

TWIN CITIES INTERNATIONAL  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
Regular Board Meeting  
May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 10:30 am  
International Education Center, Room 120

**Board Members Present:**

Abdikarim Mohamed, chair; Mandee Rickard; Kristin Kjolsing, treasurer; Jessica Wroblewski; Abdirashid Warsame; Abdisamad Ibrahim; Ibrahim Aden, secretary; Wesam Shaker.

**Board Members Absent:**

Mahmoud Kalif Ahmed

**Ex-Officio Members Present:**

Mark Felshiem, Sponsor Representative from Century College; Randal Eckart, TIES Director; Mohamed Egeh, Business Manager

**Guests:** Abdullah Mohamed; Mohamed Adan (Business Office); Ali Muse.

**Also present:** Abdihamid Geyre, Clerk.

**1. Open Meeting.**

Mr. Abdikarim, the Chair, opened the meeting at 10:34 AM. He handed out minutes from April. He asked for revision/addition on the agenda. Mandee proposes discussion of Annual Meeting. Item 6D was added to the agenda. Then the Chair asked any other observations. Several observations have been made, including the making distinction between business manager and treasurer, amending earlier statements of TIES Director, and presenting the business in all its three fronts: YTD report, check register, and monthly cash report.

**Approve Agenda.**

Mandee moved motion to approve Agenda. Jessica seconded. Motion carried.

**2. Review minutes from previous meeting.**

Abdirashid moved a motion to approve minutes from previous meeting. Abdisamad seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Treasurer's Report (5 min).**

- i. April 2009 YTD report  
\$62,000 for special Ed, \$162,000 in Title I
- ii. Preliminary Budget report (2009/2010)—15 pages  
Egeh briefed on the preliminary budget for the year 2009-2010. Egeh noted that there are currently four program sites, and will be increased to six sites. A budget of \$50,000 is earmarked. Among the major additional expenditures presented by Egeh included transportation van, technology (\$60,200 for SMART), increase in text books, STEP-and-LANE increase. Egeh also noted that the stimulus has two components:
  1. Federal especial Education, and

## 2. Title I

Neither of these two components are represented in the school's 2009-2010 budget. Egeh mentioned \$268,000 that the school won't get, but to be offset by the current school budget. He noted that the house could propose +2% and the senate a decrease of -3%--which could lead to a "flat" outcome. Egeh said that 60%-70% of the expenditures are people-related. And that the expenditures are to remain the same. On Food Services, Egeh stated that 10% students don't qualify for reduced lunch. He also stated that the projected community fund balance could increase to 1.6 or 1.8 million dollars. Egeh informed the board that the revenue is fiscally responsible (not including the stimulus), and that staying below 30% is "good and safe".

Abdirashid inquired about equipment and building. Randal sought clarification on whether Abdirashid referred to 1) cost adjustment such as rent, or 2) building structure, e.g. having a sound proof system. Abdirashid clarified that he was referring to the latter subject. Egeh noted that a major painting was undertaken previously, but not continuously. Randal added that having sound proof is good for the school and the community. He also observed that there's a significance drop in student injury after the playground is "resurfaced". Egeh inquired whether or not the current playground is enough—and if the school needs additional playground. The response was in the negative.

Mandee inquired about the nature of the text books. Egeh responded that it's mostly replenishment. Randal reminded Mandee that more discussion on that will be made under item 6.C., but again concluded that it is replenishment.

A guest calls on the Board to consider soundproofing the auditorium because of a disruptive echo. The Chair thanks. Abdallah calls on the Board to compare and contrast TIES with other charter schools. He reminds the Board that questions about technology increase should be directed to Lucas. Abdissamad emphasized the need for the students to be computer-savvy and the school's role in helping them achieve that. He also asked about what improvements/strides the school might have had made in relation to technology. Lucas briefed the Board on the SMART program. An interactive, the SMART BOARD taps the different intelligences such as audio, visual, physical, kinaesthetic. Lucas stated that SMART gives teachers the option to digitally write lessons and save them electronically for future retrieval. "If technology doesn't benefit classroom, there's no need for it," Lucas observed. He then referred the Board to whitepaper (independent, research-based document) for further information on SMARTBOARD. "It's quite phenomenal," Lucas concluded. Egeh asked installation cost. Lucas estimated a cost of about \$3,800, including specialists. He then emphasized integrating instruction into technology. In reference to TIES student body, Egeh stated that only about 70% might access to computers at home, therefore recommending more computer time in school. In response, Randal stated that the school takes students to public library twice, and they're taught the book retrieval skills necessary in the library. Chair asked if there was any question. In response, Abdallah commented and the reminded the Board not to focus on computer-savviness at the expense of core subjects.

Kristin moved a motion to approve preliminary budget, Mandee seconds. Motion carried.

## 4. New Business.

### a. Sponsor's Remarks (10 min).

Dr. Felsheim appreciates and commends/complements Egeh for good business management. He then briefed on recent developments at Century College such as 10% budget cut and financial stability in the next coming two years. He shared his observation that with a slow economy, people go back to college, and that increased enrollment was up from fall, and there's graduation in at the end of May. He also expressed his hope to visit TIES and walk around. Then TIES Director, Randal, invited DR. FELSHEIM to come and

visit—and be read to by kindergartens. Mohamed Aden expressed his appreciation for having his daughter in kindergarten as she had developed the ability to read. DR. FELSHEIM added that critical thinking and critical analysis encourage reading awareness. He then mentioned students in horticulture program in Century College might come and work with TIES late in the summer for possible garden plantation. DR. FELSHEIM also mentioned that his college would introduce interpreting program with emphasis on the ethics and cultural components. Also to be introduced in the fall is the Solar Assessment Program. DR. FELSHEIM then discussed preventive measures against Swine Flu such as raising awareness on H1N1 as well as making hand sanitizers available on campus.

b. Director's Report (10 min)

Mentioning that full academic assessment is to come in the following board session, Randal stated that hopes are high because TIES staff had worked hard. He also expressed TIES' determination by "gearing up" for next year's assessment tests. Randal noted that long days lead to excited and hyper students. DR. FELSHEIM asked about staff retention. He was told that two of them had submitted resignation letters and TIES' contract depended on preliminary budget. DR. FELSHEIM asked whether teachers were aware of issues involving the contract. The response was yes.

5. Discussion

a. Adding 3 more days for the student contact days 2009/2010 school year (10 minutes)

Ali stated parents' concerns regarding school days. He mentioned that some days are lost in the winter due to inclement weather, adding that some charter schools start classes five days earlier than TIES and end the same time as TIES. He then called for an understanding of the psychology and the needs of the parents—and cautioned against being "stagnant." Randal stated that Minneapolis charter schools are allowed to start earlier. Chair called on the Board to discuss this issue, adding that it hinged on contract and schedule. Randal also noted that it hinged on bus contracts as well. Abdisamad reminded the Board for the need of a "well-thought-out" approach and supported increased hour, suggesting that 1) having longer contact days is a good idea, 2) financial aspect of this idea to be studied, and 3) a committee for further study should be set up. Abdisamad then called for gathering other charter school calendars, with Randal responding that the choice to add or not to add longer days remained "strictly" with TIES. Ali asked that shouldn't TIES compete with other schools. The Chair responded that the two administrations (TIES and MIMS) would discuss the issue.

Abdirashid noted that the issue solely rested on the board's decision. DR. FELSHEIM finally suggested that the issue shouldn't be rushed. He called for a reflective approach based on data-analysis. Steps he suggested included setting up a committee, finding out how teachers thought about the issue, how parents thought about it, and cautioned that if rushed, it might have some ramifications, especially the inherent negativity in relation to frozen salary and longer school year days.

The Chair asked if anyone wanted to move a motion.

Randal suggested three solutions: either add three days, or stick with the current school calendar, or rearrange the calendar—and that proposal could be sent to the calendar committee. Abdirashid asked why the school can't keep its current approved calendar.

The Chair called for a five-minute recess at 12:42 PM.

The meeting resumed at 12:47 PM.

Abdirashid started out by asking the Board what the school's student contact days should be, 173 or 174 since Minneapolis has 172 student contact days. Mandee called for feedback/data collected from community. Ali cautions against that. DR. FELSHEIM reminded the Board to communicate to the parents that TIES offers quality education and that such choice remains viable, and that TIES has a proven record of success, and that it's doing what's the best interest for the students, and that parents should decide on the quality of education—not on competing with other schools. “Our primary focus is the quality of educational experience,” DR. FELSHEIM noted. Abdallah added that parents are informed about school choices and quality education.

The Chair concluded that TIES would accept what the community committee would recommend.

b. Wellness Committee Report (5 min)

Director briefed on the wellness committee. He said they had met and concluded that they should meet four times a year (quarterly), and that their chair would set the date and time for quarterly meetings.

c. Exploring Science Curriculum (5 min)

Director motioned the setting up of a committee that consists of one board member, parents, and a curriculum coordinator in charge of that. The Chair called upon Abdallah to sit on committee—Abdallah accepted, but at the same time suggested that experts' advice should be sought. The Chair suggested that Kelli should head the committee, Jessica be the Board representative and that she should select other teachers from different grades to sit on the committee. The committee will report back to the board.

d. Annual meeting (5 min)

Ibrahim, the Board secretary and Board Clerk would conduct the annual meeting. There would be an election. Board secretary will put up together the event for the day. Mandee stated that the following Board meeting was scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup>, 3PM before the election.

6. Action Items (10 min).

a. Nomination of Policy Committee.

The Chair revisited Policy Committee, nominated Wasam Shaker, Wesam accepted nomination.

7. Old Business.

Mandee motioned to adjourn meeting at 1:08 PM, Kristin seconded.

8. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 1:08 PM.