

Our Community School
Board of Directors Meeting
September 10, 2009

In attendance: Scott Miller, Heather Ashton, Susan Friedman, Bill Maxwell, Hilary Anderson, Ricardo Accorsi, Scott Spooner, Jana Harper, and David Marsh. Absent: Carolina Goodman

Non-voting members in attendance: Chris Ferris (principal), Beth Wolfsbauer (vice principal), Carrie Wagner (CEO, ExEd), Rich 5(V.P), Cat Campbell (6th grade teacher), Jude Stabiler (5th grade teacher). Absent: Victoria Camacho (PTSA)

6:05pm – Meeting called to order.

Community Speakers: Teachers Cat and Jude spoke in favor of expanding OCS to include a middle school. 12- and 13-year olds benefit from being in a small school with people who have known them since they were younger. Many parents have expressed the hope that OCS would go K-9, and it might be good for the enrollment. This particular class of 6th graders would make excellent leaders for starting a new middle school, if it could happen as soon as that.

For the sake of an efficient meeting, Scott M. reminded Board Members to limit their words to the most important points.

Scott M. moved, and Bill M. seconded, to pass the consent agenda, which included to elect Bill Powers to the Board and to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

ExEd Report

- Our new support person from ExEd is Rich Vazquez.
- OCS had \$227,000 in the bank in June.
- We are using a new form, “Financial Dashboard”, to simplify information.
- OCS is debt free, having paid off personal and emergency loans.
- OCS has not needed to access our line of credit.
- We have done a great job of curtailing expenses in anticipation of budget cuts.

Jana moved, and Bill M. seconded, that we approve the June financials. Unanimously passed.

- Our debt/equity ratio is a strong point.
- Revenue is up; expenses are down; our income loss is less than we anticipated; we do not expect more cuts from the state.
- ADA is \$262; enrollment is 276.

Bill M. moved, and Scott M. seconded, that we approve July financials. Unanimously passed.

- SB740 is now \$231,916. This is higher than the amount that we used for our budgeting.
- The deferral schedule has changed from the state, more than the actual income level. 25% of our income this year will be deferred. This is not as challenging as it sounds because

of SB740 monies are being doubled this year only. The state is changing their policy from paying in arrears to paying it in the same year it is paid out.

Bill M. moved, and Heather seconded, that we approved the amended budget. Unanimously passed.

David moved, and Scott M. seconded, to approve the check registers. Unanimously passed.

Hire ExEd to prepare application for 1D

- Chris explained that the fee is \$5,000. The deadline is September 28, 2009. It is unlikely that OCS would receive the grant and/or loan; however, LAUSD recommends that we proceed with the application as part of the process for getting the Devonshire site. OCS is unable to submit the application without ExEd's help.
- David moved, and Bill M. seconded, to approve the contract with ExEd to prepare the OCS application for 1D funds. Unanimously passed.

OCS Music Program

Bill M. moved, and David seconded, to reinstate the contract with the OCS music teacher through June, 2010, now that the OCS budget looks stronger for the year. Unanimously passed.

Procedures for making motions:

- Scott M. explained how Board Members will make motions in the future. (See attached.)
- David moved, and Scott M. seconded, to make official the procedures for Board Motions. Unanimously passed.

Charter Renewal to include middle school (K-8)

- Chris explained that the timing is good for including expansion in our new charter. OCS is in good standing, high APIs, etc.
- Including middle school in the new charter gives OCS the option, rather than requiring us to expand. Facilities must first be settled, and a feasible program plan needs to be developed.
- Bill wants to notify the Chatsworth Neighborhood Council to keep them in the loop.
- Heather suggests that it is a good idea to keep sixth grade connected with elementary, rather than making a middle school with grades 6-8.
- David moved, and Scott M. seconded, to add seventh and eighth grade to our charter renewal application. Unanimously passed.

Task Force to study and develop a program for middle school

- Susan and Heather agreed to head this task force as co-chairs.
- Chris said she was submitting the charter on October 2 so she needed some material from the task force soon. The details did not need to be worked out until later.
- The proposal could be general, painting a picture of how we might see the program, physical layout, etc.
- Bill M. moved, and Susan seconded, that the Board create this Task Force. Unanimously approved.

Special Education

- Beth presented the pros and cons of continuing with LAUSD's SELPA
- Without a relationship with LAUSD, OCS would need to pay for each support provider, every assessment, etc.
- LAUSD requires a specified amount of money BEFORE the school year in order to secure support providers for OCS.
- In the past, LAUSD has been slow to respond and difficult to work with; on the other hand, there are financial benefits to working with LAUSD and there is less drain on OCS administration.
- Risk, control of money, and liability are the main issues.
- Beth believes that she has built relationships with LAUSD over time and that special education is currently working well.
- Administration will check with teachers to find out how the system affects them.
- Scott explained that administration is developing a recommendation for a motion on this issue for the next meeting.

Review of Long-Range Strategic Plan:

Facilities Committee – Bill Maxwell

- We should know about Devonshire by October.
- We are making connections with real estate agents and local businesses; we have the luxury of an architect on our board.
- The committee will be splitting into two. One to focus on the physical campus. The other to focus on maintaining the sense of community and taking care of the needs of the school community through relocation, e.g. providing a bus.

Finance Committee – Irina Castillo

- This committee reviews the financials each month and asks for more detailed information.
- Works with ExEd to create a budget.
- Makes recommendations for budget cuts or increases

Program Committee – Chris Ferris

- Currently finishing the first draft of the petition renewal. Working to get rewrites back in a timely fashion.
- There is a concern that LAUSD may delay the process and force OCS to accept unwanted edits to the charter at the last minute, e.g. special ed, no teachers on Board.
- The WASC self study is moving along according to schedule. To be submitted in December.
- We are working with CSUN to provide staff development in the area of P.E.
- There is a new emphasis on students reading outside of school.
- Susan will be joining this committee.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE – Heather Ashton

- Working on ways to support a P.E. program. Parents with P.E. experience to volunteer time.
- Organizing a Disaster Preparedness event in October, free to the community. Chris suggested we notify local neighborhood councils.
- Researching ways to encourage families to provide healthy food for their children.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – Jana Harper

- Kids Dash - \$40/student would raise over \$10,000 with no overhead.
- Blues and Brews is a parent-generated event to raise money to support the House of Blues music program for 5th and 6th grade.
- PTSA will raise money as well as build community with a spaghetti dinner, pancake breakfast, pizza Fridays, movie night, and Spring Faire.
- Big Night Out will be a school event, rather than a PTSA-sponsored event.
- Need to find more no-cost ways to raise money for OCS.
- Jana will be attending a seminar about creative fundraising.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – Scott Miller

- Most of the Strategic Plan action steps remain the same. Something that needs maintenance, but not necessarily a goal, is uniting the different parts of the school community.
- The Board can make a great impact at Back to School Night, September 17.
- This year, we will be focusing on Board Evaluation – fulfilling steps of the Strategic Plan, efficient time management, contributing time/resources to OCS.

OCS MISSION AND VISION

- The Board reviewed OCS Mission and Vision.
- Scott distributed an example of how committees will organize their goals, strategies, and timeline.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- **FACILITIES:**
 - Securing Devonshire; potentially by fall 2010.
 - Ricardo reports that Devonshire doesn't need as much work as LAUSD has led us to believe. He shared the map of the Devonshire site and briefly discussed logistics.
 - Board Discussion: New/varied interests based on looking forward to Devonshire. Need a transition plan. When do we notify our landlord? How do we communicate information to the OCS community? What is the next step in communicating the information visually? Could the Governance Committee decide on how to proceed?
- **PROGRAM:**
 - WASC Accreditation
 - Middle School Task Force
 - Unify vision of various OCS constituents: PTSA, etc. (This goal has largely been accomplished.)

Board members reflect on our meeting process. Most people expressed relief at having a meeting that focused on plans, goals and positive things instead of cutting the budget!

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolina Goodman (from notes taken by Hilary Anderson)