

**THE HOPE ACADEMY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

December 21, 2015

MINUTES

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Monday, December 21, 2015. An agenda was distributed to all present (and made a part of these minutes by reference). Directors in attendance included, Mayor Charles Lombardi, Michael Deragon, Matthew Harvey, John Kelly, David Ortiz, David Sluter, and Deana Tineo. Staff in attendance included Superintendent Margaret Knowlton, Head of School Raphael Diaz, Tom Conlon, Gisselle Pellerano-Monserratt, Susan Vanderdoes and Deborah Malachowski. Also in attendance as a guest was Sara Grant, AIA, Partner, Murphy Burnham & Buttrick Architects

Call to Order – Chairman Lombardi called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed the group.

Consent Agenda- The Chairman asked if Ms. Knowlton would, prior to voting on the items on the consent agenda, review the Board letter to the Rhode Island Department of Education as well as the three policies that were on the agenda for approval. Ms. Knowlton briefly outlined the information in the letter that was previously discussed at the October

19, 2015 meeting. She also reviewed the policies, noting that Mr. Diaz had also discussed the two (2) Title I policies with The Hope Academy Parent Association and School Improvement Team.

Chairman Lombardi asked if there were any questions regarding the items on the consent agenda which were previously sent out to the Board members. Hearing none, Chairman Lombardi then asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda:

- Minutes from October 19, 2015**
- Board Letter to Rhode Island Department of Education**
- Superintendent Goals**
- Time and Effort Reporting Policy for Federal Grant Programs**
- Title I Parent Involvement Policy**
- Title I School-Parent-Student Compact Policy**

Mr. Sluter made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, Ms. Tineo seconded the same, and the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

Facilities Report – Discussion – Mr. Kelly, at the request of Chairman Lombardi, introduced Ms. Sara Grant, AIA, from the firm of Murphy, Burnham, & Buttrick Architects to review the development of Meeting Street’s campus master plan. Ms. Grant provided a power point presentation which explained the process as well as the challenges that are being addressed with the onsite growth of

Meeting Street and The Hope Academy, both internally and externally. Ms. Grant shared the proposed plan that the Meeting Street Board is considering inclusive of The Hope Academy. She also addressed the need for additional parking, entrances and exits for the various school and agency programs accessing the building on a daily basis. A discussion ensued that included several questions from members in regard to the timeline of the project as well as the funding mechanisms that are in place.

The Board then confirmed their commitment to continue to go forward to create a larger learning community. No vote was taken at this time. Mr. Kelly noted that the Finance Committee will make a recommendation to the Board based on the financial projections within the next few months. Ms. Grant then thanked the group and recused herself from the remainder of the meeting.

At this time Mr. Sluter recused himself from the remainder of the meeting and was no longer a participant.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment (VOTE) – Chairman Lombardi asked Ms. Knowlton to introduce Curriculum Coordinator, Ms. Susan Vanderdoes, who provided a power point presentation, shared the philosophy and design of curriculum and explained the benchmark assessment schedule that has been developed. Ms. Vanderdoes gave an in-depth outline of each subject structure and provided examples of classroom work explaining in detail how

student work is assessed. Ms. Knowlton explained data collection procedures for benchmarks and noted that the curriculum at The Hope Academy is academically rigorous and addresses all common core and content area specific standards. A discussion followed regarding how special subjects are built into the curriculum with Ms. Knowlton providing information regarding instructional minutes. The Board asked Ms. Vanderdoes to continue to provide data regarding the progress of benchmarks at future meetings. Mr. Ortiz complimented Ms. Vanderdoes on how informative her presentation was.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions regarding the curriculum and assessment as presented. Hearing none, Chairman Lombardi then asked for a motion to approve the curriculum and assessment structure.

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the curriculum and assessment structure as presented, Mr. Deragon seconded the same, and the benchmark system for curriculum and assessment was unanimously approved.

Finance Report – Mr. Conlon reviewed the financials which had been provided to the members prior to the meeting. He reviewed the year to date budget variances as of November 30, 2015, answering several questions in regard to clarifying expenditures and revenue. Mr. Conlon also went through the combined balance sheet reviewing

items listed in assets and liabilities as well as the financial requirements that must be met for the Implementation Grant. The Board had a brief discussion pertaining to the financials as presented. Mr. Conlon outlined the future expenses of the school explaining the variables that will influence the surplus and revenue.

Transportation Update (VOTE) –Mr. Conlon and Mr. Harvey presented the Finance Committee's report regarding the possible lease or purchase of a bus. Mr. Conlon provided the Board with a comparison of financing a bus outlining the cost as well as providing information in regard to the benefits of contracting out the operational part of transportation. Mr. Harvey recommended that a Request for Proposal (RFP) be issued for an option to purchase or lease a bus as well as a Request for Proposal (RFP) to contract out the operations involved in transportation. After answering several questions regarding their preliminary research, Mr. Harvey and Mr. Conlon agreed to create and put out the Request for Proposal (RFP) and to report the responses to the Board.

The Chairman asked if there were any further questions regarding transportation as presented. Hearing none, Chairman Lombardi then asked for a motion to approve the transportation bid process.

Mr. Deragon made a motion to go forward with the transportation bid process as presented, Mr. Ortiz seconded the same, and the

transportation process was unanimously approved.

At this time Mr. Kelly recused himself from the meeting.

Head of School Report- Mr. Diaz informed members that the recent parent teacher conferences were a success and report cards for the first trimester were sent home with students. The Hope Academy students attended a field trip to the Providence Museum of Natural History and Planetarium. At this time Hope has seventy-eight (78) kindergarten, seven (7) 1st grade and six (6) 2nd grade applications for the 2016-2017 lottery which will take place on Tuesday, March 1st, 2016. Mr. Diaz noted that applications and other information may be found online on The Hope Academy website or in the school office. There will be an open house for interested families on Saturday, January 23, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Hope Academy held its first School Improvement Team (SIT) meeting on December 16th and going forward will meet on a monthly basis to discuss and review strategies. The next meeting will be held on January 20, 2016 if any Board members are interested in attending.

Superintendent Report – Ms. Knowlton informed the Board that the Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP) application was submitted and approved by the Rhode Island Department of Education . She thanked all of The Hope Academy staff that were instrumental in developing this plan. She reported that The Hope Academy has hired a reading specialist, Ms. Abbey Kaknes, who will be working as a

substitute teacher while awaiting Rhode Island certification as a reading specialist.

At this time Mr. Kelly returned to the meeting.

Adjournment –Chairman Lombardi asked if there were any further questions and upon there being none, thanked the group and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Harvey, and unanimously approved and the Board adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Malachowski

Secretary Pro Tem