

Seven Hills Charter Public School Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday October 14, 2008
5:45pm, 51 Gage Street, Worcester, MA

Welcome

Meeting began at 5:55 PM. In attendance: Donna Lemoyne, Rebecca Blodgett, Richard Bisk, Carlton Watson, Lee Cordaro, Jim Diggins, Cindy Krackovic, Gerald Yung, Cheryl Hollocher and Krista Piazza. Beth Gillis recorded meeting minutes.

Minutes

Minutes of the September 16, 2008 SHCPS Board of Trustees Meeting presented for approval.

Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes: Jim Diggins

Second: Lee Cordora

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.

1) **Presentations:**

- a) Special Programs: Cheryl Hollocher to present – Refer to the attached SPED/ELL report dated September, 2008.

The SPED report has changed since this printing. There are currently 78 identified students on IEPs instead of 74, but this still translates to approximately 11% of the student population. The Coordinated Review is complete and has been accepted by the state. There was only one area for development; the Parent Advisory Council (PAC). Seven Hills has always had PAC in session; however, attendance has been very low. The Response to Intervention model has been successful in identifying two students who require additional help. The model will be expanded to include behavior, writing and math.

Seven Hills shifted the ELL model to be in line with the state requirements. Although there is concern about the amount of time taken away from core instruction, we have to be compliant. We are closely monitoring how Seven Hill's students are holding up under these standards and will report findings to the state. There are currently 60 students who require pull-out ELL services, but only 1 ½ instructors. Next year, when 15 pull-out students from Kindergarten are added Seven Hills will have to consider hiring personnel. Ms. Hollocher is addressing the DOE's citation regarding Sheltered English Immersion training. All teachers who work with LEP students are required to attend 60 hours of training within 4 categories. This is a district requirement, not an individual requirement, so it is difficult to provide incentive for teachers to participate. This is a time-consuming and expensive training. Although Seven Hills is mandated to be 100% compliant the state will accept documentation that we are making every attempt to get all teachers trained. More concerns were expressed relative to the time students spend away from core instruction for pull-outs, especially since the MEPA tests are underway. The testing will require 100 students to miss 1 week of instruction. This time, compiled with the 5 weeks missed during MCAS testing, means that students are not receiving core information. The state has just now recognized that there "may" be some overlapping to the MEPA and MCAS tests and have assigned one person to act as liaison between the two branches. There may be more changes to the testing requirements based on their findings.

2) Board Report:

a) Introduction: Juan Gomez

Ms. Piazza and Mr. Watson have met with Mr. Gomez to assess his candidacy for the Board of Trustees. Mr. Gomez will notify Mr. Watson of his ability to make the commitment required. Mr. Watson asked all Board members to identify one possible candidate to be interviewed and possibly join the Board. Candidates must have experience in the community, education, finances and/or public relations. Additionally they should be prepared to be a steward for the Board and have a strong interest in charter schools. Two Board members announced their need to resign: Ms. Blodgett will be leaving the School Board in order to put more energy into her new role as President of the Learning First Foundation, and Mr. Bisk will be leaving because he feels he is not able to adequately support the Board with his current commitments. Ms. Blodgett and Mr. Bisk will remain on the Board until after the November 3rd Retreat, and we await formal resignation notification.

b) Goals FY08/09 Assigned Task/Work Plan Update

Developing College Relationships is ongoing.

Follow up to Singapore Course Offering: A course has been hosted, and many of the Seven Hills staff attending a course over the summer. All new hires are attending Singapore training in Boston and coaches will be attending the advanced course.

Recruiting Effort is ongoing. Ms. Piazza and Mr. Yung have attended local job fairs for recruiting, as well as hosted a job fair at Seven Hills. Although attendance was poor, the Board felt that if it was coupled with another event we may attract more candidates. Ms. Piazza reported that some of the most qualified candidates interviewed to date have come from free advertising on Craig's List. Ms. Piazza is interested in identifying seasoned teachers, and not necessarily targeting candidates directly out of college.

High school relationships: Gear Up Night is October 21, 2008 and the Guidance Counselor, Ms. Dirsa, is expecting good attendance. Ms. Dirsa has been promoting the event in her JA Guidance Class and recently sent out information to student's homes with Entrance Exam and Open House dates for area high schools. Ms. Piazza is planning to utilize our alumni more effectively and ask graduated students to return and talk with current students in a more formalized and structured program.

Village Afterschool Program – There have been many changes in the Program with a new Director, increased rates, and increased number of field trips, activities and athletics.

Board of Friends – No activity to report at this time.

Grant Research is ongoing.

Summer Teaching – The one teacher who participated has been keeping in touch. Development required to increase participation.

Legislators – Ms. Piazza expressed concerns regarding the lack of a Parent Liaison. Seven Hills is paying increase dues but no representation. Ms. Krackovic will investigate and report to the Board.

Rotary Club – No activity to report at this time.

c) Board Retreat update:

Date: Monday November 3, 2008

Time: 5:00-8:30

Location: Peppercorns Grille, 455 Park Ave, Worcester

d) Annual Fall Charter Leader Meeting: Workshop schedule is attached to the Board Packet. It was also emailed to the Board on 9/29/08. The Workshop is Oct 16; however, no Trustees signed up.

e) Election of Officers – Tabled until November retreat

e) **Old Business:**

4) New Business:

- a) Coordinated Program Review Progress Report: Letter from DOE attached, these results were discussed by Ms. Hollocher and Ms. Piazza during the presentation on Special Programs.
- b) FY08 Audited Financial Reports draft for approval– Ms. Piazza participated in the Audit meeting and credited Ms. Krackovic for her efforts in making this audit a success. Ms. Krackovic noted that there were no significant changes in the audited financial from the pre-audit reported. Tofias will be coming to the December board meeting to review the audit with the board.

Motion to approve the Report Draft: Jim Diggins

Second: Rebecca Blodgett

All members voted in favor of the motion.

5) Financial Report

- a) Personnel Update, presented, no questions
- b) Enrollment Report as of 10/06/08: 681enrolled waitlist 244, ADM 682.09
- c) Cash Balances: August 2008 , presented, no questions.
- d) August 2008 Balance Sheet and P/L, presented, no questions.
- e) FY09 Amended Budget, Cynthia Krackovic reviewed the “changes” and noted that Village program was not back on the School’s budget.

Motion to approve the Amended Budget: Rebecca Blodgett

Second: Jim Diggins

All members voted in favor of the motion

Motion to adjourn: Jim Diggins

Second: Rebecca Blodgett

Meeting adjourned at: 6:53 PM

Next meeting: Mon, Nov 3 at 5:00 PM at Peppercorn’s Grille

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Elizabeth Gillis

Administrative Assistant