

Approved

August 7, 2013  
The Compass School Council  
The Compass School  
537 Old North Road  
Kingston, RI

AGENDA

**4 PM Call to order:** Elizabeth Allen, Council President, calls the meeting to order at 4:00pm

**Roll Call of Member Present:** Elizabeth Allen (EA), Dina Mandeville (DM), Cyrus Beasley (CB), Drew Virbila (DV), Hilary Downes-Fortune (HD), Michelle Clifford (MC), Rick Rhodes (RR), Charlie Weygand (CW)

Absent: Marisa Gallagher (MG)

Also present: Allen Zipke, Director; Kaleena Harrington, Business Manager; Matthew Plain, Compass School Attorney; Mark Robidoux

Compass School Families:

Kira Sawyer, Pamela L. Fitzsimmons, Martha Curley, Heather Rice, Glenn Hunter, Julia Chilicki-Beasley, Elis Lucia, Alyya Demartino, Kate Tokarski

**Approval of minutes:** RR motions to accept the June, 2013 minutes.  
CW Seconds.

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Motion carries

**Committee Reports** (Consent Agenda)

Co-Op

Development/Treasurers

Site

Learning

**RR motions to accept the reports**

DV seconds

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Motion passes

**EA motions to enter Executive session per RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2)** sessions pertaining to litigation

RR Seconds

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Motion passes

Enter Executive Session at 4:10 pm

**Enter open session at 4:48 pm.**

**DM motions to seal the minutes from executive session**

**RR Seconds**

RR Seconds

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Motion Passes

**Requests from community for agenda items and comments**

RR motions to begin Mark's hearing.

CW seconds the motion.

In favor: 5    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 3

Motion Carries

Mark's hearing is being recorded. For a transcript, contact the office.

Matt Plain described the process for the hearing. He noted that Mark would provide a statement. The audience will then be invited to make comments about the 0.6 fte Teaching Assistant position. At the conclusion of the supporting testimony, Allen Zipke would make a statement on the rationale for expanding the 0.6 Teaching Assistant position (Mark's position during 2012-2013) to full time.

Afterward, Mark would have an opportunity to ask Allen questions and then summarize his (Mark's) position. The Council would then consider a motion, to initiate a discussion, if there is to be a discussion. Matt also noted that this portion of the meeting will be recorded and a written record of the recording will be made available in 35 days. Drew Vibila, Michelle Estrela, and Hilary Downes-Fortune chose to recuse themselves from the meeting at this time. The floor was then extended to Mark.

Mark reflected that he had not expected the faculty on the Council to abstain from the hearing. Mark added that he would not participate further in the hearing at this time.

RR motions to conclude Mark's hearing

CW seconds.

In favor: 5    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Motion Carries.

RR motions to rearrange the meeting agenda to provide the community with the opportunity to make public comment at this time rather than at the end of the meeting.

CW Seconds

Approved

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0  
Motion Carries.

Pamela Fitzsimmons asked, "Can you please justify why a .6 TA position is being omitted to add a 1.0 TA position which is more money."

Julia Beasley made comments about Mark's appeal. Julia stated that many parents were unable to attend tonight and that many students have written letters. Julia stated that Mr. Mark would not be able to maintain a .4 position, and asked why we are hiring another full time aid for the Discoverers. Julia spoke to Mr. Mark's ability to understand the potential of students. Julia read a letter from Terry Hiltz.

Julia Beasley would like to keep Mark's .6 position and requested this matter be considered at next month's council meeting.

Martha Curley read a letter about Mr. Mark's .6 TA position.  
Martha Curley read a letter written by Amanda and Nathan Vinhateiro.  
Martha Curley read a letter written by her daughter.

Elisa Lucia stated that she volunteered in Mr. Mark's classroom. She stated that Mr. Mark is respectful and patient with students.

Kate Tokarski read a letter about Mr. Mark's .6 TA position.

Pamela Fitzsimmons requested an anti-bullying program.

CW asked that letters be collected and brought to council.

Julia Beasley wants council to address the lack of support for Mark R with his proposed integrated arts program.

Aliya Demartino made comments in behalf of Mr. Mark and how her daughter has been positively influenced by Mr. Mark.

Glenn Hunter stated that he was asked to come here by his children to support Mr. Mark.

### **Director's report**

1. It is August and we are approaching the first day of school. This year the first day is September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the day after Labor Day. Teachers return on August 27<sup>th</sup> for four days of professional development. Teachers will send out welcoming letters to students in their class next week.
2. Our annual ice cream social will be held on August 29<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. This is a Thursday evening. New parents and students will meet with their teachers at 5:15 PM.

Approved

3. We have tentatively scheduled an evening for new parents to the school on August 26<sup>th</sup>. The intent of this meeting is to welcome new parents and introduce them to Compass by providing an overview of philosophies and initiatives.
4. The farmhouse work is nearing completion. Josh Caswell, the contractor, has done a great job. I think everyone will be pleased with the results. We are scheduling a moving day for August 23<sup>rd</sup>. We have hired a moving company to do the move. We should plan an open house on a weekend to allow parents, funders, officials, etc. an opportunity to help us celebrate the new facility.
5. The current office space will be used for music, art, health, PE. We have also talked with Cox about providing phone and intercom service so that we will have communication among all rooms.
6. I worked with Blackboard Connect to arrange for better emergency communication. We will be able to use phones for emergency communication. Julie is inputting data and will be getting phone numbers from parents . We will be ready to go with this service in September.
7. I talked with Triumph Modular about doing some repairs on the portable classrooms. They came down last week and replaced tiles, fixed sinks, and repaired the drop ceiling. I have another maintenance person doing some other repairs, such as replacing tiles in the main building, repairing decks and ramps, installing white boards, etc. The grounds could use some work with weeding, which could be done with volunteers or we can hire our landscaping company. We can use some additional picnic tables. The current tables are getting old and needing repairs.
8. We have continued to work through the RI League of Charter Schools to investigate the possibility of hiring our own busses. The League has hired a person to coordinate this effort. He is close to putting out an RFP to see which bus companies may be interested. We have provided him information on our needs.

**Elect Officers:** Council President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer (EA)

EA nominates MC for council secretary

CW seconds

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Nomination passes

CW nominates EA for council president

RR seconds

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Nomination passes

CW nominates DM for treasurer.

RR seconds

Approved

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0  
DV seconds  
Nomination passes

CW nominates CB for vice president.

RR seconds

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0  
Nomination passes

**EA motions for executive session per RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1) director and business manager evaluations**

**RR Seconds**

**Enter executive session at 5:37 pm.**

Enter open session at 5:48 pm

DM motions to seal the executive session minutes.

CW seconds.

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0  
Motion passes.

**Announcements**

EA motions to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 pm

Approved

August 7, 2013  
The Compass School Council  
URI Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences  
Room 435 (Dean's conference room)  
120 Flagg Road  
Kingston, RI

## AGENDA

**5:45 PM Call to order:** Elizabeth Allen, Council President, calls the meeting to order at 6:15pm

### **Requests from community for agenda items and comments**

#### **Salary and Budget -**

Council discussed the current salary system at The Compass School. The chart handed out to teachers in June 2012 was not a step chart, *per se*--it was a list of 2012-13 salaries for a teacher at Compass with a Bachelor's degree and the corresponding years of full-time teaching experience at a public school. This was given out for transparency. Bonus amounts for Masters degrees, and for one person 'grandfathered' who receives a bonus for BA +30 credits, were additional. The salaries on the contracts given out this past June were derived from 2012-2013 salaries plus a flat sum raise of \$1,500 that was conservative in light of the ongoing uncertainty in the operating budget due to transportation and health care coverage costs. Staff noticed that these salaries were in many cases below the corresponding salaries for school districts in the area.

When contracts were handed out, there was confusion, because many teachers interpreted the chart from June 2012 as a traditional step scale, in which future salaries were listed by year of experience. Subsequent to all of this, our annual health care costs have come in lower than anticipated, so it was decided that we have the money to use the 2012 chart as a traditional step chart and increase teachers' salaries from the initial 2013-14 contract levels. Kaleena will create a new chart and Allen will issue new contracts reflecting these higher salaries. However, it was stressed that this new chart will apply to this year only, as the costs for transportation and health care coverage can and will continue to fluctuate and most likely increase. Council will begin late in 2013 to revisit the sustainability of salaries and our budget. As more and more teachers get into the 10+ years of experience level, funding salaries will become increasingly difficult and will require Compass to either decrease expenses or increase income.

*EA motions amend the budget to reflect that we will move the money out of health insurance into salaries to fund salaries at the level shown on the chart.*

Approved

*CW seconds*

In favor: 8    Opposed: 0    Abstain: 0

Motion passes

**Address by founder Lynn Phipps** – discuss funding opportunities and direction of Compass from a founder’s perspective

**Goal setting retreat** – review progress made this year, set new priorities for next year, discuss realizable action items to measure success

Council members will review goals and send outcomes to EA during the month of August.

**Announcements**

**AZ talked about planning an open house for the farm house in September.**

**An extra student may be added to the Adventurer Step.**

EA motions to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 pm