

Twin Cities International Elementary School

Minutes of the School Board Meeting held on Saturday, November 13, 2010, at 10:43 am, at the International Education Center, 277 12th Avenue North, Room 120, Minneapolis, MN, 55401.

Board Members Present: Mr. Abdikarim Mohamed, Ms. Kristin Kjolsing, Mr. Abdirashid Warsame, Ms. Jessica Wroblewski, Mr. Abdisamad Ibrahim, and Mr. Osman Mohamed.

Absent: Mr. Ibrahim Aden, Ms. Wesam Shaker, and Ms. Christena Pulver.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Dr. Randal Eckart, Director Twin Cities International Elementary School. Mr. Tom Black, authorizer representative for Century College. Mr. Abdirizak Hassan, Business Manager for Twin Cities International Elementary School.

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Authorizer representative, Dr. Jim Gross.

Also Present: Board Clerk Ms. Bethany Forsberg, Mr. Ali Muse and Mr. Abdullah

1.0 Open Meeting

Chair opened the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Chair acknowledged those present and thanked them for attending the meeting.

Chair stated that Mr. Mohamud Ali has moved out of the country so the board will need to nominate a new parent board member.

2.0 Approve Agenda

Time was given to review the agenda for the meeting.

Two corrections were noted.

Ms. Kristin Kjolsing made a motion to approve the agenda with the corrections as noted.

Ms. Jessica Wroblewski seconded.

Motion Carried.

3.0 Minutes from the previous meeting of October 16, 2010

Time was given to review last month's minutes.

One correction was noted.

Ms. Jessica Wroblewski made a motion to accept the minutes from last month with the correction as noted.

Mr. Abdisamad seconded.

Motion carried.

4.0 Treasurer's Report

Mr. Abdirizak Hassan noted that our current enrollment is 597 students as of November 12, 2010. This is a higher number of students than our projected enrollment of 570.

With 1/3 of the school year completed, our total revenue is \$1,418,067 with a total expenditure of \$1,921,000. We are currently tracking at 29% which is 4% lower than our target of 33%.

Mr. Abdirizak Hassan remarked that TIES is in good financial standing even with the increase in the state's holdback amount from 27% to 30% due to the \$2,000,000 fund reserve.

Ms. Jessica Wroblewski moved to accept the October 2010 year to date report.

Mr. Abdisamad seconded.

Motion carried.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Charter School Authorizer Remarks

Chair thanked Mr. Tom Black, authorizer representative from Century College, for attending the meeting.

Tom Black noted that Dr. Jim Gross sends his apologies for not attending the meeting and stated that he will be able to attend the December 2010 board meeting.

Tom Black reported that Century College is now approaching the enrollment of 15,000 students.

Mr. Black discussed the resignation of President Litecky of Century College that will take place during June of 2011. He noted that although he is saddened by the resignation, he looks forward to having a new leader for the college.

Mr. Black reported that he spoke with Dr. Jim Gross about the importance of sending a letter to the Department of Education to inform them of Century College's resignation of sponsorship for TIES as of June 30, 2011.

5.2 Director's Report

Dr. Eckart reported:

5.2.0 Student Attendance

As of November 12, 2010, 597 students were enrolled at TIES which is an increase from the projected enrollment of 570.

Kindergarten, first grade and second grade have reached student capacity.

Students are still being accepted in third and fourth grade.

Dr. Eckart thanked Mr. Ali for all of this hard work and dedication to getting every classroom to reach student capacity.

5.2.1 Fall NWEA Reading Tests

NWEA fall testing occurred during the first two weeks of November this year in kindergarten through 4th grade.

Student achievement on the tests has improved in every grade from last year's 2009 results to this year's 2010 results.

Kindergarten students increased their scores from 54.2% to 61%.

1st grade students increased their scores from 46% to 58%.

2nd grade students increased their scores from 44% to 54%.

3rd grade students increased their scores from 36% to 56%.

Dr. Eckart stated that our goal is to increase all grade level scores by 10% during the winter NWEA testing and the spring MAP testing. If we achieve this goal, TIES will be in compliance with AYP guidelines.

The results for the math NWEA tests have not been released yet due to make-up testing that will occur over the next two weeks.

Mr. Abdisamad noted that he is happy to hear Mr. Randal's report on the NWEA test results. He is also pleased that TIES is committed to consistently improving scores throughout the year.

Mr. Abdisamad attributed part of TIES' student success to the increase in instructional time during the school day. He proposed that we should increase the amount of instructional time again for the 2011-2012 school year.

Dr. Eckart agreed with Mr. Abdisamad's remarks and noted that all three schools including TIES, Minnesota International Middle School, and Ubah Medical Academy, may need to rework next year's school calendars to make further gains in student achievement.

5.2.2 Texas Charter School Visits

Dr. Eckart and Mr. Abdirashid were invited by Joe Nathan of Macalester College to visit the Kipp Academy and the YES Prep Academy in Texas.

Dr. Eckart discussed that during their visit, he and Mr. Abdirashid noticed the dedication of the students, parents, and teachers to student achievement.

Dr. Eckart noted:

Students were very dedicated to their learning experience because they felt a positive connection with the teachers and they liked the safety of the school environment.

Parents were equally dedicated to their students' achievement by setting aside time every night to help their children with their homework as well as being active members in the school.

These schools have a lengthened school day that begins at 7:30a.m. and goes until 5:00p.m. Teachers are given cell phones by the school which allows them to receive student phone calls regarding homework until 9:00p.m.

In addition to a longer school day, students also go to school on Saturdays which increases the school year calendar to 200 days.

Mr. Abdirashid noted that it was interesting to see that the lengthened school day and year was not a negative factor for the students and teachers. Instead, it was viewed positively because of their dedication to student achievement and the safety of the school environment.

The popularity of these schools is increasing as the current classroom size is around 35 students and the waiting list to be enrolled is around 5,000 students.

Dr. Eckart noted that although there is a high population of Hispanic students in these schools, they do not have a program in place for English language learners.

Since Texas does not have statewide testing like Minnesota, Dr. Eckart and Mr. Abdirashid were not able to compare test scores. Due to the absence of statewide testing, these schools focus on the number of students that attend college to indicate their rate of student success.

At the YES Prep Academy last year, they only had 5 students out of 570 graduates that did not attend college. For the students that do choose to further their education at the collegiate level, the schools provide counseling throughout their studies.

Mr. Abdirashid and Dr. Eckart stated that they would like to revisit these schools to learn more about their daily functions and what a longer school day would entail.

6.0 Discussion

6.1 Update Board Goals 2009-2010

This discussion item has been tabled until the December 2010 board meeting.

6.2 Board Training

Mr. Abdirashid stated that half of the board members have completed their board training.

The remaining board members will have the opportunity to finish their board training at TIES next Saturday, November 20, 2010 from 8:30am-7:00pm.

Chair thanked Mr. Abdirashid for setting up the board member training.

6.3 Policy Committee

Ms. Kristin Kjolsing noted that there are four policies up for review today. These include the 533-Wellness Policy (2nd reading), 406-Public and Private Personnel Data (1st reading), 410-Family and Medical Leave Policy (1st reading), and 502-Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person (1st reading).

Ms. Kjolsing and Ms. Jessica Wroblewski have put the policies in order in terms of priority to ensure that they are reviewed in a timely manner.

Ms. Kjolsing stated that she and Ms. Wroblewski will do the majority of the policy changes and will present a summary of them to the board so they can be reviewed by members easily and effectively.

6.3.0 Wellness Policy (2nd reading)

Ms. Kjolsing stated that she would like to have an annual report created by the food contractor of TIES so a review can be conducted by the board to ensure that students are receiving nutritious and religious conscious foods.

The board decided that it will serve as TIES' Wellness Committee for the current 2010-2011 school year.

The next reading of the Wellness Policy will take place during the December 2010 board meeting. At that time, policies 406,410, and 502 will be reviewed for their second reading and three new policies will be presented for their first reading.

Ms. Kjolsing noted that Ms. Tena Pulver and Ms. Bethany Forsberg are working with the Policy Committee to ensure that all required policies are posted on the website in a timely manner for public review.

7.0 Action Items

7.1 Hire EA for Special Education Department

Dr. Eckart stated that TIES received two more students that need special education services so a new EA will need to be hired for the 2010-2011 school year.

The salary for the new EA will be coming out of the Special Education budget so it will not affect TIES' 2010-2011 school year budget.

Ms. Kjolsing made a motion to accept the hiring of a new Special Education EA.

Ms. Wroblewski seconded.

Motion carried.

7.2 Nominate a New Parent Board Member

Mr. Abdisamad made a motion to accept Osman Mohamed as TIES' new parent board member.

Ms. Kjolsing seconded.

Motion carried.

Mr. Osman Mohamed noted that he has lived in the Twin Cities for over 12 years and has three children at TIES.

Mr. Osman is very pleased and thankful to have the opportunity to be on TIES' school board and looks forward to working with the board members until the end of his term.

8.0 Old Business.

No old business at this time.

9.0 Adjournment.

Ms. Kjolsing moved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:05 pm.

Mr. Abdisamad seconded.

Motion carried.