

**Des Moines Public Schools
Special Board Meeting
Tuesday, May 29, 2012
901 Walnut 6A
Minutes**

APPROXIMATE TIME	ITEM	POLICY REFERENCE	STATUS
12:00 p.m.	Special Meeting 1. Call to Order 2. Roll Call 3. Approval of Agenda		Action
12:05 p.m.	Board Items 4. Charter School Update 5. Purchase of Instructional Services — Grades K-1 Instructional Staff 6. <i>Personnel Recommendation</i>	ML 2.8 ML 2.8	Disc/Action Action <i>Action</i>
12:45 p.m.	Adjourn		

Minutes

Ms. Caldwell-Johnson, the Board Chair, asked for a roll call.

Present: Boesen, Caldwell-Johnson, Elsbernd, Howard, Jongewaard, Murphy, Sweeney

Absent: None

Mr. Jongewaard moved approval of the agenda; second by Elsbernd.

Aye: Boesen, Caldwell-Johnson, Elsbernd, Howard, Jongewaard, Murphy, Sweeney

Nay: None

The motion carried.

Item No. 4 **Page 1 of 4**

Subject: CHARTER SCHOOL - UPDATE

For: DISCUSSION/ACTION

Contact: Dick Murphy, Cindy Elsbernd
Pat Sweeney **Attachments: None**

Issue: The work group will provide an update on the Charter School.

Presentation: None

Minutes

Speakers:

Amy Sheeler
 1435 31st ST.
 DSM; 50311

Grant Sheeler
 1435 31st St.

James Kilt
 E. 28th ST.
 DSM

Laurel Clinton
 1190 10th St.

Bre Smith
 4317 SE 4th St. Ct.

Laurel Clinton
 1190 10th ST.

The Board work group comprised of Mr. Murphy, Mr. Sweeney and Ms. Elsbernd presented their summary and recommended a list of new and/or revised operational procedures they feel should be in place if the Charter School is to continue. Some of their recommendations were modeled after the Management Limitations that are included in the Board's own Policy Governance model of administrative procedure. A written report from the work group was submitted to the record.

Mr. Murphy said the group had considered the possibility that at some point in the future the Board may have to decide if the Charter School will be a grades 7-12 school or strictly a middle school because the district currently has an array of options available to high school students that is not in place for middle schoolers.

Ms. Boesen said she has had concerns from the start about the viability of the Charter School at the high school level so she thinks it makes sense to reexamine the idea of gradually expanding through grade 12. Financially, she wondered if the Board will have

Item No. 4**Page 2 of 4**

access to the Charter Foundation's financial statements since that group must play such a key role in closing projected budget shortfalls at the school.

Mr. Murphy said the work group had not seen any yet.

Ms. Boesen thinks the school has suffered from blurred lines of authority between the school's administration, advisory council, foundation and the district so she is glad to see the work's group's recommendations aimed at greater clarity of jurisdiction. She also feels the school is behind on the adoption of formal operational protocols and policy manuals.

Mr. Jongewaard thanked everybody who's stepped up in recent weeks to try and save the Charter School instead of giving in to an attitude of resignation and chalking it up as a failed project and moving on. He is hoping for a fresh start under new direction. He thinks the operational problems are fixable as long as the school can be stabilized financially and singled out the Charter Foundation for its role in shoring up that area.

Mr. Howard echoed the concerns of others as to the school's potential to grow through the 12th grade level. He thinks eventually the Board may have to designate it as a middle school only. He also clarified that part of the short-term budget remedy is the district foregoing rent next year on the current facilities on Walker Street.

Ms. Boesen asked about the capacity of those facilities. She speculated that if the enrollment grows in accordance with projections they will become inadequate and the school will have to move to quarters that will not be rent-free.

Mr. Murphy said he thinks many of the problems the school has encountered so far reflect Iowa's ranking as 50th in the nation in terms of states' friendliness to charter schools. There have been difficulties between the various governing authorities as each seeks to establish its level of accountability. He would like to see the school make a go of it and hopes for a greater commitment from staff to stick it out as the school works out the kinks associated with starting something new from scratch. He decried the anonymity that's characterized many of the complaints about the school and challenged stakeholders to speak their minds on the record in a spirit of improvement and teamwork.

Ms. Elsbernd stated that she believes the school can make a go of it thanks to the foundation's renewed financial support combined with the recommended changes in administration and oversight.

Mr. Sweeney, too, commented that he thinks the Charter School can right itself if everyone involved resolves to learn from mistakes and cooperate going forward.

Item No. 4**Page 3 of 4**

Ms. Caldwell-Johnson first thanked the Board work group for its efforts in compiling a thorough review of the situation. She said the Board probably doesn't have grounds under state law to revoke the charter at this point but it can't continue with a business-as-usual approach. She thinks the school must be kept on a short leash of probation for the next year.

Mr. Murphy said he feels the probationary period should be for two years instead of one, a period that would coincide with the expiration of the school's original four-year charter. He said a one-year probation would continue to hamper recruiting efforts at the school as uncertainty lingered over its status.

Ms. Caldwell-Johnson said she would go along with extending the probationary period from one to two years, recognizing that, barring substantial changes the situation a year from now will be essentially the same as the current one: a struggling school under the auspices of a Board that lacks the legal grounds to suspend its charter.

Mr. Jongewaard said he believes the Board will have grounds to suspend the charter if things haven't changed a year from now, as he hopes they will.

Mr. Murphy moved the Des Moines Public Charter School (charter) be placed on a probationary status for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 academic years and required to comply with the following measures of accountability as established by the DMPS Board:

1. That the Charter Advisory Council complete the development of all policies, procedures and handbooks governing the school and its operation including a draft to the DMPS general counsel for review with final approval of the document(s) by the DMPS Board by July 1, 2012
2. That the Charter Advisory Council be reconstituted as set out in the DMPS Board Committee recommendations and that elections of new board members take place within 30 days of the start of the 2012-13 Charter school year
3. That the newly constituted Charter Advisory Council develop and adopt governance procedures including bylaws and/or Council operating procedures and participate in training appropriate to their roles as the governing body of the school
4. That the Charter Advisory Council provide written and oral quarterly reports to the DMPS Board as set out in the Board Committee recommendations including schedule and content areas as recommended
5. That student achievement data be reviewed and a plan of action developed and presented to the DMPS Board in August 2012 to address any student achievement deficiencies identified in the report

Item No. 4**Page 4 of 4**

6. That the Charter Advisory Council complete a business plan and 4 year budget projections to be submitted to the DMPS Board by October 30th and predicated on the following:
 - a. enrollment projections that are realistic and coincide with current enrollment figures and take into consideration matriculation trends for grades 9-12
 - b. facilities and space projections that are realistic and account for enrollment projections
 - c. additional required teaching staff with endorsements necessary in meeting all requirements for grades 9-12
 - d. additional support staff necessary in providing a realistic level of building and administrative support to insure operational effectiveness of the Charter
 - e. funds provided by the Charter School Foundation, private foundations, corporations, individual donors, and others are to be identified and supported by written commitments
7. That an audit of Charter School operations and finances be undertaken in the spring of 2013 to determine compliance with District financial and reporting requirements
8. That the DMPS Board engage in discussions with the Iowa Department of Education informing them of the Charter School's probationary status including understanding of issues to be addressed and future actions that can be taken, if required, prior to the end of the initial four-year charter period; second by Howard.

Aye: Boesen, Caldwell-Johnson, Elsbernd, Howard, Jongewaard, Murphy, Sweeney

Nay: None

The motion carried, 7-0.

.

Item No. 5**Page 1 of 2****Subject: PURCHASE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES —
GRADES K-1 INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF****For: ACTION****Contact: Holly Crandell/Thomas Ahart****Attachments: None**

(holly.crandell@dmschools.org; 242-7892/thomas.ahart@dmschools.org; 242-7536)

Issue: Purchase of professional development and teacher resources for Grades K-1 instructional staff.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The superintendent recommends the Board approve the purchase of these materials.

Background: The Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures will increase K-1 students' engagement in the classroom. Teachers will learn how to increase and manage student talk to provide many opportunities throughout the school day for language learning. The Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures support teachers with helping students on how to work in teams, think critically, respect each other, share and take turns, communicate effectively, follow directions, and succeed socially and academically. The training will support ELLs and students in need of language development. Teachers will take away ideas and activities that will be used on the first day (and every day) of school. Implementation of the structures and strategies introduced will supported by the Teaching and Learning Department throughout the school year.

The professional development services and teacher resource materials:

- Kagan Structures for Cooperative Learning and Active Engagement
- June 4-5, 2012 for Grades K-1 Classroom Teachers
- Participants will receive Kagan Cooperative Learning book and course workbook

TOTAL **\$44,850.00**

Professional Development sessions will be held on June 4 and 5, 2012.

Presenter: None. Holly Crandell will be available to answer questions.

Funding Source: United Way Grant Funds to support Grade K-2 English Language Learners

Minutes

Mr. Howard moved approval of the purchase; second by Boesen.

Item No. 5

Page 2 of 2

Aye: Boesen, Caldwell-Johnson, Elsbernd, Howard, Jongewaard, Murphy, Sweeney
Nay: None

The motion carried, 7-0.

Item No. 6
Page 1 of 1**Subject: PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS****For: ACTION**
Contact: Scott R. Mikesh
 (scott.mikesh@dmps.k12.ia.us; 242-7972)
Attachments: None

Superintendent's Recommendation: The superintendent recommends the Board approve the personnel recommendations.

Background:**RESIGNATION**

Name	School, Position	Effective Date	Reason
Rieker, Scott E.	Pleasant Hill/Phillipsl, Vocal Music	05/25/12	Personal

Minutes

Ms. Boesen moved approval of the recommendation; second by Elsbernd.

Aye: Boesen, Caldwell-Johnson, Elsbernd, Howard, Jongewaard, Murphy, Sweeney
 Nay: None

The motion carried, 7-0.