

**Independence Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2008 7:00 pm**

Board Members Present: Becky Baehr, Anyabwile Banko'le, Rona Buchalter, Nicole Perkins Kilcullen, Rosina Miller, Kristin Nocco, Pam Prell, Pedro Rodriguez

Board Members Absent: Eric Cramer

Others Present: Robin Kohles, Owner's Rep; Jurate Krokys, CEO; Stephanie Bungard, Principal; Ramzy Andrawos, Director of Operations; Megan Steelman, Administrative Assistant; Leonora Cravotta, Development Director; Amy Leigh & Kelly Nelms, teachers; Jerry Santilli, Santilli & Thomson; Cristina Vea, PTA Liaison; Nannette Johnson, parent; Andrew Sparks, University of Pennsylvania student.

I. Call to Order & Oath of Office

Co-President Nicole Perkins Kilcullen called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. Nicole administered the oath of office to new Board members Rona Buchalter.

II. Approval of Minutes

Pam moved to accept the October minutes; Rosina seconded. The minutes were approved without change.

III. CEO Report

Jurate introduced Andrew Sparks from the University of Pennsylvania. He explained that he is a student who is studying charter school governance. He is interested in interviewing three Board members for thirty minutes each.

Jurate reported that ICS participated in the recent "Principal for the Day" initiative; a representative from Merrill Lynch was the guest principal at ICS. A small group of local charter school administrators have begun regular collaborative meetings. PDE recently sponsored a charter school CEO conference at which many new requirements were reviewed, such who needs clearances and having an anti-bullying policy. Jurate reported that students are thoroughly enjoying the KaBoom playground and remarked again about the tremendous parent involvement in getting it completed. She stated that the deans have been talking with colleagues at Wissahickon Charter School to talk about playground policies, such as how cold is too cold to go outside. Both deans report that behavior reports are down so far this year; that is preliminarily being attributed to a combination of implementing Responsive Classroom/Developmental Design, fresh air and good food.

IV. PTA Report

Cristina reported that attendance continues to be up at the PTA meetings; local vendors participated in the November meeting. She reported that the carnival was a huge success and that it was a good partnership with Hyatt. Cristina introduced parent Nannette Johnson, who will be sharing in the liaison responsibilities this year. She added that this year's Cherrydale sales raised about \$12,000 which is on par with last year. The PTA is contemplating the possibility of buying a kiln for use by the ICS art

program. Nicole thanked the PTA for organizing the well-received carnival Friendraiser.

V. Teachers' Report

Amy circulated the results of the staff survey regarding possibly adding the word "international" to the school's name; she stated that the results were split just about evenly with those in favor and those against the idea. Several people offered suggestions. Amy asked whether the Board would consider officially supporting an ICS team for a fundraiser, such as the AIDS walk or the Susan B. Korman walk. She also reported that staff is discussing the possibility of having a Martin Luther King Day project, even though that is an ICS holiday. Staff has also requested that the bereavement policy be revised. The staff also asked whether Pr. Stephanie will now be seated at the Board table, since we now have a CEO and Principal. Pam stated that the reason the CEO and Teacher Representative are included at the Board table is that they are both ex-officio members of the Board. She stated that the Board can consider this request.

Rosina stated that the staff doesn't need Board approval for participating in fundraising events. Jurate cautioned that we need to be sure not to show favoritism. Nicole recommended that the teachers come to the Human Resources Committee to discuss the bereavement policy.

VI. Construction Update

Robin reported that the work on the building by Sullivan is almost 100% complete; some windows still need to be completed. Nicole asked whether Robin still wants to be listed on the agendas to report; Robin said she would like to be included until the money is all spent.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Finance

Rosina apologized for not having a written report. She reported that Sullivan completed their work on time and under budget. Therefore, ICS is extending Sullivan's contract in order to complete some additional items, such as replacing the fence, insulating the attic and installing the brick walkway. She stated that a change order is needed in order to do that; Becky agreed to draft a resolution to be voted on later in the meeting.

Rosina stated that the Finance Committee discussed the WINGS coordinator position and agreed not to continue the WINGS program and to change that position to a food services position. It will be included in the next budget adjustment. Rosina asked Jerry to review the September financials. Jerry reported that most of the variances are due to timing issues. He explained that due to the number of students reportedly participating in the food program, that should help cover the cost of the change of the WINGS position to food services. He explained that since that person will also be coordinating clubs, we will need to identify funds to cover those costs. Kristin asked when the Board will start to get a separate food services financial report; Jerry said that would be available starting in January. Jurate and Stephanie explained that Linton staff has been testing the bar codes, but there have been some glitches. Kristin asked whether ICS has gotten the new phone line that is needed; Ramzy explained that it has not, because we couldn't sign the contract. Ramzy is meeting with three other vendors this week. Rona asked whether there is

any way to get the phone line faster. Ramzy said the software has been fixed, but there are some bar code problems. Nicole stated it sounds like Lunchtime should be handling this problem. Pam added that if there is a way to capture the time ICS staff has spent, that would be an interesting report. Nicole recommended putting immediate pressure on Lunchtime.

Rosina moved the September disbursement resolution; Becky seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Rosina moved the change order resolution:

The ICS Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Finance Committee to approve change orders to the building construction contract with Sullivan for replacing outdoor fencing, attic insulation, playground phase two work and an outdoor canopy, provided that funds for the above-mentioned items are available in the project fund balance.

Pam seconded. Jerry clarified that items like the fences need to be completed right away and stated that the Board may want to move money around to get started on it. Rosina stated that if we need to use unreserved fund, she'd like it to come back to the Board. Pam noted using unreserved funds would be a last resort. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Policy

Nicole reported that the committee did not meet this month; however, the absence and lateness policies had already been discussed and the draft resolution was circulated to the Board for review. Becky moved the resolution; Pam seconded. Nicole explained that Dean Andrea and other staff authored these revised policies, because the previous ones were not effective. Jurate clarified that there is supposed to be a back-up from the School District and Charter School office, but that does not happen. ICS has found that when students apply for high school, these are big issues. Rona asked how the policies will be disseminated; Jurate stated they are in the 2008-2009 parent handbook. Rosina asked whether an e-mail message from a parent is an acceptable excuse note; Jurate said that it is. Kristin suggested giving some slack to families as they get used to the South Street Bridge closing; Jurate stated that should only be for one time, since families know they will need to allow time for an alternate route. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Human Resources

Becky reported that the committee met on Monday afternoon and discussed a confidential personnel matter, the loan reduction act, sick time donations and the Independent Professional Development (IPD) policy. Jurate clarified that the committee needs to work on the details of the IPD plan to decide on this like the amount of sick time needing to be banked. Amy asked whether staff can lump together the Professional Development workshop and tuition money. Becky stated that is possibly, since the Board recently loosened those policies. Becky stated the next HR meeting will be on Friday, December 5th at 10a.m. Nicole asked that Finance and HR talk to decide if the Friday before the Board meeting will be their regular meeting date, so that the regular date can be posted.

D. Development

Leonora thanked all the Board members who attended the ribbon-cutting festivities. She stated that sponsorship of the calendar event is down 20%

this year and that ticket sales have been slow. She reminded Board members to be sure to purchase tickets.

E. Curriculum

Pam reported that Pr. Stephanie will lead the World Cultures Curriculum Task Force. She explained that under the Strategic Plan, the Curriculum Committee had three responsibilities: Middle School planning, the Village model and World Cultures. Pam stated the purpose of the Task Force to make sure we're complying with our mission and vision; she encourages people to get involved with the Task Force. Pam stated that at the next meeting the committee will discuss the possibility of adding "international" to our name and the implementation of the Gifted Support program.

VIII. Public Comment Period

No one signed up to speak during the public comment period. However, Cristina asked how the decision on the word "international" will be made. Pam said the Curriculum Committee will be reviewing the idea and encouraged Cristina to participate, which Cristina agreed to do. Rona stated she thinks this discussion is long overdue and is very exciting. Stephanie stated it seems to be where our study of language meeting our study of cultures. Penn student Andrew Sparks asked whether there were any questions about his study. Rona asked whether participants will get a copy of his final report. He stated they will, be noted that names would be disguised.

IX. Old Business

Nicole asked Becky to give an update about legal services proposals. Becky stated that five proposals were received and that if anyone would like to see copies, they should contact her. Pam asked whether an Executive Session will be needed. Becky stated that won't be necessary, since it is a contract. She explained that she and Jurate are reviewing all five. Nicole asked that the Board receive a brief summary and the recommendation; Becky said that should be ready for the next Board meeting.

Pam explained that Pedro has circulated a draft resolution regarding the Board Development Committee; she stated that since we have a Board structure policy, this does not require a by-laws change. Nicole clarified that under our Board structure policy, we have specific committees; those committees are not named in the by-laws. At the annual meeting in June, the Board will review all the committees. She stated that she recommends that we keep this as an Ad Hoc Committee and that we adopt this as the mission of that committee. Pedro reminded the Board that he still needs two more surveys completed to help the Board know what skills are needed. Pedro moved the resolution to adopt the Board Development Committee Mission:

The Board Development Committee is commissioned by and responsible to the Board of Trustees to assume the primary responsibility for matters pertaining to Board of Trustees' recruitment, nominations, orientation, training, and evaluation in accordance with the by-laws of the organization as well as established policies and practices approved by the Board of Trustees.

1. *Appointments of the Chair and members of the Board Development Committee shall be made annually by the President (or co-president) of the Board with the advice and consent of the Board in accordance with the ICS Board Committee Structure policy.*
2. *The Chair of this Committee shall be a member of the Board of Trustees.*
3. *Other members of this committee shall be members of the Board of Trustees, and other appointments, subject to the conditions stated in the by-laws.*

Responsibilities

1. *Study the current composition of the Board of Trustees to determine current skills and experience; Identify skills and experience needed on the board.*
2. *Recruit members to serve as members of the Board and develop a slate of directors for consideration by the membership at the annual meeting in accordance with selection/election procedures outlined in the by-laws. Review annually the procedures for Board recruitment.*
3. *Develop an orientation and training plan for new board directors and assist in the planning of the Annual Board Retreat.*
4. *Assist the Executive Committee in an annual board self-evaluation.*
5. *Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.*
6. *Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Trustees.*
7. *Report to the Board of Trustees at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.*

Becky seconded; the motion passed unanimously. Rosina volunteered to be on the committee.

Nicole and Pam asked everyone to refer to the Committee Structure and Mission statements. Megan stated that she could not locate the Finance Committee's Mission statement; Rosina agreed to forward it to her. Pam asked Leonora what Board members are currently on the Development Committee. Leonora said none are on the committee. Rosina volunteered to participate on, but not chair that committee. Nicole reminded everyone that the reason the Board made the Development Committee a temporary committee was that we were moving toward a separate Development Board. Pam asked Pedro to establish regular meeting times since we want to be sure to publicize all committee meetings under requirements of the Sunshine Law. Nicole reminded all committee chairs to be sure to publicize meeting dates and times so we can also be sure to put them on the ICS website calendar.

X. New Business

There was no new business.

XI. Adjournment

Becky moved to adjourn; Anyabwile seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45p.m.

Handouts circulated at this meeting:

Agenda

Minutes from the October 2008 meeting

CEO report

Teachers' Report

PTA Report

September financials

Development Committee Report

Board Development Report

Curriculum Committee Report

**Independence Charter School
November 12 2008
Resolutions**

ADOPTED

September Disbursements

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approve disbursements from the month of September 2008 in the amount of \$ 368,748.42 as presented to the Board.

Change Orders

The ICS Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Finance Committee to approve change orders to the building construction contract with Sullivan for replacing outdoor fencing, attic insulation, playground phase two work and an outdoor canopy, provided that funds for the above-mentioned items are available in the project fund balance.

Student Attendance & Lateness Policies

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approve the attached student attendance and lateness policies to be effective immediately.

DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

While the following procedures outline Independence Charter School's process of progressive discipline, Independence Charter School will consider the facts of each incident in determining whether suspension or expulsion may be an option.

Independence Charter School has developed the following rules to guide the conduct of students, school employees/volunteers, and parents/guardians. These rules expand upon the "community created" rules and will apply at all times that school is in session, during any school program or function, either in the building or at any other location, as well as during arrival and dismissal, and traveling to and from school.

The rules are informed by two basic themes. First is the understanding that all individuals in the ICS community will treat others with dignity, respect, kindness, and understanding. This is consistent with ICS's mission to learn from and about peoples and cultures throughout the world. It is also consistent with a child's right to receive an education in a safe environment. The second is the idea that behavior, whether appropriate or inappropriate, is a choice, and all members of the ICS community will be responsible for their choice of behavior.

LATENESS

Punctuality is directly linked to a child's success in school. *Please remember that Pennsylvania Law states that it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to get their child to school on time, everyday.*

Student is late three or more times	Teacher will call the parent/guardian. If the lateness is due to student behavior, the guardian will be notified that any more student-caused lateness will result in Saturday School.
Student is late five or more times	Warning letter is sent home by Dean of Students. If the lateness is because of student behavior, Saturday School is assigned.

Student is late seven or more times	<p>Letter is sent home, followed by a phone call, to schedule a meeting with the primary guardian and the Dean of Students.</p> <p>At the meeting, a plan is put into place to correct the problem leading to the lateness. The plan will be signed by all parties.</p>
Student is late ten or more times	<p>Letter is sent home, followed by a phone call, to schedule a meeting with the primary guardian, the Principal and a member of the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>At the meeting, an agreement is signed that states that if the student has any further lateness, they will be asked to investigate enrollment into a school closer to home that will facilitate timely arrival.</p>
Student continues to be late.	<p>Principal will contact the primary guardian to notify them that the agreement has been broken. This will jeopardize the student's status for enrollment.</p>

ABSENCE/TRUANCY

Attendance is directly linked to a child's success in school. *Please remember that Pennsylvania Law state that it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to get their child to school everyday.*

Following each absence, a student is required to bring a note to their teacher explaining the absence. The Dean of Students will determine whether this absence is excused or unexcused. Please note that a phone call to the front office is not sufficient.

Independence Charter School requests that families plan vacations coordinating absences with holidays or vacations in the school calendar. If your child must be absent for a period exceeding three consecutive school days you must inform your child's Dean of Students in writing no less than two weeks before the expected absence. The Dean of Students will respond in writing as to whether or not your child's absences will be listed as excused.

Student is absent three or more consecutive days without a note from a doctor or prior approval from the Dean	If the student is absent for <i>three days in a row</i> , the student will not be allowed into class until the parent/guardian provides the Dean of Students with a doctor's note.
Student is absent three or more non-consecutive days without a written, valid excuse.	Teacher will call the parent/guardian.
Student is absent five or more non-consecutive days without a written, valid excuse.	Warning letter is sent home by Dean of Students.
Student is absent seven or more non-consecutive days without a written, valid excuse.	Letter is sent home, followed by a phone call, to schedule a meeting with the primary guardian and the Dean of Students. At the meeting, a plan is put into place to correct the problem leading to the truancy. Plan will be signed by all parties.
Student is absent ten or more times	Letter is sent home, followed by a phone call, to schedule a meeting with the primary guardian, the Principal and members of the Board of Trustees. At the meeting, the previous agreement is reviewed, modified and signed stating that if the student has any further absences, they will be asked to investigate enrollment into a school closer to home that will facilitate consistent attendance
Student continues to be absent.	Principal will contact the primary guardian to notify them that the agreement has been broken. This will jeopardize the student's status for enrollment.

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Responsibilities

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3. Develop an orientation and training plan for new board directors and assist in the planning of the Annual Board Retreat.

4. Assist the Executive Committee in an annual board self-evaluation.

5. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.

6. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Trustees.

7. Report to the Board of Trustees at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

**Resolutions
DEFEATED
None**

**Resolutions
TABLED
None**