

Seven Hills Charter Public School Board of Trustees
Retreat Minutes
February 5, 2008

Welcome

Meeting began at 5:15 PM. In attendance: Carlton Watson, Donna Lemoyne, Jim Diggins, Lee Cordaro, Richard Bisk, Cindy Krackovic, Lisa Dirsa, Krista Piazza and Gerald Yung. Chris Bogden facilitator. Beth Gillis recorded meeting minutes.

Minutes

Minutes of the January 8, 2008 SHCPS Board of Trustees Meeting presented for approval.

Motion to approve: Jim Diggins

Second: Donna Lemoyne

All members voted in favor of the motion.

Public Comments

The BOT has allotted 15 minutes to those individuals from the community or staff who has notified the Board in advance that they would like to speak on a topic that may or may not be on the agenda.

Presentations: Chris Bogden facilitator

1. GOALS UPDATE (see attachment)

- a. MATH / SCIENCE INITIATIVE – The intent was to improve student achievement by developing university partnerships and improving staff training and recruitment. Seven Hills has seen major gains in the Junior Academy in the past year.

Training, mentoring and study groups have been developed to help benefit the teachers on staff. SHCPS has had high quality teachers in math and science, however retaining them is an issue. The goal is to identify teachers who have expertise in math and science that also have the skill set to be engaging educators.

It was agreed that the goal for 2007-08 is to keep trying to recruit high quality teachers. The school will recruit student teachers and offer incentives such as signing bonuses for those who have successfully completed the Elementary Math.

- b. HIGH SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS – This 2006-07 goal was designed to promote SHCPS visibility, retain students through 8th grade, and to establish a tool to recruit future students.

Seven Hills wants to successful transition students into high school. Parent involvement is important to ensuring that success. Discussions with parents should emphasize high school as the bridge to get students into college. If we promote good high schools, the high schools will promote the good colleges. Seven Hills plans to develop relationships through an alumni network so that parents can learn about their options. With high school partnerships we may promote ourselves as the “better choice” to help prepare students for better choices in their future.

Lisa Dirsa, the school Guidance Counselor, has prepared a spreadsheet that highlights key areas of interest at local high schools. The spreadsheet includes programs, sports, languages, college affiliation, notes, etc. This document will be posted on the school website to provide interactive information for parents to identify the schools that will meet their child's needs. Lisa Dirsa also reported that parent participation during High School Gear Up Night was at an all time high when the event was combined with Mandatory Parent Conferences. SHCPS needs to identify more ways to get parents actively involved with the school.

It is important to get students thinking about high school options as well as their parents. Although 6th, 7th and 8th grade students attend a class that discusses career selections, it was suggested that it's equally important to start students and parents thinking about high school much earlier; in 4th and 5th grade. Taking students to visit high schools through other programs such as sporting events, theater, etc. would expose students to their many options.

The school wants to grow the scholarship funds available to students and recognize the children who want to succeed. To that end, Seven Hills is starting a National Junior Honor Society Chapter for this school year. Also, a new scholarship will be offered through the American Legion Post in Lisa Dirsa's brother's honor. Seven Hills will be working to cultivate relationships with local business to develop more scholarships.

- c. FACILITIES – Seven Hill's goal was to improve the quality of the environment within the school and to help retain staff. Space was the major area of concern. Discussions started with getting Village out of the classrooms and off-site. Community programs were investigated to help with that effort. Regrettably, there was not one good off-site program that could accommodate our needs. The facility issues boil down to weighing teacher complaints against potential parent complaints. Further discussion required.
- d. FUNDING SUPPORT – The strategy to increase funding support includes visibility, presence and relationships with the community. Krista Piazza has been identifying potential grants and Seven Hill's new grant writer has been submitting applications. Board members were asked to help research and identify grants.
- e. DISSEMINATION – All board members agreed that Seven Hills should focus less on getting people to the school and more on getting our faces out into the public eye. We must reframe our strategy as well as develop better relationship with local papers such as Worcester Business Journal and Worcester Magazine. Chris Bogden suggested that Seven Hills buy advertising space in college's student newspaper and distribute flyers.
- f. POLITICAL ADVOCACY – To date Seven Hills has organized a State House advocacy trip, a letter writing campaign, community leader events and visits with local politicians. It is vital to continue and grow our political advocacy efforts. Chris Bogden suggested that involvement with the local Rotary Club might increase Seven Hill's visibility. Gerald Yung has already begun to build a relationship with the Shrewsbury Street Business Association and will continue to foster that connection.

2. **GOALS FOR 2007/08** – Goals list was developed and tasks assigned (See attachment).

3. **MID-YEAR ACHIEVEMENT UPDATE** (See attachment)

Additional mentoring, training, support, etc. are being implemented to help improve teacher performance.

4. **SITE VISIT DISCUSSION** (following documents attached)

- a. Accountability Plan 2006-2011
- b. Mission Statement
- c. Site Visit Protocol
- d. Site Visit Questions

5. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. 403 (b) proposal by Lincoln Investment Planning to be presented in March.

6. **NEW BUSINESS** – No new business to report at this time.

7. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

- a) Personnel Update
- b) Enrollment Report as of 1/29/08: 671 enrolled, waitlist 175, ADM 673
- c) Cash Balances: December 2007
- d) December 2007 Qtr Balance Sheet and P/L
- e) Budget to Actual 2nd Qtr
- f) Amended FY08 Budget

Motion to approve amended budget: Jim Diggins

Second: Donna Lemoyne

All members voted in favor of the motion.

8. **SUMMARY**

Each member of the Board commented on the growth and success of Seven Hills Charter Public School. Krista Piazza and Cindy Krackovic complimented the Board on their commitment to the mission, support of the faculty and students, and never losing sight of their goals.

Motion to adjourn: Lee Cordaro

Second: Jim Diggins

Meeting adjourned at: 9:00 PM

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 4, 2008

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Elizabeth Gillis

Administrative Assistant