

South Carolina Calvert Academy  
Founding Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 19, 2009

In Attendance:

Susan Frew (by phone)  
Randy Wilgis (by phone)  
Jean Halle

Scott Moores  
Steve Brown  
Secaida Howell (by phone)

Lisa LoVullo  
Mike Wilmeth

Randy Wilgis opened the meeting at 11:05 AM.

The board approved the minutes from the October 15, 2009 meeting.

**Headmaster's Report:**

Dr. Secaida Howell provided an enrollment update, reporting that the school was adding new students and experiencing some withdrawals. The 5 day student count of 247 is now up to 257 so gains have outweighed losses. Dr. Howell also commented on his team's rededicated effort to implement the Calvert curriculum and expressed his appreciation for a recent professional development visit from CES's Dr. Gloria Julius and Michele Dunn to work with his staff on Verticy. As a result of the visit, Dr. Howell related that teachers now have a better understanding of the program but "still have a ways to go." Dr. Howell also commended CES's Cecilia Liss for her dedicated effort in getting placement and curriculum orders turned around but related that sometimes the school has had to request replacement courses when teachers determine that the material is too challenging or not challenging enough. He expressed concern for school budget and the need to make sure that all materials originally ordered are being returned to CES. Dr. Howell also reported on the school's 501(c)3 application and stated that their attorney was waiting on signed agreements.

Discussion followed as board member Jean Halle asked about withdrawals and why students are leaving. Dr. Howell agreed to start a report and keep a tally on why students withdraw and where they go. The board also requested Dr. Howell to create a parent satisfaction survey so that information could be used to insure that the charter goals were being met and to strengthen future recruiting efforts. Dr. Howell agreed to conduct a survey.

Dr. Howell opened discussion on student computers and offered that we may need to put the breaks on providing computers to students next year because of decreases in funding. However, he believes that since SC-CAL is now one of only two schools that provide student computers, this may be a drawing card for recruitment. The board offered that we may want to only provide computers in cases where there is financial hardship and Jean Halle suggested that we conduct a survey on why parents choose SC-CAL to see if providing a computer influenced the decision. The board subsequently determined the need for a resolution to create flexibility on providing computers. The following motion was offered and passed: SC-CAL will provide computers to students at its discretion based on budgetary actions of the state, fiscal conditions of student families and other factors which are deemed appropriate. Dr. Howell suggested that he take this resolution to the District Charter Board (SCPCSD) as a matter of protocol. The board stipulated that this policy will be implemented only after the aforementioned survey.

**Financial Report:**

Fiscal Services Consultant Bill Moser presented the revised FY10 budget and described the recent reduction in EFA funding and subsequent negative impact on SC-CAL revenue. He also reported that there was no reimbursement assumption for Title I students and that IDEA funding was dependent on SCPCSD. He further stated that his office was still waiting on funds from the Implementation Grant because the state was behind in processing. Mr. Moser related that although there was a current negative cash flow balance, all revenues were collectable and that there was negligible risk in SC-CAL's ability to make required payments.

Discussion followed on certain budget expense categories in the October report and Ms. Halle asked for an explanation of payroll adjustments. The board also asked for an accounting of what was outstanding in accounts receivable and Mr. Wilgis requested that the school's interest expense be included in the budget. Mr. Moser indicated that he would provide follow up explanations to the board and would make the requested changes.

Dr. Howell requested that some funds be added to cover his teachers field trip expenses and will call Mr. Moser to provide specifics. Dr. Howell also stated that information was needed from CES on withdraw related courses in order to determine if the school faced a financial liability for unreturned courses.

Mr. Moser further reported that there could be a significant cut in Federal Stabilization funds due to inaccurate head counts provide by SCPCSD last year. He is in contact with District Superintendent Dr. Wayne Brazell who is attempting to resolve this issue. Mr. Moser also reported that there may be a shortfall in IDEA funding related to the stimulus allotment because the number of SC-CAL special needs student is less than projected. Mr. Wilgis requested that Mr. Moser create a contingency line item column in the budget to capture potential shortfalls. Ms. Halle asked Mr. Moser to add new columns in the budget document so that the board could see the originally approved FY10 budget compared to forecast. This will help the board to track all of the changes and variances. Mr. Wilgis indicated that he would call Mr. Moser after the meeting to figure out how to do this.

Mr. Wilgis summed up the discussion by stating that SC-CAL may need to ask CES for extended payment terms on the short-term \$20,000 note. Ms. Halle agreed to alert the CES Business Office but also requested that Dr. Howell and Mr. Moser look into other funding possibilities. The board asked Mr. Moser to meet offline with Dr. Howell and CES's Scott Moores to better define the current variables and to work on a projection for next year's budget based on the current funding mix.

Mr. Moser concluded the financial discussion by stating that all SC charter schools were having these same solvency challenges due to the extremely low funding and \$1900 per student base cost.

**Marketing and Student Recruitment:**

Ms. LoVullo reported that the new FY11 8" x 11" school brochure has gone to the printer and that the new school store went live yesterday and received its first order. We will start to accept applicants for the 2010-11 school year on December 1, 2009. She also reported that the schools website is currently

being updated and will be complete by the end of the year. The recruitment effort will start in January with Google key words and live online information sessions will be scheduled for March.

**Annual Board Meeting and Election:**

Ms. LoVullo announced that the location and agenda for the SC-CAL annual board meeting on December 1, 2009 had been announced on the school's website. So far we have received 21 electronic ballots from parents. Dr. Howell agreed to post a reminder to the school bulletin board and student announcement pages and will also send parents a reminder email.

**Additional Resolutions:**

Dr. Howell proposed two resolutions, requesting that 1) the board approve participation of SC-CAL employees in the SC state retirement plan; and 2) that direct deposit of payroll checks be authorized for SC-CAL employees. The board entertained motions and approved both resolutions.

**New Business:**

Ms. Halle announced as a courtesy that CES was considering opening discussions about Calvert distance learning programs with superintendents of select public school districts in South Carolina. She offered that CES does not believe that this will impact SC-CAL and promised to inform all contacts about SC-CAL. Dr. Howell expressed that there may be some issue and Ms. Halle assured everyone that she would keep them in the loop.

The board meeting was adjourned at 12:42pm. The board went into executive session immediately thereafter.