



Charter Board of Trustees meeting
October 13, 2009

Call to Order

Chairman Davis called meeting to order at 2:04 pm

Trustees Present

Wade Davis George Gant Nan Johnston Mike Seigerwald David Lane

Charter Schools USA Representatives

Mary Vecchione Dan Cappola Richard Page

Charter Schools Representatives

Dr. Cecille Diez – Bellalago Academy-Principal

Foundation Staff

Kathy Carr Pattie Burdick Sharon Harrington

Approval of Minutes

- 🚩 **Nan Johnston motions to approve minutes from September 8, 2009 meeting, Mike Steigerwald seconds the motion, all Approved.**

Board Updates

Charter Board of trustees meeting at Bellalago

Chairman Davis would like to have Bellalago Academy host a Charter Board of Trustees meeting, since we are charter holders of this school as well as Charter Schools USA schools. Dr. Cecille Diez, Principal at Bellalago Academy is always welcome to attend

meetings and the Charter Board welcomes updates regarding the school. Available dates for future meetings are December 2009, March 2010 and April 2010. Dates are discussed and December 8, 2009 confirmed for meeting at Bellalago Academy

PM Wells Landscaping

The final touch to any structure is landscaping. Funding is discussed and will depend on final monies available after termination with Imagine Schools. Foundation staff suggested a youth group and possibly donated plants. Plants that would be easy to maintain. Dan Cappola will check with Charter Schools USA landscaper for possible donations and suggestions on what kind of plants would do well with little maintenance.

Nan Johnston would like to suggest a sign for the new modular building. Discussion regarding what kind of sign would be appropriate for the building.

School Report

Bellalago Academy- Dr. Cicille Diez, Principal

Dr. Diez updated the board on her history with the SDOC and Bellalago Academy; she serves on three boards associated with her connection to Bellalago Academy. The Foundation board, The Charter entity for Bellalago Academy and The Educational Benefits District Board. She was excited to accept the position as Principal because of all the different relationships involved with the school. Bellalago Academy was opened August 2004 six years ago; they are a Charter school managed by the School Board of Osceola County. The school maintained an enrollment with approximately 1320 students last year and is currently enrolled at 1450 students. New classes have been added for the growth of the school. Bellalago Academy is in compliance with class size reduction, but very close. Students come to Bellalago Academy based on a geographic zone it is not a typical charter school of choice. Any student who lives within the area from Southport Rd north to the new subdivision of Eagle Lakes is zoned for Bellalago.

Dr. Diez continues to highlight student achievements and programs that are at Bellalago Academy

- ❖ 12 middle school students who are top 5% in district in Math & Science and will be recognized as key scholars.
- ❖ October 15th they will be hosting outstanding academic students with their parents. They will be learning about the Duke Tips and Osceola Tips programs for 7th grade students. These students will be able to sit in with high school students for SAT testing.
- ❖ Explore testing for 8th grade students is provided by high school guidance to establish steps into high school and to establish their strengths and weaknesses.
- ❖ The 8th grade leadership class initiated a food drive for a local food pantry and collected over 2400 lbs.
- ❖ Portable planetarium is on loan at the school currently.
- ❖ Intramural sports are also happening at the school.

- ❖ Fall Festival is being held this Friday evening, all are welcome.
- ❖ Autumn Treats is a safe alternative for Halloween held on October 29th
- ❖ Program for older students who may struggle in reading are given opportunity to read to younger students.

Kathy Carr expresses the benefits of being in a K-8 school.

Canoe Creek Charter & PM Wells Charter principal unable to attend meeting today. They are attending a Principal's meeting.

Schools information is provided in CSUSA packet for review. Any question on the packet please contact Mary Vecchione and she will address them.

Charter Schools USA Update - Mary Vecchione

Charter Schools USA will address the following at next months Charter Board of Trustees meeting.

- ❖ Parent Involvement
- ❖ Library update

Foundation Update – Pattie Burdick

Merit Pay

A Merit Award Plan was presented to the Charter Board of Trustees last year for both schools. The Merit Award Pay for Canoe Creek Charter has come in and was distributed. Money went to Imagine Schools to award there teachers from last year. We do not have a copy of the Merit Award Plan it was filed with the SDOC through Imagine Schools. We have requested a copy from Imagine Schools and have not received it yet. The SDOC did give the monies to the Foundation, but in error included it in our FEFP monies which did not indicate what monies were for. Money was then in turn forwarded to Charter Schools USA. The amount of \$17,888.00 in Merit Pay amount was received. The money has been given to Imagine Schools to distribute according to the Merit Award Plan that was approved. The Foundation was informed by the SDOC that the money could only go to employees still employed at a school or retired by October 1, 2009. After consulting with Foundation attorney a letter was given to Imagine School with a check for \$17,888.00 indicating they would provide copy of Merit Award Plan and list of employees who would receive Merit Award Pay. We have not received copy of the plan or the list of employee's who received the funds.

Vice Chairman Gant asked if we could obtain plan and distribute money from Foundation. The Foundation responds and indicates that benefits and social security need to be taken out and does not want Foundation responsible for that.

Richard Page comments that he has been Merit Award Plan administrator for the past 3 years for Charter Schools USA. The money in question is from last year. The DOE will not approve plan unless board resolutions were attached to the plan. The process is very difficult and detailed 60% of student data and test data are required. Every teacher has to go through evaluation process which is put into the model and ranked. If this has not been done the merit plan is not going to happen. If checks are not cut by October 1st they will not let them distribute.

Richard Page has been trying to have Canoe Creek Charter and PM Wells Charter included into Charter Schools USA Merit Award Plan for this year. The plan is in existence and has been approved, but they are having a hard time doing so.

Richard Page disagrees with the employed statue. It means employed with the school during that year and finished the year they are entitled to Merit Award Pay. This is how it has been interpreted by Charter Schools USA. Eligibility is valid if you are employed with that school at the school year end. DOE also requires a compliance report by November 1, 2009 with a list of things.

Audit Review

Berman Hopkins was unable to attend this meeting due to death in family. Foundation would like to schedule a meeting with auditors for review of Charter schools audit with the Charter Board. The Foundation has changes to be made prior to meeting.

Kathy Carr is concerned that because of the delay with Charter School audit the Foundation audit will be delayed also and the Foundation has notified the SDOC of the problem.

Discussion for dates to have Audit Review meeting. The Foundation would like to meet within the last 2 weeks of October. Nan Johnston will not be able to attend meeting, she will be out of town. The Charter Board decided on two dates October 22, 2009 after 12:30 pm or October 27, 2009 anytime that day the Charter Board is available. A new "draft" with changes will be sent to Charter Board prior to meeting.

The Foundation has been advised by our attorney throughout this process. Issues need to be resolved. One example of the audit indicated that PM Wells modular contract with MVB & Associates , although signed in 2008/09 school year, would not be completely paid in the 08-09 budget. This is because work was not completed before July 1, 2009 some expenses will be carried into the next year budget.

PM Wells Modular classrooms

There was an A/C issue with the modular building. It was a humidity problem that has been fixed replied Dan Cappola, Building Maintenance with Charter Schools USA.

A+ Money

The Foundation staff went to the School District county office for clarification of the A+ money. The SAC committee decides where the money is distributed for 08/09 school year. Both schools thought that the SAC from last year decided where the money went. When in fact it is this year 09/10 SAC committee who decides how money is distributed. PM Wells Charter SAC committee has put a plan in place already. Canoe Creek Charter SAC committee put a plan in place in June 09, 2009, however the SAC committee needs to revote on the plan during this year. A plan needs to be in place with the SDOC after July 1, 2009. Some SAC committees use money as bonuses, because they are the ones who got the grade for that year. PM Wells has allocated some of the money for technology, instructional personnel and bonuses.

Vice Chairman Gant asks how much money? Pattie Burdick responds PM Wells Charter's is approx. \$55,000.00 and Canoe Creek is approx. \$32,000.00. Vice Chairman Gant's concern is that if monies are given to Imagine Schools they will not distribute properly. Once money is given to them they are accountable for following the plan put in place by SAC Committees. Chairman Davis explains the approved plan needs to be given to SDOC by the 1st of November.

Chairman Davis explains the A+ money process and states it should be what was agreed on last year. He and Pattie Burdick will be attending Canoe Creek Charter SAC meeting tonight at 6:00 pm.

If Foundation feels that they are not comfortable that Imagine Schools will do the right thing with the money Charter Schools USA is willing to distribute accordingly if the Foundation would like them to.

Money for A+ and for Merit Award Pay will have to be included into the budgets for 09/10 school year for accounting reasons for the audit this year.

Chairman Davis feels that money should be given to Imagine Schools to distribute according to the approved plan for legal reasons and we are not held responsible.

The Foundation will keep monies that are allocated to the schools for improvement. These funds will be given to CSUSA to use as planned in the A+ plan. Then the remaining money given to Imagine Schools for the bonus pay.

Charter Schools USA Update – Richard Page

Class size and FTE count issues everything is good. Everything is on course there were some initial issues with the records not clean. They have been cleaned up some of the out of compliance reports with the SDOC some were just errors in reports. As of today both

schools are running clean reports in terms of our FTE data, race ethnicity codes are in there and class size numbers in compliance.

The Foundation asks about enrollment going up but also had some withdrawals? PM Wells is as 820 enrolled currently. Most are due to transportation issues from the beginning of the year which never got resolved. We need to look into it for next year. Only three students so far this year that were not satisfied with curriculum.

Richard Page states that they are continuing professional development at Canoe Creek Charter. Sherry Hage or someone from her team will be at Canoe Creek Charter on a weekly basis. Charter Schools USA ensures the board that they are paying close attention to the school.

Foundation asks what is being done about dressing out for PE? Richard Page doesn't know the answer to that, but will get back to the board on that. Media center is up and running. The system is restored and is being run by volunteers at this time.

Merit Award Plan

Charter Schools USA would like the support of the Charter Board to include both Charter schools in Charter Schools USA Merit Award Plan which is included in the packet. The issue that they are having with the DOE is that they have submitted the plan for next school year. Charter Schools USA will need a motion that says "we support the inclusion in the Merit Award Plan" if the DOE will make an amendment to allow the schools to participate this current year. We need another motion to support the inclusion in 2010 also which was submitted.

Chairman Davis would like to know if this is the same plan as last year. Charter Schools USA replies the plan has not changed. MAP plans are submitted on a 2 year basis. In theory both schools are in the same plan that Imagine Schools submitted last year. The DOE is comfortable with this as long as the schools were under an existing MAP plan then they are at least being counted in the numbers verse a school that never had a MAP plan. Richard Pages asks if Canoe Creek and PM Wells both have the same plan. Did they both have approved MAP plans? Foundation responds that only Canoe Creek Charter received money. The Charter Board minutes state that Dr. Thomas still had changes that the DOE required and no more mentioned if he ever submitted a plan.

Charter Schools USA uses one plan that covers all schools. All the money is pooled together and they evaluate all instructors in the network. All the data goes in and the top 25% in the network get the Merit Award Pay. Money gets reallocated based on performance.

Vice Chairman Gant asks if DOE accepts this plan that way. Charter Schools USA are the only people who have a plan that crosses districts that is approved by DOE. The bonus is based on 5% of the average teacher's salary for the school district. Pay is based on what district and school you work for. It is also broken out by grade level K-2

teachers, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12 and administrators are all in their own pool. Administrators are required to participate. Evaluations are built into SIS system and goes into a data base.

Mike Steigerwald abstains from the vote, his wife is employed by Charter Schools USA at PM Wells Charter.

- ✚ Nan Johnston motions for Canoe Creek Charter and PM Wells Charter be included in this years Charter Schools USA Merit Award Plan for 2009/10 year, David Lane seconds the motion, all approve.**

Mike Steigerwald abstains for the same reason as in prior vote.

- ✚ Nan Johnston motions to approve Charter Schools USA Merit Award Plan for Canoe Creek Charter and PM Wells Charter school year 2010/11. David Lane seconds the motion. All approve.**

School Marquis – Dan Capola

An example of the two Charter Schools USA logos were presented to the board for approval. Logos will be on marquis signs at both schools by the road.

Foundation would like to see the Foundation logo somewhere on the logos at the schools. This has been an issue in the past and would like the Foundation to be recognized. These are Education Foundation Family Schools.

Vice Chairman Gant feels that it is important the Foundation is on the logo along with Charter Schools USA.

Nan Johnston asks for an update on our 5K and Duck Race. 5K went well the 1st place runner finished in approx. 23 minutes, 2nd place runner was Sheriff Hansel and Mr. Smith, Foundation President was 3rd place walker winner. Duck race went well there was no wind, so an airboat helped them along. Jennifer Smith's adopted duck won the race, but she declined the winning. Another duck was chosen. The event made budget at \$4000.00 earned.

Chairman Davis adjourns meeting at 3:30 pm.

Next Scheduled meeting on November 10, 2009 at Canoe Creek Charter Academy at 2:00pm.