

**Independence Charter School  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
July 13, 2005, 7:00 PM**

**Board Members Present:** Sandra Aidar, Becky Baehr, Michelle Campbell, Christine Chisholm, Eric Cramer, Susan Gobreski, Lisa Haynes-Nelson, Sean Hennessy, Rosina Miller, Pam Prell, Gary Shepherd, David Webber

**Board Members Absent:** Ingrid Schafroth

**Others Present:** Jurate Krokys, CEO; Krista Pfeiffer, Teacher representative; Sean Gallagher, Vice Principal; Andrea Soelter, Dean of Students; Ramzy Andrawos, Director of Operations; Gerry Santilli, Business Manager

**I. Call to Order**

**President Susan Gobreski** called the meeting to order at 7:13pm.

**II. Reading and Review of Minutes**

The minutes from the last Board meeting were circulated. The minutes were approved.

**Sean Hennessy** moves to adopt the minutes.

**Rosina Miller** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

**III. Public Comment Period**

None

**IV. CEO Report**

**Personnel**

At the BOT meeting you will receive a comprehensive list of teaching positions, who is assigned to what grade with which responsibilities. To date, we have two openings: one for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade L. Arts teacher who would teach three sections of L. Arts. I have set a goal of the end of next week to offer this position. I have a few qualified candidates. The second position is for FLES. Claudia is actively helping me in this as is Marcela Summerville. This is a difficult one since the job requires very specific skills of fluency in Spanish and the ability to manage many classes. Many schools, especially suburban schools are looking for Spanish teachers as well. If you have seen the classified ads, there are many positions open in many charter schools. We are actually in a pretty good place, though I would have liked to have finished this earlier.

All current employees have contracts. Most new employees do as well. We welcome Sean Gallagher who has begun work as the Vice Principal.

The teachers and I worked on a new Teacher Induction plan. Our original plan must be renewed every four years. This plan will be circulated on Monday to the Board as well. You will see that it is very comprehensive.

We are working on the plans for the August in-service for teachers. August 22-25 is solely for new teacher induction. August 25 to the 31<sup>st</sup> is for current and new teachers. To date, the in-service includes the following:

- a nationally known consultant who will present all day on writing
- a National Board Certified Teacher who will present on the use of primary resources in social studies
- teacher led curriculum planning and mapping for the whole year
- special guest to speak on Diversity and urban education (to be confirmed)
- extensive work on SWEBS and classroom management.
- Training for upper level teachers on Making Meaning the new upper level reading curriculum
- Training for upper level teachers on the use of new math curriculum
- Lower level teachers will receive training in Voyager and SFAW math

**Curriculum**

The following areas of curriculum will feature either new or modified features:

Enrichment- this is the proposed weekly time period from 1:30 to 3:30 which will provide our teachers with meeting time. During the Enrichment period all students will have

a study hall for the first 35 minutes followed by a one hour assigned enrichment activity that will be scheduled for approximately 8 week intervals. Students will cycle through four such enrichment activity cycles in the course of one school year. This is still in the planning stage but we are working actively in this regard.

Social Studies/L.Arts- Grade 7 will pilot a different approach to Language Arts through Social Studies. It will include the use of primary sources and the use of oral histories.

Mathematics: For the 7<sup>th</sup> grade we have moved to Connected Mathematics which provides a problem based approach to math and a solid introduction to Algebra. It is highly regarded as an exemplary research-based math program. It will be supplemented by practical Math practice for those kids who need it.

Reading: The BOT has supported the hiring of a full time Reading (Specialist) Teacher. This teacher will assist the upper level teachers in gr. 5, 6, 7 with kids who need more intense work on comprehension and fluency.

**Summer activities:**

The usual summer cleaning and repair has begun at ICS. Powell is stripping and waxing classroom floors. Patching and painting is going on in some areas of the school. We are waiting to hear on the progress of the fourth floor renovation which would allow our 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to enter and set up there.

Various reports are due to the State in the summer months. We have submitted our Weapons report. The Child Count is due at the end of July as is the rather voluminous Annual Report. We also have the opportunity to apply for an after school grant and I will be asking some of you for help in that: due mid-August. Thanks to Santilli and Thomson, our Titles Application has been submitted early in July (although it should have been submitted in June).

Tuesday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, Philadelphia Charter School representatives will be meeting at ICS for a workshop on preparing the Annual Report and in regard to AYP. It is scheduled to start at 10am. On that same day we will be hosting an educator from China via the IVC. If anyone has interest in meeting her (and her interpreter) will be here from 11-3.

Of course, our summer camps and summer school are currently underway. They are very successful. Most groups are no larger than 14. Several of our new teachers are the summer school teachers. This is a great opportunity to get to know our kids.

**Terranova Scores:**

Our Terranova Scores just came in this past week. They will be presented to you at the BOT meeting, and if possible distributed via email on Tuesday. In general, the scores indicate that our children are averaging several points above the national norm. When looking at cohorts, there is an indication that there is steady growth from year to year. We have not had time to disaggregate all of the data to look at individual students, or bottom quartiles, for example. However, it is clear that our regular education classes are showing equally strong growth, and that is very heartening.

**Enrollment:**

The ladies at the front desk have worked very very hard and have fully enrolled most every new student for a total of 595. They will be transitioning our files into a different form in the next month, one that will reflect the actions indicated by our renewal audit. We still need a few more kids for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade immersion.

**Transportation and arrivals and dismissals:**

Our bus company Metro Mobility has gone through some changes and is now called Safety First. Andrea is working feverishly together with Daud El-Hamid to prepare the bussing lists. We are meeting with administrative staff to streamline arrivals and dismissals and are discussing the possible use of sixth street for dismissal of walkers only.

**Cafeteria:**

Administrative staff is also working on the reorganization of the cafeteria. Scheduling will allow a staggered entrance into the cafeteria, 20 minutes per grade for lunch and 20 minutes for recess in the other half of the cafeteria.

**V. Updates**

**A. Teacher representative report: Anna Evans, Veronica Kim**

None

**B. PTA Report**

None

**C. Committee Report**

**1. Treasurer’s Finance Report**

**a. Purchasing Policy, Budget Changes**

There has been a transfer from Foundations, Inc. to Gerry Santilli. Gerry is not present so we will be unable to approve disbursements for June. We will approve June and July at the next Board meeting.

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees adopts the following purchasing policy:

**Purchasing Policy**

The following policy is the required minimum standard for purchase of materials, supplies, equipment, and services.

**General**

No employee or Board member has authority to make purchase commitments, enter into contracts for materials, supplies, or services, or otherwise take any action that may be construed as financially binding to the school, except through the approved process as described herein. Segmenting or breaking apart purchases to reduce the purchase price with the intention of circumventing quote or approval thresholds is prohibited.

**Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all employees and Board members to adhere to these policies, and the responsibility of the CEO and her/his designates to ensure adherence.

**Competitive Quotes**

For expenditures over \$10,000 (individually or cumulatively per fiscal year), written quotes must be solicited from at least three qualified vendors, and outlier quotes reviewed with the vendor to ensure a correct understanding of the scope.

For purchase amounts between \$2001 and \$10,000 (individually or cumulatively per fiscal year), written quotes must be solicited from at least two qualified vendors.

For purchase amounts less than \$2000 (individually or cumulatively per fiscal year), competitive quotes are not required unless requested by the CEO, Finance Committee, or Board of Trustees.

Competitive quotes will be reviewed by the CEO before authorizing the relevant purchase. Competitive quotes are not required for utilities, telephone service, rent, professional services, books, software, and educational and office supplies.

**Approvals**

Appropriate authorization must be obtained before committing ICS to any purchase. The minimum necessary authorizing authority is listed for each category of expenses in the table below.

		Purchase Amount		
		> \$20k	\$5k to \$20k	<\$5k
Already provided for in Board-approved operating budget?	Yes	Board of Trustees	Executive Committee or Finance Committee	CEO
	No	Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees	Executive Committee or Finance Committee

Payment for expected, recurring expenses (e.g., rent, telephone, electricity) exceeding the thresholds stated above can be made following a motion duly passed by the Board of Trustees

approving such purchases up to a certain amount. Expenditures for amounts beyond those provided for by the resolution require a new resolution.

**Sean Hennessy** moves to adopt the resolution.

**Rebecca Baehr** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous to adopt.**

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees approve the following budget adjustments:

Adjustment Number	Account	Action	Amount	Fund Balance	
				Action	Running
1	School District Subsidy Education	Increase	361,906	333,833	333,833
1	Unrestricted Fund Balance	Increase	361,906	361,906	695,739

**Explanation:** To adjust school district subsidy for rate change (from \$4,202,500 to \$4,564,406)

2	Instructional Salaries	Increase	30,000		
2	Instructional Employee Benefits	Increase	10,830		
2	Unrestricted Fund Balance	Increase	40,830	(40,830)	654,909

**Explanation:** To provide an additional classroom intern

3	Instructional Computer	Increase	2,400		
3	Federal Program Revenue	Increase	2,400	0-	

**Explanation:** To accommodate equipment purchases for new school year.

**Sean Hennessy** moves to adopt the resolution.

**Rosina Miller** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

## 2. Curriculum

The enrichment will take place in the classroom. The programs will still be staffed by outside people. We will need approximately 27 specialists per week. If any Board member has an idea please contact Pamela.

Jamel Henderson, Sean Gallagher and Ramzy Andrawos will be helping to coordinate and plan the program.

The first 40 minutes will be a study hall in the classroom (bathroom included). Teachers may have a specific homework prepared for the study hall enrichment area. The next hour will be a specific enrichment program. Teachers will then return to the classroom to help with dismissal.

Susan is thinking we could contact a university department and coordinate with one of their community service or individual intern classes.

GIFTED—the committee still feels that the gifted teacher will work with individual teachers to adjust each student’s curriculum to fit their gifted IEP. The feeling is that adjusting the student’s entire curriculum to fit their gifted. Not just one class per week. There might also be a gifted program only for gifted student’s enrichment time.

Discussion

Susan—let’s hold a public hearing on this topic. This will allow us to open up a discussion with the school population of parents. The meeting will also allows the parents to voice their opinion early on and feel heard. Pam—we should listen to the educators who feel this would be so much better for the students. Christine—we could send out a letter to the parents stating what the plan is and giving them the avenue to voice their opinion of how things are working. Cross Cultural exchange program?? What does the board feel? A majority of the Board members felt favorable.

## 3. Community Relations

Website has been a priority and David Webber, Michael Prell and Daud Abdul Hamid will be getting together to work on the site. E-mail and voicemail boxes will be on the teacher page as well. The teacher page will be updated by September. Donations will be taken over the web page.

#### 4. **Development**

Board members should hand in their checks to Ramzy Andrawos. If you haven't made your 1,000 goal, keep working.

There have been interviews for the development coordinator. The committee will get together to decide who will receive a second interview. Applications are still being taken.

Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees authorize the CEO to make an offer of employment to a development director upon the advice and consent of the Human Resources and Development committees for an amount not to exceed \$45,000 per year.

**Sean Hennessy** moves to adopt the resolution.

**David Webber** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

#### 5. **Facilities**

Preparing for the upcoming community meeting for the Thomas Durham building. We are the only school. The other applicants are architects and developers. Parents who live in the general area are being contacted to remind them of the meeting.

4<sup>th</sup> floor—renovations will be done by the end of August. The lease will be from CHAD and not the foundation.

#### 6. **Human Resources**

Meeting this Friday at 9am. There are some hiring resolutions.

We still need a FLES teacher and a 1<sup>st</sup> grade immersion teacher. There are also some NTA positions open and classroom assistant positions open.

CEO evaluation is ongoing.

#### 7. **Diversity**

The committee's purpose statement has been revised again due to the actual racial break down of the school.

Committee talked about a fundraiser that would attract a bigger parent population. ICS unity day in October (weekend) and block off Sansom Street to set up booths and vendors to help raise money. This would help to create unity within the school. Perhaps have student talent show. Are there any other ideas of places to hold the Unity Day. There is a park at the end of 7<sup>th</sup> street, Washington Square Park...perhaps have a rain date. Please e-mail suggestions to Michelle. If you would like to be involved with Michelle and Lisa.

The money raised could be used to help with the enrichment program to expand the student's music program.

There have been 20-25 people who have shown interest in serving on the diversity committee.

The committee would like to have 5 standing committee members and the rest of the people would serve on sub committees with the other 5 standing members.

**Gary Shepherd announces his resignation from the BOT.**

#### 8. **Executive**

Committee sign up is sent around. Also a form for committee minutes is given and minutes will now be sent to a yahoo page for public viewing. E-mail it to the CEO, President and Secretary 10 days before the meeting. BOT members will then be able to read the reports to prepare for the meeting. We will be able to spend less time discussing committee reports.

*Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees approve the following protocols and practices for committees.*

##### ***How Committees function as part of the whole***

- *Explore topics, discuss, research, make recommendations on appropriate Board or staff actions; accept and integrate feedback on topics.*
- *Specific topics may be assigned to a committee, which then needs to take up the matter (even if the committee would not have taken up the matter without direction).*
- *Unless otherwise directed by the Board of Trustees, only the full Board of Trustees may take official action on behalf of ICS.*

##### ***Committee Responsibilities***

- *Meet a minimum of 6 times per year.*
- *Set a meeting date in advance and post it.*
- *Create agenda for each meeting and post it in advance when appropriate.*
- *Create a regular report that documents and summarizes activity. (see attached form)*

- *Provide opportunity to entire Board for comment and/or vote before actions are/must be taken.*
- *Fully comply with all laws and regulations that apply to ICS as a whole, including Charter School law and priorities.*
- *Establish goals and priorities.*

***Committee Chair Responsibilities***

- *Schedule meetings that are accessible to appropriate parties, ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for input. In general it is expected that a regular, recurring meeting schedule will be established and adhered to.*
- *Post scheduled meetings at least 2 weeks in advance to the CEO, ICS BOT President and Secretary and the IVSBOT and ICSinfo lists (when meeting is open to public and all meetings are open to public except HR, Discipline, and EC).*
- *Write Committee Reports/minutes, using format; provided to full BOT 1 week in advance of monthly Board meeting, post to ICSBOT and ICS info lists if appropriate.*
- *Communicate and coordinate with President to schedule appropriate time on BOT monthly agenda.*

***Committee Membership and Meeting Participation***

- *Only BOT members may be official members of committees with voting privileges.*
- *Other individuals may be invited to join in committee work but will not have voting privileges.*
- *Members of the public may attend any meetings that are public.*
- *Committees are expected to provide for regular and ongoing participation from stakeholders (staff, parents); the Executive Committee may approve people to participate as non-voting members of a committee, which shall mean that they are considered part of the working group of the committee; all members of the public may request to be heard at any meeting; committee chairs are expected to recognize members of the public for comment in a manner consistent with the rules and laws that apply to the Board of Trustees.*

***Pamela Prell*** moves to adopt the resolution.

***Rebecca Baehr*** seconds the motion.

***Unanimous*** to adopt.

**9. Discipline**

Expulsion hearing has been postponed until next week.

**VI. Unfinished Business**

**A. Calendar**

**1. School Calendar**

Be it resolved that the ICS BOT adopt the attached School Calendar for 2005-2006, with discussion of Back to School Nights.

**Rebecca Baehr** moves to adopt the resolution.

**Rosina Miller** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

**2. BOT meetings calendar**

Be it resolved that the ICS BOT adopt the attached BOT monthly meetings calendar:

August 24, 2005

September 14, 2005

October 12, 2005

November 9, 2005

December 14, 2005

January 11, 2006

February 8, 2006

March 8, 2006

April 12, 2006

May 10, 2006

June 14, 2006

July 12, 2006

**Sean Hennessy** moves to adopt the resolution.

**Christine Chisholm** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

**B. Enrichment Program Update**  
(see Curriculum committee notes)

**VII. New Business**

**A. Personnel**

Be it resolved that the ICS BOT authorize the CEO to offer employment to the following persons and for the positions stated under the conditions and terms specified by the CEO and the conditions of the contract:

- Marcela Arango-Oritz: Teaching Intern
- Salim Martin: Science/Gifted
- Richard Taggart: Grade Five
- Kim Passidomo: NTA
- Deborah Suzanne King: Grade Five

**Rebecca Baehr** moves to adopt the resolution.

**Sean Hennessy** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

**B. By-law changes**

**Discussion**

Michelle Campbell - lack of diversity on the board. We have 2 black members and no Hispanic or Asian BOT members as of October. We need to put a good foot forward and diversify. There are people waiting for the spots. We should fill them. David Webber – The diversity committee had a lengthy discussion about BOT diversity. Committee members feel we need to move to 15 members in order to meet the goal of diversity. Rosina Miller - suggests that we have the full by laws ready to vote on at the next BOT meeting. Pamela Prell - Can we go ahead and have the candidates join a committee now while we wait for the bylaws to be adopted and decisions to be made? General feel that yes... Susan Gobreski - let's circulate names and bio's. Eric Cramer - will come up with language about contract vs. purchase for the definitions in the bylaws.

**C. Other**

Be it resolved that the ICE BOT delegate the adoption of the professional education plan to the executive committee.

**Rosina Miller** moves to adopt the resolution.

**Pamela Prell** seconds the motion.

**Unanimous** to adopt.

**XII. Adjournment**

**Rebecca Baehr** moves to adjourn.

**Pamela Prell** seconds the motion

**Meeting adjourns at 9:35pm.**