

**Independence Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 18 2005, 7:00 PM**

Board Members Present: Sandra Aidar, Becky Baehr, John Baram, Michelle Campbell, Christine Chisholm, Susan Gobreski, Rosina Miller, Pam Prell, Ingrid Schafroth, Gary Shepherd, David Webber

Board Members Absent: Eric Cramer, Sean Hennessy

Others Present: Jurate Krokys, CEO; Randi Ostrow, Foundations; Ramzy Andrawos, Operations Manager; Veronica Kim, Teacher representative; Anna Evans, Teacher representative; Teachers: Eve Manz, Kelly Espinoza, Katie-Jo Andreola, Meredith Barkley, Amy...., Barbara Zisk, Tienne Martin, Andrea Yanez, Allison VanWyck, Ben Horner, Anne Halle, Paulina Hayden, Davelba Sanchez-Duska, Claudia Lee, Luz Angela Bolivar; Vicki Hirsch Holm, PTA Representative; Joan Bell, PTA Representative

I. Call to Order

President Rebecca Baehr called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

II. Reading and Review of Minutes

The minutes from the last Board meeting were circulated and adopted with the following minor changes: Gary Shepherd states that he was listed as seconding a motion and was not present at that vote because he had to leave early.

The minutes were approved with this change.

III. Public Comment Period

None

IV. CEO Report

1. **Personnel:** We are continuing the process of interviewing and viewing demonstration lessons of potential teacher candidates. We are working with AMITY to secure recommended Spanish Immersion teachers. In June, we will ascertain which classroom assistants would like to return in the coming year, which are recommended by various teachers.

2. **Special Events:** A special reception for **volunteers** who have worked with ICS was held on April 28th. Light fare was available at the Principal's Office. ICS students were scheduled throughout the day to come and thank the volunteers and to present them with a special pin that says "I make a difference".

The Principal/CEO took part in **the Charter Schools Conference** in Harrisburg on May 1-5. Although the highlight, from our perspective, was the performance of our sixth graders on May 2nd, there were many valuable and informative events scheduled. Elections for various representative positions took place. Some resulted in ties and will mean runoffs. The Principal met with a representative from Great Britain who is interested in partnering with schools here as they establish what is called "academies" in England. The conference provides opportunities to network and to attend workshops. This Principal met with a representative of Odyssey of the Mind, with representatives who help broker bonds, and attended workshops such as gifted education, science and math innovations. Vendors presented their goods.

The sixth graders performed a dance medley of the 1900's in front of about 400 people, and they did it exceptionally well. This event seemed to be the best organized of all of the recent conferences.

Upcoming events: **the annual camping trip** with Teacher Barbara Kay. Once again ICS students are going to Camp Onas for the challenge course. Fifth and sixth graders will be attending this overnight experience.

The International Festival will be happening on May 25th from 10 to 2pm and then 5pm to 8pm. This second annual event promises to be even more wonderful than last time. The kids at all grade levels will be presenting their country studies projects and will be teaching other kids about their countries. There will be live performers, and besides ICS kids performing, Lisa Nelson Haynes from the Painted Bride (and an ICS mother) has promised us two performers one of whom is Tania Isaacs! All Board Members should consider it mandatory to visit during the festival, it is a special event that demonstrates so much of our work. We have a strong parent committee helping to coordinate the activities.

3. **Community relations:** We continue our good work with the **International Visitor's Council (IVC)**. Once again we hosted guests from Russia. These were NGO's who represented organizations working on human rights and civics issues in Russia. We had a lengthy tour of the school and then a luncheon on the fifth floor. We were happy to be joined by Sandra Aidar and by the UN local chapter representative and advisory Board member Norma VanDyke. Third and fourth grade representative children joined us for a discussion of culture and education. This is especially great for our third graders who just completed a study of Russia. Some of the children had learned Russian phrases and were able to use them.
We continue work with the Arts Alliance. We are hosting special guest performers and evaluating their abilities to work with kids. We are discussing the possibilities of working together to get grants for artists in residence.
4. **Special project: Human Rights for Tasha.** We have undertaken a special project to help one of our first graders: Tasha. The Principal visited all 19 classes in Grades 1-6 to discuss the "human rights pyramid" to develop the idea of human rights as a "right" for all of us. From there we began to talk of initiatives to help Tasha. Kids were involved in working toward a goal of collecting 1000 letters to be delivered to Senators Santorum and Specter. It is amazing how ready all of our children were to participate in this. It only seemed natural to them to help a classmate for something so logical as human rights. To date, over 2,200 letters have been collected. The purpose really is to garner media attention and to inform our representatives in government. It has turned out to be a great service learning project. Media attention has been accomplished with The City Paper and the Philadelphia Inquirer and there will be a brief article in the nationally distributed Education Week. This is a paper heavily used by Universities and at administrative levels in the state and departments of education. Our plan is to continue this project to the end of the year. The trip to Washington with seven sixth graders was very fruitful on all sides. We met with the director of the Washington chapter of Amnesty International and with legislative counsel to Arlen Specter Juria Jones, and with Tooshar Swain, legislative aide to Rick Santorum. Our next targets will be congressional representatives.
5. **Space:** We are planning a meeting with the building owners to discuss space issues for next year.
6. **Special Programs:** ICS has become a **GLOBE** school! Teaching Intern Ben Horner and Claudia Lee took part in a two-day workshop in Delaware that has us on a track to begin GLOBE science programming in our school next year. We now join over "15,000 schools in over 100 countries participating in GLOBE, which is a hands-on environmental science and education program that unites students, educators, and scientists from around the world in studying the global environment."
The Uruguay Project is well underway. We will be exchanging with our sister schools in Uruguay, a books project. In each respective school, children wrote about various topics predetermined by our Fulbright team. These books will now be sent to Uruguay and we expect to receive their books by May 25th for our International Festival. Be sure to come see them. Any suggestions for who we should invite to this great festivity? Please let the Principal know.

V. Treasurer's report / Finance Committee Report

Be it resolved that the ICS board of trustees approves the spending of \$66,621.00.

Susan Gobreski moves to approve the spending.

Rosina Miller seconds this motion.

Roll Call Vote

Sandra Aidar-- aye

Becky Baehr-- aye

John Baram-- aye

Michelle Campbell-- aye

Christine Chisholm-- aye

Susan Gobreski-- aye

Rosina Miller-- aye

Pam Prell-- aye

Ingrid Schafroth-- aye

Gary Shepherd-- aye

David Webber-- aye

Motion Carries.

Be it resolved that the ICS Board of Trustees approves the revised budget for fiscal year 2004-2005.

Susan Gobreski moves to approve the spending.

Gary Shepherd seconds this motion.

Roll Call Vote

Sandra Aidar-- aye

Becky Baehr-- aye

John Baram-- aye

Michelle Campbell-- aye

Christine Chisholm-- aye

Susan Gobreski-- aye

Rosina Miller-- aye

Pam Prell-- aye

Ingrid Schafroth-- aye

Gary Shepherd-- aye

David Webber-- aye

Motion Carries.

VI. Updates

A. Teacher representative report: Anna Evans, Veronica Kim

1. GLOBE – Ben Horner and Claudia Lee

GLOBE is an international science program where information is taken from within 15 kilometers of the school and then compared to other schools' internationally. We have chosen GLOBE because it is hard to incorporate math and science into the school's global mission and vision. GLOBE is very hands on...taking water samples and teaching students pH, saliency, etc. GLOBE also teaches students that they have a direct relationship to Earth and what happens to Earth. GLOBE will allow us to expand our relationship with our sister schools in Uruguay. This is a new program, therefore new curriculum, this will require a resolution. We would like to discuss and do more inquiry before we take this step.

2. Teachers' request – collaboration time

Early Dismissal Proposal...we love our jobs and are proposing this so that we can do our jobs better. Faculty Meetings and Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC) are scheduled during the regular 8AM-4PM school day. The following are requirements that must take place outside of the regular school day: CSAP meetings (1 hour monthly), Grade Level Meetings (1.5 hours monthly), Immersion Meeting (2 hours monthly), Voyager Professional Development (1 hour monthly), Committee Meetings (1-3 hours monthly), Mentor Meetings, Individual Educational Plan (1-2 hours per student), Parent Meetings. Problems with Current Schedule: unable to schedule collaborative meetings during the day, after school meetings prohibit the participation of all teachers and are inefficient.

With the proposed early dismissal every week (2 hours early) ICS will still be meeting the Pennsylvania requirement for instructional hours, which is 990 hours. ICS currently has 1,100 instructional hours per school year. With the early dismissal (54 hours) we will still have 1,046 hours.

Proposed Schedule

Week 1

All teachers attend faculty meeting

Week 2

Immersion teachers attend immersion meeting. K-7 teacher meet, focused on a particular discipline. FLES teachers meet. Possible student clubs/rehearsal led by specialist teachers.

Week 3

CSAP process for 1.5 hours. Mentor/Mentee meeting for .5 hours.

Week 4

Grade level meetings occur for one hour. New teachers are required to attend professional development for one hour. Committees have a one-hour block to schedule meetings and work on projects.

Discussion

Pamela Prell – The first year ICS opened dismissal was at 3:00pm. The second year teachers requested additional instructional time and the Board of Trustees

added 3.5 hours per week and the busses take this additional instructional time away. By dismissing early every week we are only taking 6 hours away from the total 14 hours previously added. Susan Gobreski – My instant reaction was, YES, I have a couple of questions. My questions are “how” questions, not “what” questions. We want you to feel that you can come into meetings and shape decisions. Pamela Prell—This would also give a chance for students to live fuller lives and do extra curricular activities or spend more time with friends. Gary Shepherd—This was a very well put together presentation. This provided the problem and possible solutions. Would this be enough time? (Kelly Espinoza --Technically this is not enough time to realistically tackle all of the main issues, but it is a start.) Christine Chisholm—I understand how frustrating it is to feel that you do not have time to do the best job you can. I am all for the proposal. Michelle Campbell – Is this a wish list or what you want the Board to approve? I want you all to ask for everything you want and need. I think that the Board should start from the wish list. Why not ask for more time? Sandra Aidar—Early Dismissal is a nightmare for the school. We need to think of how to build this into the school’s day so that students are not going home early every week. Ann Hall—This feels like the realistic solution, not the wish list solution. I’ve been in a district that did early dismissal every week and it works very well. Susan Gobreski—This will be complex and we need to take the time to speak with parents and get feed back. What day do we use? Is Friday the day? Is it healthier for the students and teachers to break up the work week? Eve Manz—We would like to have a committee with BOT members and teachers meet between this meeting and have a scheduled timeline for decision. (HR members, Curriculum members, PTA members (or parents), Teachers) Jurate Krokys—This proposal would allow me to attend these meetings and spend time with teachers in professional development.

SIGN UP SHEET WILL BE CIRCULATED

There will be a resolution ready for the June Meeting.

B. PTA Report

The Silent Auction made \$15,000.00 (rough estimate). Traditionally this money has been used to fulfill curriculum needs.

There were officer elections. Shannon Webber is the secretary. Kristin Nocco is the membership chair. All other officers have remained the same.

The last PTA meeting is on June 01, 2005. The annual student talent show will take place at this time.

IKEA is interested in having a long-term relationship with ICS and has already contacted Susan Gobreski to set up a meeting. IKEA did make a donation to the silent auction.

C. Committee Report

1. Executive

a. Diversity

(The terms of Jonathan Baram, Rosina Miller, and Ingrid Schafroth will expire at the next Board meeting; members can be re-elected if they wish to remain on the Board.) Is there a goal to expand the Board of Trustees back to 15? Sandra Aidar asks if there is a goal to make the Board more diverse not only in racial terms but in socioeconomic and educational background as well. She also raised the issue of setting a progressive quota. Gary Shepherd—We need to take a look at the diversity of our Board, Teaching Staff and Administration. I think we have a great staff, but we need to focus on diversifying the staff so that all of our students have people to look up to (of like race and background) within the school. We also need to have a diversified Board because some parents feel more comfortable approaching a Board member of like race and/or background. Susan Gobreski—we all need to make sure that we are doing our prep work for the short window of time we have for hiring teachers and Board nominations. Jurate is not able to do all of this on her own and has a lot of other very important issues to deal with on a daily basis. Each of the Board members needs to commit to finding people for Board seats and staff positions that fulfill the goal to diversify. There are two staff positions

open that have not been filled, let's focus on each board member finding a person of color to fill these positions. Questions: Do we want to incorporate quotas for Board seats? Do we want to maintain seat names (ie, founder, parent)? **Will the teacher representatives go to the teachers and ask for their feedback, opinions and help.**

Be it resolved that the ICS Board of Trustees create a diversity committee, to be chaired by Gary Shepherd.

Rosina Miller moves to adopt the resolution.

Rebecca Baehr seconds the motion.

Discussion

Christine Chisholm agrees to be on the new committee.

Unanimous to adopt.

2. Development

The committee will be calling all Board members at the end of June to make sure that everyone is on track with their fundraising. If you need help please let us know. People will give if they are asked, but people will not give money without being asked. What about a Tea Party (Susan Gobreski) where there is a fundraiser without the event? You give people a tea bag and they send in their contribution.

An ad was posted for a Development Position. Can we post it on GPCA's job site? The response has not been overwhelming so we need to do some more looking.

Christine Chisholm would like to do a calendar fundraiser, displaying the students' artwork.

3. Human Resources

The following positions are open: Reading Teacher (to work with curriculum coordinator and reading specialist), Teaching Intern, 7th grade language arts teacher, Development Director

4. Curriculum

Grades 4 through 6 will be using a literature-based curriculum, "Making Meaning". The committee will be working on a reading/language arts curriculum for the middle years. The committee will be going to an IB meeting this coming Tuesday and will report back to the board during the June Board meeting.

Be it resolved that the ICS Board of Trustees adopt the **Globe** educational science program, effective July 02, 2005.

Pamela Prell moves to adopt the resolution.

Susan Gobreski seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

Be it resolved that the ICS Board of Trustees adopt the **Making Meaning**, language arts program, effective July 02, 2005.

Pamela Prell moves to adopt the resolution.

Rosina Miller seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

5. Technology

Jon Baram and Ramzy Andrawos met and laid out a plan for technology for next year.

6. Community Relations

Meeting notes will be circulated by e-mail.

7. Discipline

There is a student issue that is being managed at this time. Michelle Campbell has been giving so much time to this issue: mediating with the parents, giving advice and support to Jurate Krokys, Principal and Andrea Soelster, Dean of Students. Thank You, Michelle.

8. Facilities

The proposal is in as of Monday, May 16, 2005. Susan Gobreski and the Executive Committee put a lot of time into the proposal. There will be an open community meeting the first week in June. We are hoping to be invited. We continue to attempt to meet with the Future's Foundation in regard to our space for the 2005-2006 school year.

Christine Chisholm asks if IKEA might be interested in this level of involvement?

The question is asked: Do we bring our political connections into the issue?

Randi Ostrow will have someone at Foundations, Inc. speak to someone at the School District to determine the status of the Durham building.

VII. Resolutions

A. Old Business

1. Tokens Policy

In July of each fiscal year the Designated School Employee shall determine the token needs for ICS based on the needs of the previous year and expected enrollment for the upcoming year. At that time, the Designated School employee shall complete a token form documenting the order with the number of packets needed and the cost. The form shall be given to the business Manager. A check will be cut from the General Fund and forwarded to the school to be deposited into the Student Activities Account. This will cover enough tokens for school opening. Adjustments using the same procedure can occur as needed. This will be shown in the token inventory in the general fund. All tokens shall be purchased by the school using a written check from the Student Activity account.

The Designated School Employee shall be responsible for documenting token orders, sales, and remaining tokens on a monthly basis. This log will be sent to the Business Manager for each month. The Philadelphia School District reimbursement form will be completed by the Designated School Employee and sent into the school district, with a copy sent to the Business Manager. When the reimbursement is received it should be deposited into the student activities account to replenish the money used to purchase tokens. In the even the school needs to purchase additional tokens, the token inventory summary, with quantity on hand, amount, sold, and amount to purchase must be sent to the Business Manager. At this time the token inventory will be increased in the general fund. The money will be transferred into student activities and the school may purchase additional tokens.

The Designated School Employee shall maintain the inventory and send a report monthly to the Business Manager. The monthly report should indicate that cash on hand plus the value of tokens on hand must equal the opening balance every month. Tokens will be kept in a lock box while being sold. Each day the remaining tokens should be locked in the safe. The log should be maintained separately and filed separately.

Rosina Miller moves to adopt the resolution.

Susan Gobreski seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

2. School Based Accounts

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees approves closure of the back account dedicated to the WINGS after-school program and of the bank account dedicated to Fundraising activities, and that these funds be deposited into the general ICS bank account managed by ICS's business manager using appropriate accounting procedures.

Susan Gobreski moves to adopt the resolution.

Rosina Miller seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

B. New Business

1. Bond Issue

WHEREAS, Independence Charter School (the "Corporation") has submitted a proposal to lease, on a long-term basis, the Durham School at 16th and Lombard Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from the School District of Philadelphia for use as a charter school; and

WHEREAS, if the Corporation's proposal to lease the Durham School is accepted, it intends to undertake a project (the "Project") consisting of: (i) the renovation and equipping of the Durham School for use as a charter school; (ii) other capital costs related to moving the Corporation's facilities from their current location to the Durham School; and (iii) other miscellaneous capital costs of the Corporation.

WHEREAS, the Corporation anticipates financing the Project through the issuance of tax-exempt bonds on behalf of Corporation by the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development or another appropriate governmental issuer; and

WHEREAS, the Corporation may expend funds with respect to the Project prior to the issuance of tax-exempt bonds with the intent of being reimbursed from proceeds of such bonds; and

WHEREAS, to the extent required under the Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986, as amended, and the regulations promulgated thereunder, this resolution is intended to fulfill the "Official Intent" requirement prescribed in Treas. Reg. 1.150-2.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as follows:

1. Maximum Amount. Up to \$6,000,000 of the proceeds of tax-exempt bonds shall be applied to build and equip the Project.
2. Official Intent Requirement. In accordance with Treas. Reg. 1.150-2, the Corporation hereby states its intention that a portion of the proceeds of tax-exempt bonds will be used to reimburse the Corporation for original expenditures relating to the Project paid prior to the date of issuance of such bonds. All original expenditures to be reimbursed will be capital expenditures (as defined in Treas. Reg. 1.150-1(b)). The reasonably expected source of funds that will be used to reimburse the original expenditures is the proceeds of tax-exempt bonds. The description of the type and use of the property for which the original expenditures to be fully or partially reimbursed are to be paid are costs related to the Project.
3. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Adopted: _____, 2005.

Susan Gobreski: Request to make the resolution more general, not specific to the Durham School site.

Deferred until the June 2005 Board Meeting.

2. Auditors

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees authorizes the CEO to enter into an agreement with Larsen, Allen, Weishair & Co., LLP to perform an audit of Independence Charter School for the year ending June 30, 2005, for an amount not to exceed \$10,500.00.

Susan Gobreski moves to adopt the resolution.

Christine Chisholm seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

3. Appreciation

Be it hereby resolved that the ICS BOT acknowledges with grateful appreciation the outstanding commitment and results of the efforts of both the entire PTA organization and the numerous individuals who dedicate an extraordinary amount of time and energy to the ICS community. In particular, the ICS BOT would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals:

Michelle Coats	Tracey Hill
Lynn Hunt	Caren Seltzer-Devine
Kim Woods	Sherdina James
Ryan Boyer	Vicki Hirsch-Holm
Tomika Boyer	Marci Zimmerman
Katrina Johnson	Ernie Coats
Maureen Long	Megan Steelman

Susan Gobreski moves to adopt the resolution.

Rosina Miller seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

4. Document Destruction

Be it resolved that that Board of Trustees of the Independence Charter School direct its officials and other representatives to maintain all financial and personnel records, files,

electronic files, and all other documentation required to support potential litigation for not less than seven years or in the even of pending or actual litigation. This would include, but not be limited to, significant contracts, rental agreements, fund raising documents, invoices, financial statements, tax documents, personnel evaluations and other legal documents, and student records and files.

Rosina Miller moves to adopt the resolution.

David Webber seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

5. Personnel:

Be it resolved that the BOT of Independence Charter School offer full-time positions as stated below, to the following individuals under the terms and conditions specified by the CEO and the ICS contract:

- a. Sean Gallagher – Vice Principal
- b. Noga Newberg -- classroom teacher
- c. Erika Powell – FLES teacher
- d. Megan Steelman – administrative assistant

Susan Gobreski moves to adopt the resolution.

Pamela Prell seconds the motion.

Sandra Aidar-- aye

Becky Baehr-- aye

John Baram-- aye

Michelle Campbell-- aye

Christine Chisholm-- aye

Susan Gobreski-- aye

Rosina Miller-- aye

Pam Prell-- aye

Ingrid Schafroth-- aye

Gary Shepherd-- abstain

David Webber-- aye

Motion Carries.

X. Executive Committee

The Board of Trustees moves to executive session at 10:25 pm to discuss contractual issues.

The Board returns from executive session at 10:50 pm and votes on the following resolution:

6. Business Contract

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School BOT authorizes the BOT president to enter into a contract with Santilli & Thompson LLC for the provision of business services for the year beginning July 01, 2005 for an annual cost not to exceed \$54,000.00 and upon final approval of the Executive Committee.

Rosina Miller moves to adopt the resolution.

Christine Chisholm seconds the motion.

Unanimous to adopt.

XI. Adjournment

Susan Gobreski moves to adjourn.

Rosina Miller seconds the motion

Meeting adjourns at 10:55 pm.