

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

May 21, 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: Chairperson Traficante, Mrs. Coogan (in place of Dr. Lundsten), Mr. Santangelo, Mr. Cardi, Ms. Oberlander, Mr. Sabitoni, Mrs. McFarland, Mr. Rampone and Dr. Leone.

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 – April 11, 2013

Moved by Dr. Leone, seconded by Mr. Sabitoni; all were in favor.

Public Acknowledgements/Communications – none.

Board Members Communications -

Mr. Sabitoni stated – On Thursday, May 30, 5:30 reception; dinner at 6:30 p.m. Armand Sabitoni is being honored at the Rhode Island Convention Center by LaSalle Academy. There will be a scholarship in his name starting next year. An invitation is extended to all board members. Armand is a graduate of LaSalle Academy and that school is near and dear to his heart as is this high school so I know for a fact that if he looks out and sees a table of his charter school board members, teachers and staff that would make him even prouder.

Chairperson’s Communications – none.

Executive Director’s Communications -

Update on Focus School Status/Diagnostic Screening

Mr. Curran stated – we have a few items today to review with you in my report. Let me start by thanking The Laborers’ Public Relations Department who spent the morning with us today doing some video testimonies about our school from parents and students. Over the course of the time that I have been here I have shared with you many comments I have received from parents and students alike about why they like this school, why they came here in the first place, and what they take out of this building each day and each year and as we think about the work ahead of us for next year, in terms of recharter, I thought that maybe we should have a video of testimonies from those

people so today we brought together the PR department from The Laborers'. Three staff members were sent here and we recorded a number of parents and students. We think that these testimonials will be powerful next year when we share with the Board of Educators and others what this school is all about. What I said when I was interviewed – this school is not about a number on a piece of paper that represents assessment results; this school is about much more than that and that's the message and the story that we need to tell next year. So when that video is edited and completed I will bring it to the table here and probably also give you copies of it so you can share it beyond our confines. The more we tell our story I think the better off we are going to be as a school to get rechartered next year and to continue to do the important work that we do here each year. Please pass on Traf, if you would, to downtown my thanks for giving us that time today.

Mr. Sabitoni suggested this video be added to the recruitment information. Mr. Curran stated that would be done and it will also be put on our website so people can access it that way.

Mr. Curran continued – Go Local Prov (handout #1 on file in the superintendent's office) last week published a listing of rankings of high schools in Rhode Island. There are 50 high schools in the state and we were ranked 38 of the 50. Also, a document showing you the Charter School Day (handout #2 on file in the superintendent's office) which was at the State House. Charter Schools were asked to bring parents, students and staff members to try to engage our senators

and representatives as they moved into their assemblies on that afternoon.

Graduation – is Friday, June 14, 2013, 6 p.m. at Hope Highland Elementary School.

Mr. Curran stated – as part of our monthly meeting we give you an update on where we are in terms of the focus school status and at this point in time I have asked our consultant Carolyn if she would give us a brief overview of our status at this point.

Carolyn did a PowerPoint presentation and stated the following – we had to come up with four interventions and these are the strategies and descriptions. At this point this is called our Student Reform Plan (SRP). The SRP has to be evaluated quarterly from RIDE. We have to then come up with a report for RIDE every quarter. We had this approved on April 4, 2013 and our first report out was May 8th. So what this looks like, and this is just one example of one of the interventions, this is from the report that went in in May; it is a forty page document. At this point I cannot give you a copy of it because we are in the midst of that process. RIDE can come in and review it with us but on May 30th we actually go to RIDE and they kind of put their stamp of approval on this. So until then this cannot go out publically. As part of their documentation what we had to do with each of these interventions was to look at the indicators and then rate ourselves. The way RIDE rates their process it is a red, yellow, green

process. Red means that it is something that needs attention, yellow means you are kind of in the process but there needs to be continued work and then green is you're kind of in the clear. So as we went through seeing this was our baseline it was our first go-around we were pretty tough on ourselves and we pretty much gave ourselves red across the board because we wanted to start this moving forward. At this point what we have to do is come up with data to show RIDE we are using data to make decisions. What we did was we looked up the first one which was about student support systems and we looked at what we had and that was a fast turnaround, it was a month. We started the advisory program here in January we have done a couple of surveys over the last four weeks so this is part of the student survey that we looked at and what we gathered was is if they felt connected personally to the staff members, how they felt an adult responded to them insofar as their success and then we also, as part of the advisory program, we know that one of the concerns and challenges we have here is our attendance rate. We wanted to use advisory in that process of how it would have a positive impact on the attendance rate. Right now at this point when we look at our data, we have a five minute check-in, four days out of the five days, students are not using that as a way to help them get into school by connecting with that person. So as we sat with RIDE and reported out on this we saw that this is probably where we need to draw our attention and maybe come up with a different strategy insofar as that was concerned. RIDE coming in for the first time, they wanted to see that we were able to talk about data. The survey was much longer

than this but we just wanted to give a couple of bullet points to RIDE. We are looking at the ILP (Individual Learning Plan) in that we use the same ILP process throughout the three high schools in Cranston. It is implemented during the advisory time period but right now we use the data between the student data and the adult data, there's sort of a disconnect at that point and that is something we are going to be looking at too. The students are not getting, as you can see by this percentage, what role the ILP plays. Could this be partly because the advisory program started in January and it's only been a few months, absolutely, but that is something that we are kind of looking at. What we did was we took the student data and then we compared it with the surveys the adults in the building did and we started to look at similar data to see where they were. So where, just an example, 92% of adults see the value of ILP's. So we're seeing there's a disconnect where the students aren't quite getting it yet all the adults in the building do. So that is something we reported to RIDE, that we as a team need to spend a little more time with the student to have a better understanding. We also as part of this intervention we had CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) training for any staff who wanted to participate and that group was surveyed. From this we have learned that 83% of the staff that was surveyed felt that the entire staff needed to be trained in CPI. This is the last piece of that template that RIDE sent to us. What we have to do is give bullet points.

When we came back to the table with RIDE and they had read across the board and they said, you know I have heard there is a little bit

more going on here so let's leave this at what is coding and we broke it down. In the infrastructure of the building we have pretty good support and moving in the right direction insofar as all of the interventions are concerned. The way that this comes from RIDE, it prepopulates the leading indicator information up there and this is prepopulated every three months. Then it will work its way down here and we will report out on those four areas. So at this point on the 30th we go to RIDE and this is what we will be looking at and the areas that we know that we need to address, we know we are getting closer in the yellows, and the areas in the red are the areas that do need the most work at this point. This is all baseline so just walking away with some greens at this point we would be in pretty good shape. The meeting with RIDE, there wasn't a single issue with what we brought to the table so as far as I am concerned it was a good report, we were very happy with where we were and the kind of data that we were collecting. We have been reclassified from a focus school to a warning school.

Mr. Curran stated – if you look at the top box, because this is basically what we will be talking about when we go to RIDE on the 30th...that will be Jeannine Nota, assistant superintendent, the superintendent, Traf as the board chair and I will be there as the executive director. We will basically be talking to them about this one page. If you look at those numbers on the top, teacher absenteeism, baseline year was 6.9, this year it is 10.82 and the current year we have to set a target for August of 10%. I am not completely

comfortable that the baseline data is all correct. I say that because when you go back to 2011-2012 we still have AEP data comingled with our data and that effects our data results here because there is 70 students typically in AEP and all their attendance, all of their NECAP scores, all that data is part of our school in that year. So I don't think until we look at 2012-2013 which is this year that we will really get good baseline data but that's the format and we can't do anything about. I think this year, even though it is called the implementation year, in my opinion really is the baseline year and as Carolyn says we're already showing good improvement in the fact that we went from focus into warning; we're moving up. The next line up is typical and we only missed typical by about 3 points. We almost jumped two whole categories in one year which is quite remarkable. I have to believe that with the trajectory that we are on right now that next year will be typical and focus will be a distant memory for us. We can see these numbers are improving as we look at the chronic student absenteeism, 53% in 11-12; this year to date is 22% so we have cut that in half. Our suspension data is not yet available but the baseline was 15.8% in 11-12; there is no way, I believe, in 10-11 it was 8%. I just don't think that is a real number but it's what they have. Based upon the number of suspensions we had this year, I know that our number for May is going to be lower than 15%, I going to guess it's going to be around 10 or 11%. So, these numbers are all improving and that's certainly what we need to show and then next year we will show more improvement so I think we will be in a good place. This is focus work, it's not our recharter efforts but they will

align themselves with each other next year.

Mr. Curran continued – I went to a Charter League meeting a week ago, I go once a month, this League is all 16 charter schools in the state and right now we are looking at something that RIDE has put out recently to all charter schools a document called “The Charter”. Believe it or not schools do not actually get a physical charter when you are chartered by RIDE and now they are looking at doing that which is great. However, all the charter schools are very nervous about what they are proposing and I think if...they are not actually proposing it, I think really at this point they are saying, here is what we are going to do and the Charter League is trying to say, slow down, let’s talk about this, we have some reservations and so forth. So we are not sure where this is going to go but I just wanted to mention this to you now because this will probably be an ongoing issue for us. This isn’t actually the charter renewal process. They want to give this out each year to a school that says you are chartered by RIDE. My concern about this, and I am not alone in the League, is that as part of this charter process they have a school accountability plan which is attachment one, and in it it says, if you are going to get rechartered every five years, every year, the school outperforms it’s student sending district as measured by math and reading on the statewide assessment. Every year the school shall outperform demographically similar schools as measured by math and reading on the statewide assessment. Every year the school will show student level growth percentile in math and reading higher than

the state's median average on the statewide assessment. So they are making it very clear in this that in a five year period that you would typically have a charter, every year you need to outperform your district and the state on NECAP and any demographically similar schools. That's a very high bar. My concern here is that is so limiting I am not sure the Board of Education would have any leeway to give a charter to a school if they haven't met that standard. Right now I think they can still have that discussion and still approve a charter even if it is not recommended by RIDE but I think this is going to handcuff them so they have to not give a charter if the school has not met those standards. I am very concerned about this. This school would have to outperform East and West and any other town that sends students to our schools. All the charter schools are in this same situation. (This information is in draft form and on file in the executive director's office.)

Chairman Traficante stated – I think we need to have a meeting with Eva Mancuso from the Board of Education regarding this issue. We need to make the BOE aware of this information.

Mr. Santangelo stated – this is taking the BOE out of the equation.

Mr. Curran stated – I will keep you posted on this as it moves along. Hopefully by the June 11th meeting, our last meeting for this year, I will have more information for you about that.

Rhode Island Charter School Annual Report for the NEL/CPS Construction Career Academy (handout #3 on file in the superintendent's office). Mr. Curran stated – we turned in this report last fall. As we prepare for the August retreat as a board, this is good background information about our school. It really gives you a good handle on what our school is all about.

Awards Ceremony 2013 (handout #4 on file in the superintendent's office). Mr. Curran shared with the board the pamphlet for the award ceremony that was held on May 16, 2013.

Memo from Marilyn Coppola re: Job Placement Report of 2012-2013 NEL/CPS and AEP Students (handout #5 on file in the superintendent's office). Chairperson Traficante commended the two placement specialists for placing so many students in jobs.

Monthly update on the budget

Mrs. Corcelli reviewed the Proposed Operating Budget for 2013-2014 and the current operating budget as of 4/30/2013 (see handout #6 on file in the superintendent's office).

Ward, Fisher & Company, LLP Audit for June 30, 2012 (Audited) and June 30, 2011 (Unaudited) was presented by Mrs. Corcelli (see handout #7 on file in the superintendent's office).

AEP Report (see handout #8 on file in the superintendent's office).

Mrs. Dzekevich read from her report.

A motion was made by Mr. Sabitoni to accept these reports. This was seconded by Mr. Rampone; all were in favor.

Public Hearing

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

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

Public Hearings on Non-Agenda Items - none

Announcement of Future Meetings – June 11, 2013.

Adjournment – a motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. McFarland and seconded by Mr. Sabitoni; all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Traficante, Chairperson