

Governing Board Meeting Minutes
Columbia, SC
Thursday, February 18, 2010

In Attendance:

Randy Wilgis*	Pauline Sternick*	Gloria Julius*
Jean Halle*	Ann Miller*	Steve Brown*
Andrea Mathis*	Ross Norton, Jr.*	Mike Wilmeth*
Secaida Howell	Bill Moser*	

Absent: Scott Moores * Indicates participation via teleconference

Randy Wilgis opened the meeting at 3:30 PM.

Mr. Wilgis took the role and offered a motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes from 12/29/09 and 01/21/10. The minutes were approved.

Headmaster's Report

Dr. Howell reported that 72 students had re-enrolled to date with 16 new students enrolled who are siblings of current students. There had been 72 new inquiries for the upcoming school year, which brings the total to 160 inquiries for the 2010-2011 school year at SC-CAL. Dr. Howell was pleased with these numbers because the big marketing push has not yet occurred and the inquiry numbers are high.

Dr. Howell stated that he and his staff will do outreach to encourage current students to enroll who have yet to fill out/complete re-enrollment forms.

Student Recruitment and Marketing

Mike Wilmeth and Tamra Misseijer had been working on a parent survey in order to determine parent satisfaction with SC-CAL and CES. Dr. Howell mentioned that the state of SC also issues its own parent satisfaction survey which was due March 5th. The state issues such surveys to serve as a "report card" for each public school in SC. The Board discussed the purpose of two surveys and concluded that they would like Dr. Howell to send a copy of the SC state survey so Mr. Wilmeth and Mrs. Misseijer could determine if the questions of the SC-CAL parent survey would overlap with the SC state parent survey.

Board decided that it is OK for the parents to complete two parent surveys as the SC-CAL parent survey from CES is designed for internal planning while the SCDOE (SC Department of Education) parent survey is designed to report on how each public school is performing and is required by the state. The SCDOE survey will be mailed to parents

and the Board decided to approve the CES survey to be emailed immediately to parents. It was noted that the SCDOE parent survey results will not be available to SC-CAL and the Board until September 2010. Board also suggested that the CES parent survey should state why there are two surveys so parents understand the importance of completing both surveys.

PASS Testing

Dr. Howell reported that PASS testing dates would be March 16-17 for the writing components and that the ELA, math, science, and social studies would take place in May. He stated that there would be several testing sites throughout the state due to parental input. Dr. Howell stated that SC-CAL had confirmed contracts for each of the testing sites for the March and May dates. Dr. Howell said there has to be at least one faculty or staff member from SC-CAL who is certified to administer the test and that each test day should last no longer than 2.5 or 3 hours. He noted that there would be no time limit for each portion of the test.

Ann Miller suggested obtaining a group of parent volunteers to assist SC-CAL staff at each testing site. Mrs. Miller volunteered to send out an email letter to all parents, asking for volunteers. She thought it would be a good idea to encourage students to come to the testing by reminding them they will be able to meet their classmates and will be able to socialize after the test. She suggested having the kids bringing lunch so they could eat lunch with their classmates after the test. The Board approved Mrs. Miller to write a letter and contact parents for volunteers.

Jean Halle from CES said students should receive some type of token for attending all test sessions and Dr. Howell stated that he would acquire gift certificates or coupons to have a free ice-cream dish from a place like Marble Slab.

SC-CAL Visit with Dr. Julius from CES

Mr. Wilgis stated that Dr. Julius from CES visited faculty and staff at SC-CAL and her reports would be available to the Board within the week. Dr. Julius did not discuss teacher workload with faculty at SC-CAL but her findings stated that teacher mentors from CES would be helping SC-CAL faculty in the upper grades by checking compositions and opening tests for students.

School Policy and Agreements

Mr. Wilgis stated that he had spoken with Joel Medley regarding the ethics of having Jean Halle from CES on the SC-CAL Board and said that Mr. Medley did not see anything unethical with a CES person on the Board but as non-voting member. Additionally, Mr. Medley requested access to the SC-CAL Board Meeting Minutes, thus Mr. Wilgis told Mr. Medley that all Board Meeting Minutes can be found on the SC-CAL website.

Mrs. Halle from CES stated that CES is uncomfortable not having a member on the Board and wanted to make sure that the Board would take action to create an ex-officio seat for a CES person on the Board. Mr. Wilgis and the Board acknowledged this and Mr. Wilgis said he would speak to Mr. Medley

The Conflict of Interest was finalized and approved and is to be sent to Mr. Medley.

Budget

Bill Moser gave an overview of the FY10 budget and addressed the lack of funds necessary to hire a replacement teacher for the SC-CAL teacher who resigned in January 2010. Mr. Moser suggested that SC-CAL take advantage of the advisory teachers available from CES as they are able to help without adding costs to the budget.

It was noted earlier in the meeting that Dr. Howell had begun the interview process for hiring a new teacher and had narrowed the choices down to two teachers. Jean Halle from CES asked if the Board could view the resumes of each individual in order to determine what qualifications they have to teach at SC-CAL. Dr. Howell agreed to do this and Mr. Moser reminded the Board that a new teacher could not be hired for this year but for the 2010-2011 school year. Dr. Howell felt it would be a good idea to hire a new teacher now so that she/he can be trained by current teachers and be used as a substitute as necessary.

Mr. Wilgis and Mr. Moser had previously discussed the budget at length and Mr. Moser encouraged the Board to reach out to our state representatives and senators in order to acquire funds for SC-CAL – to eliminate further budget cuts. Mr. Wilgis suggested that the SC-CAL provide families with the contact information for the state representatives and senators to ask them to provide more funding for virtual schools. Mr. Wilgis said he would develop a form letter that parents could use and then personalize to send to their state rep.

Mr. Moser stated that SC-CAL currently operates on a 1993 level – allocating only \$1764 per student. This is because of the state budget cuts. Mr. Moser stated that he, Mr. Wilgis, and Scott Moores are developing a plan to address the long-term debt SC-CAL has to pay CES. SC-CAL needs to pay back debt within four years.

Computer Policy

Current policy is that each SC-CAL family is provided with a free computer, webcam, headset, and bamboo board. However, there are only two more computers available. Thus, Pauline Sternick, Board Treasurer, developed a draft for a computer policy stating that parents can lease out a computer for the year and computers will only be given free of charge to SC-CAL families who demonstrate financial need – who meet the national poverty guidelines.

Board wanted the computer policy to go into effect for the 2010-2011 school year. If any other new families join SC-CAL for current school year, they will not receive a computer if the two remaining computers have been issued. If a family has three or more children enrolled in SC-CAL, they would be eligible for a free computer. Policy would state that each family would need to return computers in June so they can be serviced before the next school year.

Board asked Mrs. Sternick to finalize the computer policy ASAP and post it to the website after the CES parent surveys were completed.

Public Board Meetings

Richard Norton suggested that SC-CAL post the time and date of each Board meeting and open the school for the community to be able to attend the Board meeting at the school site in Columbia, SC. Parents and community members can only attend the Board meetings onsite because a phone conference would be costly. Board accepted Mr. Norton's public board meeting policy.

Committee Structure/Formation

Mr. Wilgis suggested that the Board form a committee that is responsible for social activities at SC-CAL such as extra-curricular activities, field trips, PASS testing, student activities, etc. Ann Miller volunteered to head up this committee and wants to develop a list of museums and other educational places that offer discounts for schools so that SC-CAL students and families can get together and meet at these museums. Mrs. Miller would like to obtain parents to be part of this committee in hopes of creating a greater sense of community at SC-CAL. Dr. Howell stated he would give list of family contact information to Mrs. Miller so she could proceed in getting parent volunteers for the Social Activities Committee.

501(c)3 Application

Dr. Howell stated that he was good to go on the application and had sent it in for approval.

After no further business, Mr. Wilgis asked the Board to go into Executive Session but the members could not. Therefore, Mr. Wilgis stated he would send an email as to when the Board would meet for the Executive Session. The meeting ended at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Tamra Misseijer