

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

4 Sharpe Drive, Cranston, RI

January 14, 2014

1:30 P.M. Executive Session - Conference Room

Immediately Followed by Public Session - Cafeteria

Educational Seminar following Public Session

MINUTES

This meeting of the New England Laborers' and Cranston Public Schools Construction and Career Academy was held on the above date in the conference room and called to order at 1:35 p.m. with the following members present: Chairman Traficante, Dr. Lundsten, Mrs. McFarland, Dr. Leone, Mr. Cardi, Mr. Santangelo, Mr. Rampone and Mr. Sabitoni. Absent was Mr. Jacobs.

Dr. Leone made a motion to convene to Executive Session; this was seconded by Mr. Sabitoni; all were in favor. Executive Session was conducted pursuant to R.I. State Law(s):

1. PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel: Executive Director's Evaluation

At 2:10 p.m. the board moved to the cafeteria to conduct the public session of this meeting.

Mr. Traficante addressed the audience and introduced every member of the Board and gave a brief background of each member.

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

A motion to seal the minutes of executive session was made by Mr. Sabitoni; seconded by Dr. Leone; the roll was called; all were in favor.

Minutes of Previous Meeting(s) Approved – November 19, 2013

A motion to approve these minutes was made by Mr. Santangelo; seconded by Dr. Lundsten. All were in favor.

Public Acknowledgements/Communications – no public acknowledgements.

Mr. Traficante stated – under communications – as you know US Congressman Jim Langevin visited our school and he wrote a letter to Mr. Curran thanking us for his visit here and he was very, very impressed with the hands-on project based learning that takes place in our construction technology field and commended us for the work that we do here. We also received an email from a parent of a student here at our school. Mr. Traficante read it into the record – “Dear Mr. Curran, I cannot thank you enough and your staff for working with my son so he was able to graduate this year. I want to especially thank

Mr. Pecorelli, Mrs. Hoffman for their hard work and dedication they provided and also for believing in him. There aren't too many teachers or administrators that I know of that would have done what they both did my son. My son attended Johnston High School prior to coming the NEL/CPS Construction and Career Academy. They did not provide half the resources that your school provided. You should be very proud of how your staff conducts the curriculum for students who fall through the cracks in a public school setting. I would highly recommend your school to anyone."

Mr. Traficante continued – I wanted to read this to you because it is commending you, the teachers and staff, for the job you do and you are recognized for that.

Board Members Communications – there were none.

1. Executive Director's Communications

Mr. Curran stated – I would like to recognize our entire staff for being present today for our board meeting. As you know we set this meeting today because our staff doesn't get a chance to see the board in operation and it is important for you to know who the members are on the board and also what these meetings look like. They happen during the day and we understand you cannot come because you are teaching but certainly we are glad that you can see this meeting today. Our meetings are always open meetings and if you have a free period please feel free to come into one of these meetings.

I would also like to piggy-back on the email sent from the parent on what this school has done for their child and this is sort of my segway on my report to admissions. We recently contacted about ten parents to have them come in during the RIDE visit because the RIDE team will want to interview parents as well. When we spoke to the parents and asked them if they would be willing to come in and give up an hour or so of their time in the late afternoon in February; every person said they would be glad to do that because your school has saved my child – without your school existing I am sure my student would not be in school now or they would be in school somewhere else and not doing well at all. We hear that so often from parents about our school that we really are a beacon out there for them to save that child who has not done well in another setting and you know that better than I do because you're the one toiling in the trenches in the classroom every day and you know it is a struggle for the kids but also a struggle for you when you have to deal with high absenteeism, lack of interest, and poor foundational skills based upon their previous experience in school. So we have to keep this charge going because we're really serving a very important purpose in the state of Rhode Island to help many kids who would not be successful if it were not for this school. So I want us to keep our eyes on that prize and that is why we're doing this.

Admissions – As a segway then into my report on admissions I will pass out each of the packets to the board (See handouts #1, 2 and 3 on file in the Superintendent's office). Mr. Curran stated – these are

the three reports you are going to hear on now from me. The first report is the admissions report. As you know we changed our paradigm this year in terms of how we were going to recruit. We wanted to get out of the gate early this year before students, particularly in Cranston, make their decision about which high school they want to go to. Traditionally it is March before we would visit the schools and talk to the 8th graders and get information to parents. So this year we started that process in December and we went to the schools in December, Mr. Pecorelli, Marilyn Coppola, Ray Johnson and I went to talk specifically about the World of Work and the Construction Program because we thought that would be of more interest to the students than for Rich and I talk about our school. It really did pay off great dividends. We spoke to all the 8th graders (at all three middle schools) during assembly and over the holiday vacation we mailed out a letter to all the parents of 8th graders in Cranston along with our new flyer and a flyer on open house which is tomorrow night. Already we have fifteen applications from Cranston and by this time typically in the year we have none. So we are way ahead of the game right now and if that pattern hold true then we hope that in early March or April we might have as many as 45 to 50 applications just from Cranston alone which would just be wonderful. We are anticipating a class of about 45 next year and if we had up to 60 applicants we would fit them in somehow. We want to open these doors to as many students as we can. Tomorrow night will be open house and it will be mostly Cranston parents but we will also have parents from other communities in the area. We will have parents and

students from other grade levels. Our staff has been invited to attend as well this year and we are hoping if enough parents come they can walk around the building and talk to teachers and get a feel of what is going on in our classrooms. We will also have the construction lab open outside so they can go there and see what is going on out there.

Mr. Curran continued – Typically this time of year report cards come out in a few weeks in Rhode Island and we will get some phone calls from parents, students and/or guidance counselors asking if we have any room in our school. We would be more than happy to take those students in. We will keep you posted as we proceed. The first week of February we will hold a lottery. We have to do that as a charter school and we have never had enough students apply to have a lottery because we have never been full but we're thinking this year we will have a lottery for the first time because we can only have 192 students and I would love to be able to hold a lottery for those 192 spots.

Adult, Vocational and Credit Recovery – Ms. Dzekevich read from her report. (Handout #2 on file in the Superintendent's office).

Financial Development – (See handout #3 and 3A on file in the Superintendent's office).

Ms. Corcelli stated – as of December 31, 2014. We have one school district that has not paid their bill and we are meeting with legal on Thursday to address this issue.

Last meeting we discussed a \$5,800 credit on our rent because of a miscalculation of the previous years' rent. That has since been reversed per legal counsel because of the financial support that our landlord provides to us.

Ms. Corcelli continued – we also contracted for some printing and wiring issues that were much higher than previous years. Some salaries will be reimbursed by the district and that will happen in January. Student Council is working on a fundraiser. We are also working on a scholarship drive.

Mrs. McFarland asked – insofar as the rental; will that stay at \$292,605?

Mrs. Corcelli replied – the rental is \$292,605 and we receive reimbursement of 25% of that for the downstairs rental.

Mr. Curran asked – where did we put the costs for the computer cart with the laptop?

Mrs. Corcelli stated – we will have a new account for that – computer lease and that is not noted yet with \$7,000 going into that account. (20 laptops, carts, headsets and mice). Mr. Curran stated – let me just explain that – we have to have a mobile cart of laptops for testing purposes only and every school in Rhode Island has to be ready for when we do the PARCC test and we did not anticipate this cost last year when we did the budget but we are looking at the finances on this and it made sense to lease rather than buy because we can lease for two years for approximately \$7,000 for each of the two years and at the end of the two years we can buy the laptops for \$1.00 each. So it was a better business model for us to lease the laptops and the cart

then to buy them. This will allow us to do the PARCC test when it comes around; not next year but the following year. However, this year all the schools in Rhode Island are on a pilot and we will be piloting the PARCC test here through the web in March in our ELA classes. That expense was not anticipated and not in this year's budget so we will have to make that money up in the budget from somewhere else.

Mr. Curran continued – to finish out my report – just to give you an update – our NECAP scores, we anticipate will come back at the end of January, possibly the first week of February. Tonight Dr. Lundsten and I will be at a meeting at RIDE (NE Tech location) from 5-7 and it is for the NECAP release of scores. They will be giving us information on how they will be releasing the scores to the district. Just keep in mind that our scores will be in two parts, juniors and our present seniors that had to retest. We had 18 seniors who had to retest in math and we are hoping when those scores come out all of them will have shown enough progress to meet the graduation requirements but if not then there is one more test they will take in March; one hour NECAP test, that will give them one last chance to meet that standard and pending that, if they still don't meet the standard we would have to see if they qualify for a waiver of that requirement. So I will keep the board posted on all of that information as we go forward so we know where we stand. Mr. Curran explained the waiver process to the board.

Mr. Curran also passed out the last school newsletter from November 2013 (see handout #4 on file in the Superintendent's office).

Mr. Curran passed out a memo from Ms. Marilyn Coppola re: Job Placement Report of 2013-2014 NEL/CPS and AEP students (handout #5 on file in the Superintendent's office). We are tending typical for this time of year.

Mr. Traficante passed out the article that appeared in the Cranston Herald (see handout #6 on file in the Superintendent's office) re: Congressman Langevin's visit.

A motion to accept the Directors' Report was made by Mr. Sabitoni; seconded by Mr. Santangelo; all were in favor.

2. Public Hearing

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

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

3. Consent Calendar/Consent Agenda

4. Action Calendar/Action Agenda

RESOLUTION(S)

NO. 1-1-14 – Be it RESOLVED to accept the Rhode Island Department of Education Wireless Classroom Grant Agreement. This grant will

award the NEL and CPS Construction and Career Academy a total of \$ 30,381.85 and is to be used to create a districtwide wireless classroom solution.

Be it further RESOLVED to accept the proposed solution submitted by ePlus Technology Inc., Cisco/Meraki. ePlus Technology Inc. who will be the Cranston Public Schools' vendor for the implementation of this grant.

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Cardi; seconded by Mr. Sabitoni. Discussion: Mr. Curran stated – RIDE has put out some monies for schools throughout the state to upgrade their wireless systems and because we are a charter school we are sort of segregated out from the Cranston Public Schools for the purpose of the grant. Cranston Public Schools School Committee approved their grant for all the schools in Cranston but we have to do our separately as a charter school and it has to be approved by this board. The grant is for \$30,381.85 and the purpose of the grant is to upgrade our entire wireless system in this school in classrooms only. That means the vendor will come in, I think late spring; early summer, and reroute our entire wireless system probably bypass the wireless system we have now because it is antiquated and it will be married with our hardwired web system. What that means for the individual classrooms is that there be greater bandwidth and the internet access will be faster. We also will have greater control of the wireless system. It really is more about management of the system than it is about bandwidth. But we

will be able to manage what the students do on the wireless system when they are on it because they can get into areas where they shouldn't be. We are more than pleased to have this grant money available to us and I have to sign the grant agreement pending the board's approval today.

There being no further discussion; all were in favor.

5. Public Hearings on Non-Agenda Items – none.

6. Announcement of Future Meetings –

Mr. Traficante stated – as you know we must be here for the onsite visit on February 4 and the board hearing is from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. here at the Charter School. The important thing is that we must have a board meeting in February and that date right now is set for February 25th, 2014, 12 p.m. conference room, Charter School. The reason we need the meeting is that by March 1st Mr. Curran must submit a roster to the personnel department regarding any potential layoffs so that meeting is critical.

7. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Rampone; seconded by Mr. Sabitoni. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Traficante

Chairperson

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EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

AGENDA

TOPIC(S):

- 1. Discussion on the Recharter of the NEL and CPS Construction and Career Academy.**

Board members who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Chairperson in advance.

Interested persons and the public at large, upon advance notice, will be given a fair opportunity to be heard at said meeting on the items proposed on the agenda.

Individuals requesting interpreter services for the hearing impaired must notify the main office of Cranston Public Schools at 270-8170

seventy-two hours in advance of the meeting date.

Any changes to the agenda pursuant to RIGL 42-46-6 (e) will be posted on the school district's website at www.cpsed.net, Cranston Public Schools' administration building, 845 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI; and NEL/CPS Construction Career Academy, 4 Sharpe Drive, Cranston, RI and will be electronically filed with the Secretary of State at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.

Notice posted: 12/19/13

Secretary of State Website; Cranston Public Schools, 845 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI; NEL and CPS Construction and Career Academy, 4 Sharpe Drive, Cranston, RI