



Board of Trustees Meeting

Minutes: April 26, 2016 - 6:39-8:33 pm

Location: Pioneer Springs Community School, Red Barn

In Attendance:

Board Members:

Abigail Jennings (Chairman)	Erik Giles (Vice Chairman)
Mark Barney (via phone)	Sandy Knox

Others:

Erin McDonald (Director)	Randolph Lewis (Assoc Director)	
Mary Mix (staff)	Audene Scarlett(staff)	Kelley Hood (staff)
Maggie Pozorski (parent)	Heidi Winfield (parent)	K Hopkins (parent)
Brian Hicks (parent)	Jenny Ward (parent)	Stephanie Costas (parent)
Lauran Sites (parent)	Laura Rossi (parent)	Mamie Barney (staff)
Jennifer Foley (parent)	Lauren Hehn (parent)	Jay Yampolsky (parent)
Lyla Khan (parent)	Meliea Holbrook (parent)	Kelly Holtman (parent)
Angelyn Boucher (staff)	Kara Smith (staff)	Tanya Blumenfeld (parent)
Beth Adams (parent)	Alex Gallo (parent)	Rebecca Shoniker (parent)
Kate Mueller (staff)	Lynn Curley (contractor)	

Established a quorum, Abigail calls meeting to order at 6:39

March Minutes approval - No questions, Sandy motioned to approve, Erik seconds, voting unanimous.

Financial Report - Erik

- Presented March Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Statement, and Statement of Cash Flows. To finish in the black, relying on fund balance and fund raising for remainder of year.
- 16/17 projected budget draft presented. Includes Asbury park and upfits, additional staffing, etc.
- Parent Question - If fund raising increased for next year can we provide more staff development? Yes. Additional monies estimated in grants. Clarification - 50K additional fund raising required for this year's budget.
- Erik motioned to approve financial reports, Sandy seconds, voting unanimous.

Facility Report - Abigail and Randolph

- Great turn out for project day - thank you! Gutters cleaned, corn hole boards built, gardening done. Next project day is afternoon of May 21st 10am-2pm.
- Asbury Park plans submitted to county and few modifications requested. Closing scheduled for July 5th with construction to begin that day. Peter Blumenfeld has been helping with the project management and has been a very big help.
- Climbing wall - locating underground utilities will help determine final location.
- Tornado drill revised based on research and experience.

- Parent Question - When Asbury closes on, how long before Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is obtained? Abigail clarified that the improvements and construction cannot begin until closing and then the CO will be received from the county. Construction is minimal and subs are already lined up to ensure school start date is met.

Governance - Abigail

- Attendance Policy revisions- recommendations received and changes presented.
- Parent Question - are email notes acceptable? Yes.
- Clarification - Tardies will have repercussions but cannot be equated to absences.
- Sandy motioned to approve revisions, Erik seconded, voting unanimous. (revised policy is attached)

Director's Report - Erin

- Debbie Bradner started at 4th grade TA, Mamie and Anne job share receptionist duties.
- Academic Report from Becky Friend
 - Will present formal proposal of future Academic Plan in May.
 - PSCS academic goal: Achieve a 5 to 8 percentage point growth on the composite score (baseline 2014/15) by defining and implementing common metrics across all grade levels and adopting consistent and pervasive instructional and operational practices.
 - Short-term academic goals were reviewed with staff on April 5th. These included assessing all students in reading and math during the first two weeks after spring break, regrouping for differentiation based on data collection, and focusing on individual student growth through the remaining weeks. The end goal for all students is grade-level readiness by year's end.
 - The academic team is in the process of articulating the long-term academic plan which addresses looping, personnel, curriculum materials, technology, professional development, benchmarks and related expenses. The draft has been shared with the BOD president, MAC chair and school director and will be formally proposed to the board at the May meeting.
 - In coordination with the Academic Excellence Committee, all grade levels are utilizing additional half-day planning periods between April 18th and 25th. The specific goals of these sessions are to realign pacing guides and plan with specificity for the remaining weeks of school.
 - Kim Champion has finished assessments with 3rd and 4th grades and will begin working with Kindergarten and 2nd grades beginning the week of April 20th. The goal will be to support learners who are below standard with regard to RTA readiness and exit standards for 2nd grade and kindergarten respectively.
 - The academic team is participating in preliminary discussions during bi-weekly faculty meetings regarding plans for the 2016-17 school year. These include a review of current math methodologies and related resources, discipline practices, benchmarking instruments and looping. Resultant recommendations will be included in the long-term academic plan presented to the BOD in May.
 - Evaluation and Licensure
 - The second round of observations for teachers has begun. This includes peer observations for those in their renewal cycles and for initially licensed (SP I)

teachers. Kate Peterson, Kelley Edwards and Mary Mix will assist in completing peer observations.

- 4 teachers will be recommended for SP II and renewal of licenses on May 1st through the NC Department of Public Instruction online licensing process.
- On April 13th Pioneer Springs Community School participated in the annual Beginning Teacher Support Program mandated for charter schools in their first three years of operation. PSCS was paired with United Community School/ Erika Hedgepath for peer assessment. A copy of the resultant assessment is on file in the Human Resources office/ Licensure filing cabinet. Information gained during this process will be used to inform training and support for initially licensed teachers in the coming year.

○ Testing

- The test schedule has been drafted and needed materials ordered/ collected, including pencils, erasers, scratch paper and calculators. Testing will be conducted on May 31st and June 1st with make-up on June 2nd and 3rd and RTA on June 5th.
- Staff will be trained on May 17th as administrators and proctors for EOG testing. Because of the significant number of accommodation test sessions, parents are also being solicited through a Coop Scoop sign up link to participate as proctors during the test window.
- PSCS will participate in the monthly regional testing meeting at American Renaissance in Statesville on April 27th. The focus of this meeting will be final details for EOG implementation.

○ Budget Requests for 2016-17 were made, approved, and incorporated into the new budget

- Parent Question - Will Kim Champion provide report to K-2 parents of findings? 4th grade not shared as results are for teachers to use for differentiation. Parents should contact teachers if they have questions. Parent Teacher Conferences good time to review child's progress and understand assessment. Becky will host Voices on Thursday to address all the changes and pacing guides, long term academic plans, so forth.
- Parent Question - Are the short term plans to catch students up? Kim Champion is support the teachers in the ongoing assessments they are doing and to help understand the needs moving forward into the next school year. Mark commented that academic discussions should occur in the Voices meetings and the report is for consideration only as progress of school evaluated.
- EC report from Julie Robinson
 - Exceptional Children's Department is working hard finishing referrals and reevaluations this month as well as reviewing all accommodations on testing for the upcoming End of Grade Testing.
 - A new school psychologist will be contracted with to assist Tonya Murray with some of the overflow testing. This person will be Dee Dee Russell. Dr. Russell was formally the school psychologist for Community School of Davidson but has gone back to private practice in the last year.
 - To assist with some of our school counselor needs, current Pioneer Springs employee, Dr. Debbie Smith will assist with counseling services on our IEP's and some Functional Behavior Assessments.

- Working in conjunction with Don Folz and state consultants to make sure that the PRC 60 grant is filled out and submitted to the public for comment. This announcement to the public will go out the first week in May in several local newspapers and after the public comment period will be submitted to the state for approval. Other grant options for Pioneer Springs are being reviewed as well as bi annual reporting for grants we have already received. Many compliance items are being addressed to get us ready for June 2nd when the state representatives will come back for the audit review session. In May, the current EC staff will be trained on all compliance items and how to write EC paperwork under North Carolina policy and standards. The EC staff will be off site on May 9th for this training. Training materials are created.
- The LEA Self Assessment (EC School Improvement Plan) in May.
- Donations of many sensory items have come in from our wonderful parents and films for our fluorescent lights have been donated. New Orton Gillingham materials as well as math manipulatives came in this month and our team is diving in.
- Research based reading programs to use in addition to the Orton Gillingham Training will be sent in that proposal. Math programs will be aligned with curriculum.
- 504 meetings are occurring this week and the first week of May to review current plans for appropriateness and continued need. Discovery Team Meetings are starting and teachers are documenting all interventions on new Discovery Team paperwork using the new RTI Resource Book.
- PBIS team will be created at Pioneer Springs to include as part of Multi Tiered System of Support. Monthly PBIS meetings should be set and added to the master calendar for next year. There will be two PBIS training sessions over the summer and the PBIS team members will need to attend. Team members should be determined by Director Erin McDonald so that these people can be registered for the trainings when they are set by the state. State PBIS consultants have offered additional training for all staff on behavior management.
- General Report -
 - Toss n Sauce - sign up to participate. Will be held on May 7th. Need volunteers for prep beforehand and day of event.
 - Proctors needed for EOGs - thank you to those who are already signed up. Striving for calm environment - begin with some circuit training to use nervous energy and water day afterwards.
 - Earth week was amazing!!! Mary mentioned pollinator gardens, composting, and craft/art activities. 3rd grade rebuilding composting bin. Great weather, classes were outside.
 - Summer camp catalog released - good variety of camp opportunities.
 - Art Spring will be held on June 4 - live band and more of a carnival theme to try and raise more money, silent auction, 3rd/4th doing entrepreneurship stands - 4th mentoring 3rd grade. Trying to encourage natural creations.
- Changes for next year - Looping and school day changes: Decisions were made with input from Becky, Audene and teaching staff. Face to face discussions among teachers, Note-ly discussions, and met on April 19th to discuss and decide. Staff made unanimous decision to support looping with K kept independent and extend the school day for 3-5 grades. Becky to host Voices to present on information on changes and answer questions.
 - Maggie Pozorski - why were parents not consulted? Extended school day does take into account the whole child but also meets the requirements from state. Abigail – the additional time allows

us to comply with requirements for academics as well as continue our nature integration and whole child philosophy.

- Suggestion from parent - allow some input from parents to create buy-in. Erin – Survey coming out soon will allow parental feedback. We need to take into account siblings, NC DOT, etc.
 - Parent Comment - More Voices meetings to allow her to connect with parents? Abigail - reach out to Becky with questions. Squeezing in parent seminars.
 - Kate Mueller - taught in public school and she is confident in decision because children are outside and learning, not at desks all day.
 - Mark – The question the board needs to focus on is whether the administration has taken into account the whole child. This question has been addressed so no actionable item for board to take up at this time.
- New Contracts: for Mamie, Anne and Debbie.
 - Mark recusing from vote for Mamie (spouse). Erik motioned to approve Mamie's contract, Sandy seconded, vote unanimous.
 - Erik motioned to approve Anne's contract, Sandy seconded, vote unanimous.
 - Erik motioned to approve Debbie's contract, Mark seconded, vote unanimous.

Academic Excellence Committee Report - Mary Coppola

In Mary's absence, Lynn Curley explained the work happening in 4th grade and Abigail provided Mary's full report. Report highlights:

- Reviewed the role of Committee and how that has changed over the last year, and the new directions for AE.
- Parent Support
- Notion of Willingness

- Past Recommendations
 - New Schedule for Math and Literacy Blocks
 - Math and Literacy Facilitators
 - Additional Classroom Support
 - Classroom Libraries
 - Leveled Books
 - Classroom Newsletters /Blogs
 - Planning Days for Teachers
 - Weekly Staff Meetings
 - Professional Development
 - Parent Information Sessions for Math and Reading
 - Master Calendar
 - Yard Art Day
 - Classroom Inventory
 - Add Members to Committee
 - Meet Monthly for a period of time, then return to quarterly committee meetings
 - Develop Tutor/Resource Bank for Parents

- Data Update - 4th Grade Math

- Math Instruction since December
 - Differentiated, Small-Groups (6 or 7 per group)
 - Math Workshop Format (Mini-Lesson, Hands-On)
 - Working on Math Combinations (Multiplication Facts)
 - Increased Focus on Arrays, "Number Sense"
 - Addition and Subtraction Remediation
 - Additional Teacher Resources, Curriculum Supplements
 - Great strides in improvement from December assessment to the April assessment
 - Instruction and curriculum interventions in place since January
 - EOG Practice and review plan through Year-end
- Recommendations:
 - Mary Coppola and Becky Friend meet
 - Offer Sessions for Parent Information: Math K-4, Reading K-4, EOG Prep #3rd and 4th
 - Salute to Staff
 - Summary Sheets
 - GRATITUDE: To Students, Parents, Staff, Board – Thank you!
 - Jennifer Foley - Are graphs and numbers 100% of 4th grade? Yes.

Strategic Plan Update - Abigail

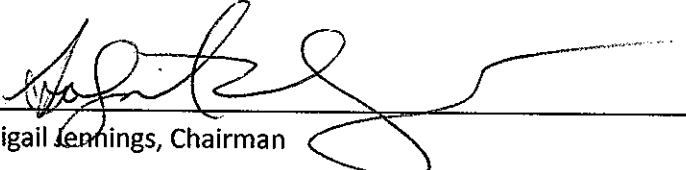
Goals still outstanding are to add additional board members with academic and financial expertise at the May meeting, and raise additional 50K by end of fiscal year. Nominations have been coming in.

Public comments:

Lauren Hehn - Dislike calendar change. Give an opportunity for feedback and parent input. Erin - Needed to incorporate staff workdays before school so teachers could best implement the things they learn. Abigail – the new calendar also helps to provide extra time if needed for Asbury renovations. Mark - board interesting in public comment but our administrative team must make decisions within the reality of operations. A parent survey could help in the future to gather input. Rebecca Shoniker - consider an extended school year break.

Erik motioned to adjourn 8:33, Mark seconded, vote unanimous

April 27, 2016 Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Jennings.



 Abigail Jennings, Chairman

Attachments: Revised Attendance Policy

Student Attendance Policy: (approved 11/26/2013, revised 4/26/16)

ARRIVAL, TARDINESS AND ATTENDANCE

Consistent attendance is fundamental to student success. Because Pioneer Springs Community School believes timeliness and attendance positively impacts student learning, we adhere to the following mandates.

ARRIVAL AND TARDINESS:

Pioneer Springs Community School expects students to arrive at school on time. Parents should allow adequate time for travel to the school and anticipate possible traffic problems or weather conditions, transition time, and other factors that may affect promptness. Students who do not arrive by the designated start of school are considered tardy. The administration recognizes that there are occasions when a student may arrive late to school for legitimate reasons. Such reasons may include:

- Illness or injury
- Medical, dental or other appointment with a health care provider
- Necessary religious observances
- Involvement in a traffic or other accident

Procedures for checking a student into school after late arrival are outlined in the PSCS Family Handbook.

ATTENDANCE

When a student misses class or parts of class, s/he does not have the benefit of discussions, demonstrations, experiments, or instruction, which has a tremendous bearing on learning and grades. Repeated absence defeats the purpose of school and jeopardizes the student's progress and chances of promotion.

Attendance guidelines at Pioneer Springs Community School reflect both the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law and the school's policies regarding absences. The *Compulsory Attendance Law* (NC General Statute 115C-378) requires that a student under sixteen must attend school regularly while school is in session. Under this law, the school must report unlawful absences to proper authorities. It is the responsibility of the family (parent/guardian and child) to make sure the student attends school unless the child must be absent for one of the following reasons:

1. Illness or Injury - when the absence results from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
2. Quarantine - when isolation of the student is ordered by the local health officer or by the State Board of Health.
3. Death in the Immediate Family - when the absence results from the death of a member of the immediate family of the student.
4. Medical or Dental Appointment - when the absence results from a medical or dental appointment for a student.
5. Court or Administrative Proceedings - when the absence results from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.

6. Religious Observance - if the tenets of a religion to which a student or his/her parent adheres require or suggest observance of a religious event. The approval of such absences is within the discretion of Board of Directors of the school, but approval should be granted unless the religious observance, or the cumulative effect of religious observance, is of such duration as to interfere with the education of the student.

7. Educational Opportunity - when it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity such as travel. Approval for such an absence must be granted by the director or designee prior to the absence.

All other absences are legally unexcused. In accordance with the Compulsory Attendance Law, the Director shall adhere to the following procedures in notifying parents after the designated number of unexcused absences:

3 Unexcused Days: notify parents by letter of the situation

6 Unexcused Days: notify parents by certified mail of a potential violation of compulsory attendance requirements and of the duty to report them to the juvenile justice or appropriate state or county agency if the absences cannot be reasonably explained or if they continue.

10 Unexcused Days: notify the parents by certified mail pursuant to #2 above, plus require a conference with the parents to discuss the reasons for the absences, what corrective efforts they are making, and possible disciplinary action. Students with ten consecutive unexcused absences may be withdrawn from the school and would have to reapply through the lottery process to gain readmission.

ABSENCES

School attendance is paramount to academic success. To promote an academic environment in which students have the potential for success - comprehension and mastery of the curriculum - limitations on class absences are enforced and excessive absences may contribute to retention.

Students are expected to miss no more than ten days of the school year unless approved by the Director. A student must be in attendance for at least half of the school day in order to be counted present for the day. In the event a student has excessive absences and/or tardies, additional documentation may be required.

Students must have a written/email excuse from a parent/guardian for absences from school. The excuse must be given to the teacher no later than two days after the child returns to school following an absence, or the absence will be reported as unexcused.