



NORTH SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Board of Directors Meeting

October 8, 2019

Present: Board Members: Jim Brigham, Michael Zuccarello, Beth Louis, Alison Nash, Kathy Anderson, Byron Francis, Thomas Hoerr, Mike Carpenter, Tracee Holmes, Ross Woolsey, Lamechia Bradford, Ken Rinderknecht.

School Administrative Staff: Chester Asher, Janine Gorrell, Brian Gross, Deb Cottin. Teachers: Megan Tosh, Wanda Aponte-Zapata, Earl Neal

Parents: Robyn Love-Clarke

4:53pm. Meeting was called to order at the Middle School.

Minutes for the September 11, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved.

1. Executive Committee Report:

Michael Zuccarello reported minutes from Executive Committee meetings will be provided to all Board members for review. Mike Carpenter, head of the Finance Committee, is now an Executive Committee member. The Executive Director and the Chief Operating Officer will attend Executive Committee meetings as ex-officio members.

There was some discussion of the make up of the Executive Committee and whether various Board Committee meetings are subject to Sunshine Law requirements for open meetings. North Side by-laws state Executive Committee members are appointed by the Board President. Mike also reported the Executive Committee determined a public comment period should be added to the agenda of each meeting of the full Board.

2. Public Comment Period:

Parent of two students at North Side, Ms. Robyn Love-Clarke expressed concerns regarding the atmosphere and her perception that there has been a loss of some community spirit at North Side. She offered her opinion children seemed not as easy-going as in the past, including her own, and they miss the Friday “field day” activities. She also expressed some concerns about whether IEP needs of her son were being timely met.

Ms. Love-Clarke was thanked for making her concerns known, was advised they were heard and will be addressed.

3. Administrative Report:

Chester Asher discussed his October, 2019 Board Report, including the goals to achieve

10% improvement in the number of North Side scholars scoring proficient or advanced on MAP, and to improve consistency in implementing school-wide practices. MAP scores were lower for North Side in 2018, but they were down overall statewide. MAP testing was more rigorous in 2018, and the cutoff level for the “proficient” designation was higher.

Asher presented statistics regarding suspension this year to date (16) and attendance levels in middle school (96.2%) and elementary school (90.2%). He addressed some of the morale issues discussed at the last Board meeting. Asher believes teachers are feeling better about EL (Expeditionary Learning) approach and that fears of the unknown have been somewhat alleviated. Janine Gorrell expressed that understanding of new approaches is coming with time, comfort level is improving, but there is need for more professional development.

There was discussion regarding the planned surveys to be done of teachers and parents. North Side is partnered with Panorama to do surveys. Issues were discussed about how surveys should be conducted and by whom. Asher stated the Panorama survey platform will provide data analysis.

Parent and Staff handbooks are to be sent to Board members by Asher. Parent handbook is to be on the website. Other issues concerning the website were discussed.

The succession planning for Stella Erondu’s position is underway. Three candidates are under serious consideration at this time, including one who was a finalist candidate for Asher’s position. Of the 149 applicants to replace Brian Gross for the Finance Manager position, 17 were interviewed by phone, with 5 of those to be interviewed in person. Three of the in person interviews were held yesterday. Search for the Operations Manager position is on hold pending selection of someone for the Finance position. Salary for the Finance Manager is to be in the \$60,000-\$75,000 range, and for the Operations Manager in the \$60,000 range. Some discussion was held regarding the responsibilities of each position. The budget will need to be amended to accommodate the two positions.

Asher reported the Capital Campaign for new building construction and cafeteria expansion is proceeding. Informational brochure, pledge form, case statement, etc. are being developed.

There is a strategy meeting to be held this evening after the Board meeting, with Pat Rich and Michael Farley, to discuss major contribution prospects and how to best solicit funding and market North Side to prospective donors.

Asher presented a detailed breakdown of the funding North Side has received from Opportunity Trust including when funding was received, for what purpose, what resources were involved in implementation, and the cumulative amount of funding contributions to date -

\$177,650. The most recent grant was \$10,000 for additional laptops. There was dialogue regarding whether Opportunity Trust is exerting undue influence on North Side’s development and operations. Asher expressed his belief Opportunity Trust is providing useful advice and counsel, with a goal of improving overall school quality. It was discussed and agreed the Board will be apprised of all grants and their purposes provided by Opportunity Trust and any conditions attached to them.

4. Finance Report:

Brian Gross discussed the financials for August, 2019. North Side is in the black financially so far this year, usual for this time of the year. The check register for September, 2019 was reviewed and approved. Some expenditures for construction costs will begin in November, 2019.

Brian discussed some details of the Conditional Loan Commitment document from Midwest Bank Centre. The payment plan will be spread out over several months, with draw down as needed based on how the Capital Campaign is going. Loan interest rate will be based on whatever the current rate is when the commitment letter is signed. A motion was made, seconded and approved by the Board to authorize Asher to sign/execute the loan document with Midwest Bank Centre for the loan outlined in the commitment document of August, 2019.

5. Facilities Report:

Kathy Anderson reported the Phase I building construction time line is moving along as scheduled. Bi-weekly meetings with the construction team are being held, and HKW Architects continue to be effective. It was also noted a firm from Chicago was contacted by Deb Cottin to provide greenscaping for North Side. The expenses for greenscaping would be covered by a grant through MSD.

Kathy noted the GMP (guaranteed maximum price) proposal from Interface Construction Corporation (ICC) has been approved. The Contract for Construction by ICC has been reviewed by Byron Francis and Peter Benoist. A motion was made, seconded and approved by the Board to approve the Contract for Construction.

6. Parent and Community Engagement:

Lamechia Bradford reported on activities for the North Side Parents Organization (NPO). Math Night will be held on Tuesday, October 22, 2019. A Spelling Bee is being planned for Thursday, November 19, 2019. The Facebook page for NPO is up and the snack table for students is up and running. NPO is hoping to have an end-of-the-year bash which would be open to the community.

7. Governance:

Tom Hoerr reported the Governance Committee will address the composition of the Executive Committee and alignment with the by-laws. Discussion regarding prospective new Board members is also ongoing. The merits were discussed of having a Spring, 2020 retreat for all Board members. It is anticipated North Side will have such a retreat, but nothing specific has been set yet.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm to go into Executive Session to discuss various administrative matters.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Rinderknecht, Secretary