TRANS/GUID	88,396	88,396	88,396	0.00%
ADULT ED INSTRUCTORS AM/PM	75,036	53,200	40,000	-24.81%
PORTFOLIO PREP COORDINATOR	35,000	26,250	30,000	14.29%
PROGRAM COORDINATOR	40,000	0	0	0.00%
JOB PLACEMENT SPECIALIST	22,977	0	0	0.00%
VIRTUAL LEARNING FACILITATOR	28,899	2,890	0	-100.00%
TEACHER SUBSTITUTES	17,755	18,000	15,000	-16.67%
CHARTER INSTRUCTORS	266,905	235,136	242,190	3.00%
SECRETARY	33,936	33,936	36,836	8.55%
CUSTODIANS	56,709	33,176	47,909	44.41%
BENEFITS/PAYROLL TAXES	418,234	424,774	453,802	6.83%
Reimbur Trans/Guid Bene	17,343	17,343	17,343	0.00%
RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS	3,000	3,000	4,000	33.33%
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	160	160	160	0.00%
RENT	292,605	219,454	292,604	33.33%
PURCHASED SERVICES - UBIO	34,851	33,750	40,000	18.52%
PURCHASED SERVICES	21,849	29,432	26,100	-11.32%
FIELD TRIPS	1,916	3,000	1,500	-50.00%

VIRTUAL LEARNING	0	1,500	1,500	0.00%		
UTILITIES: ELECTRICITY	40,465	31,696	45,000	41.97%		
HEAT	12,188	9,573	14,000	46.24%		
TELEPHONE	7,238	5,700	8,000	40.35%		
PROP & SEWER TAXES	63,068	49,659	80,428	63.44%		
INS: PROPERTY	4,652	3,600	4,000	11.11%		
E & O	5,050	5,050	5,555	10.00%		
WORKERS COMPENSATION	7,314	7,500	8,250	10.00%		
UNEMPLOY COMPENSATION	7,924	15,000	2,000	-86.67%		
LEGAL	6,770	6,000	6,000	0.00%		
ANNUAL AUDIT	1,000	10,000	5,000	-50.00%		
SPECIAL					ED	SERVICES
REIMBURSEMENT	79,675	80,000	80,000	0.00%		
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	366	1,125	1,500	33.33%		
SNOW REMOVAL	0	1,875	2,000	6.67%		
FEES & DUES (INTERSCHOLASTIC)	1,789	1,789	2,000	11.79%		
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	19,341	30,000	20,000	-33.33%		
STUDENT ACTIVITY STIPENDS	14,535	15,000	15,950	6.33%		
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	5,300	13,000	11,000	-15.38%		
CLASSROOM SUPPLIES	7,161	7,500	7,500	0.00%		
P.E. SUPPLIES	1,092	825	640	-22.42%		
ADULT ED SUPPLIES & GED Testing	17,940	13,500	10,000	-25.93%		
CHARTER OFFICE SUPPLIES	6,267	7,800	8,200	5.13%		
CUSTODIAL SUPPLIES	782	600	800	33.33%		
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	1,446	1,500	1,800	20.00%		
CAPITAL		OUTLAY			(GED	Tech

Configuration)	3,867	22,500	35,000	55.56%
WEBSITE UPGRADES	0	250	250	0.00%
CLASSROOM IMPROVEMENTS	19,440	20,000	15,000	-25.00%
ASSET INVENTORY PROTECTION	0	250	0	-100.00%
CONTRIBUTION TO RESERVE	79,928	37,063	30,000	-19.06%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	2,964,762	2,769,264	2,971,257	7.29%
BUDGET VARIANCE	351,170	85,179	0	