

BOARD ACADEMIC COMMITTEE MEETING
Merit School of Music
38 S. Peoria, Chicago, IL 60607

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

MINUTES

OPEN SESSION 6:00 P.M.

Call to Order:

Time: 6:05 P.M.

1. ROLL CALL RENEE NASH – COMMITTEE CHAIR ABSENT/PRESENT

Board Members:

Seth Harkins, Co-Chair	Present
Renee Nash, Co-Char	Present
Angela W. Richardson-Bryant, President	Present
LaShonda Milton, Treasurer	Present
La Shone Kelly, Vice President	Present

Staff:

Dr. Richard Lebron Head of School	Present
Farland Jenkins Board Administrator	Present

1. ROLL CALL

2. Introduce Guests: None.

Discussion 3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

- None.

**Discussion
& Action**

4. Accept Agenda

Motion: Seth Harkins – **Accept the agenda.**

2nd: La Shone Kelly

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

Discussion:

- None.

**Discussion
& Action**

5. CVCS Vision Statement

Motion: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant – **Request that the strategic planning committee reconvene to address the mission/vision statement.**

2nd: Seth Harkins

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

Discussion:

- The vision statement in the strategic plan is different from the vision statement on charts at the school.
- There are 2 vision statements within the strategic plan.
- The vision statements are not the most recent.
- Management proposes a procedure to evaluate and communicate the mission and vision statements.
- A committee should be formed with parents, teachers, administrators and Board members.
- Once mission and vision statements are stated they should be stable.
- The current vision statement needs to be identified.
- A vision statement needs to be short and succinct.
- The school's value statements are equally important.
- A coherent constructive value statement should come first.
- The current values do not have complete sentences.
- The Committee supports the creation of a group to develop very clear statements of values, purpose and vision statements.
- The work was done in the 2014-2015 school year.
- One document has the old one and another document has the new one.
- All of the documents need to be updated to show the new vision statement.
- The mission is identified by the articles of incorporation.
- The web site has a mission that is different from the strategic plan.
- It is significant that there is ambiguity.
- The vision should appear on almost everything.
- We may not be clear as an organization what our primary task is.
- We should make sure that Dr. Lebron gets the most recent statement.
- The strategic plan has 2 vision statements.
- The Strategic Planning Committee will work to be sure that all the documents are

consistent.

- There needs to be a strategic planning focus group.
- There should be a bottom up approach with representative stakeholders whose primary task is to identify or reauthorize the current statement or modify to develop a full list of statements.
- The current statement should be used as a starting point.
- The group should take the historic documents and if they continue to be relevant they should be changed.
- The task should be moved to the Strategic Planning Committee.
- This is another item to include in our branding model.
- Mission and vision statements are fluid.
- All stakeholders should be incorporated in the strategic planning.
- The Board should refocus on strategic plan work rather than on operations.
- It would be useful to summarize what had been the strategic planning events.
- We need to have no ambiguity to the process.
- The organizing question should be to identify what is the primary task of this organization.
- The mission statement could be the primary task.
- It should be determined how and where it should be publicized.
- The Committee should make the recommendation on how we are going to publish the statement.
- Governing is equally critical.
- It is not uncommon for mission and vision statements to be reviewed annually.
- We need to be sure that management has participation and have a process that will include all of the stakeholders.
- The Committee usually meets on weekday mornings so that parents are included.

**Discussion
& Action**

6. Comprehensive Evaluation Review Team report

Motion: Seth Harkins – **Request the Head of School to develop students in temporary living situation procedures and present them to the full Board.**

2nd: LaShonda Milton

Vote: No vote, motion amended.

Amended

Motion: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant – **Request the Head of School to develop students in temporary living situation procedures and present them to the full Board based on evaluation from CPS and consulting with them on ironing out the specifics going forward.**

2nd: LaShonda Milton

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

Discussion:

- The report contains items from the renewal of the charter.
- The report has five different conditions and goals and recommendations where CPS found that we did not meet expectations.
- Pre-renewal conditions:
 - By or before July 15, 2016, the school will submit evidence of completion of Open Meetings Act (OMA) training for all current Board members. This has been completed.
 - By or before July 15, 2016, the school must present a compliant student application form consistent with the standards identified in the Illinois Charter School Law and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) policy. This has been completed.
- Renewal Conditions:
 - On or before January 1, 2017, the school must meet state and federal rules governing English Learners as demonstrated on formal compliance reports from Office of Language and Cultural Education (OLCE). The Chicago Public Schools has designated the OLCE to conduct school visits and make determination of compliance with state and federal rules regarding English Learner Programs. A new instructor has been hired to lead the efforts.
 - By or before June 1, 2017, the school must demonstrate compliance with CPS Diverse Learner expectations of timely completion of evaluations/Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Related Service Provider (RSP) service documentation as measured by the Office of Diverse Learners and Support Services (ODLSS).
 - By or before October 1, 2017, the school must demonstrate full resolution of facility and ADA issues. Meeting this requirement is being incorporated into the new lease agreement with Merit.
- In 2014 – 2015 there was a family with a temporary living situation had significantly low attendance. Last school year there were not any students identified as living in temporary living situations. There is no data to show at this point there are no students in the temporary living situation. If we do receive such a student management will develop an individual plan. Those students may not have access to computers so a plan must be created for the student to be at the school for the full week. We would need to plan how to fulfill lunch requirements.
- Even if we do not have a homeless population we need to have a process.
- The plan may not be accepted if there are greater restrictions for this population than the rest of the student population.
- If there are no such students there needs to be documentation to indicate this.
- A staff member has to be designated as the STLS coordinator. Three staff have had CPS training.
- A written plan must be in place.
- The Committee suggests researching other schools.
- There must have been a population because there is a percentage of attendance for students.
- Part of the solution is to perform child find procedures.
- Authorize the Head of School to develop students in temporary living situation procedures and present them to the full Board.
- The report states that there were complaints. The complaint could have been a result to the CPS homeless liaison.
- The Committee would like the Head of School to find the specifics of the complaint. And to ask if there are resources in place for further development of

the policies.

Discussion & Action **7. SPED and English Learner Compliance Update**

Motion: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant – **Request the Head of School to provide an audit of the social work per minute so that we can determine the allocation of staff and then present a plan that CVCS will have in place if CPS fails to give us the social worker**

2nd: Renee Nash

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

- Discussion:
- Management has been able to find and hire all the related services providers.
 - As of August the IEP percentage in compliance is at 96%.
 - There is now 100% compliance with 504 plans.
 - The threshold is 75% to be in compliance.
 - There are 2 students who need an SOP and they have been scheduled.
 - There should be no less than 100% every month moving forward.
 - The school psychologist is generally for evaluation purposes.
 - Related service provider allocations are based on the location of the school.
 - Management plans to request a reallocation after the 20-day count.
 - We are a city-wide school but we are part of the charter network.
 - The Committee would like for management to have a written plan in place for what will we do if CPS maintains its position that location and finance affect the allocations. We may be in the same noncompliance position that we were in last year if CPS does not come through. This will hopefully reduce the chance of being out of compliance.
 - The direct service minutes are the time working directly with the students.
 - The Committee needs an audit of IEP social work minutes per student so that we can clearly know what needs to be delivered and how much personnel resources will be required to deliver the services.
 - The 20th day is October 3rd.

Discussion **8. Temporary living situations compliance**

- Previously discussed.

Discussion & Action **9. Proposed changes related to the closing of our Math Virtual ASP position**

Motion: LaShonda Milton – **Get support for the current ALP teacher with the current population and develop a plan to expand the program to serve more students.**

2nd: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

- Discussion:
- The closing of the virtual math position occurred because there was a resignation.
 - Management reevaluated the position and we were providing a very similar service virtually and in-house.
 - The position could be used better instead of a virtual position to change it to an ALP position.
 - There were questions in the last Board meeting about how many students could be served with the position.
 - There is a list of 50 to 60 students on a waiting list that could be served by the position.
 - The Committee believes that the current ALP teacher need additional help with the current enrollment.
 - The committee would like to see an ALP expansion plan. The plan should include the current teacher's needs based on the program. There may be in-house personnel that could support the program. Before we add 60 additional students we should know what is working well.
 - There may need to be more concentration on the mathematics portion.
 - We may be better served to get support for the current ALP teacher with the current population and develop a plan to expand the program to serve more students.
 - What does the program do well? How can we do it better? What will it take to make it better?
 - The motion authorizes a new teacher position for support with the current program.
 - The position is not to take on new students.
 - The new position should be 50% on-site and 50% virtual.
 - We should get the data first then management will figure out the allocation.
 - The plan will be with intent that we are seeking to expand the program for students in 2017 – 2018.
 - The new position will support the current teacher who has 60 students.
 - In terms of finance, there will not be a significant change.
 - The action will be recommended to the full Board.

Discussion & Action 10. Family Support Liaison Position

Motion: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant – **Request management to provide a F.A.S.T. report and retention information by the next Academic Committee meeting.**

2nd: Seth Harkins

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

- Discussion:
- The position was approved previously by the Board.
 - The Academic Advisor position will be left vacant.
 - The former academic advisor will move into the family support liaison position.
 - The Committee would like to see data for the number of referrals and families helped in terms of retention of the families.
 - There is one person only in the position.

- This is not a teaching certified position.
- K12 provides a report to management each month. Once the new families are on-boarded FAST reports are started.
- Management will review last year's data and provide an example of what was done by the previous FSL.

Discussion & Action

11. Teacher's Salary Increase Request

Motion: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant – **Recommend to the full Board that we draft correspondence to the teachers and staff of CVCS informing them of the Board's intent to review all salaries and benefits throughout the course of this school year.**

2nd: La Shone Kelly

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

Discussion

- A teacher has asked for a 20%. Salary increase.
- The Head of School recommends using the Board approved formula in terms of salary increases.
- Although communication guidelines have been established, the Head of School is presenting this to the Committee. In the future the Head of School will inform but bring the request.
- The recommendation is that we do not approve the salary request.
- The Committee is a little confused at how the formula was developed. There was a decision to compare teachers' salaries to all other teachers' salaries at other schools. The Chicago Teachers Union salaries were presented with the formula data for comparison.
- There have been several requests for salary increases over the last 3 months. The Committee need to evaluate the reason why this has happened. The Committee needs to evaluate the reasons for the requests as a whole.
- No actions should be taken this year. The budget Committee should review this in the future.
- The Committee may consider a letter of some type to the teachers and staff that this is something the Board will be considering in the future. We don't want to lose teachers because of compensation issues.
- The teachers have communicated that requests for increases have been approved in the past.
- The requests and increases have probably happened in the past but the Board will develop a plan to insure that this does not occur again.
- The salary structure approved for this year should be maintained and the Head of School should have the authority to deny any requests and continue to use the salary structure that was approved.
- The value issue is sufficient resources. The strategic plan may use a value statement to address this.
- What occurred is that the teachers received the lowest bonuses ever.
- Some evaluation levels may not merit an increase at all.
- A flat fee was used.
- A flat fee seemed to be less arbitrary.

- The increases for the teachers were unexpected and unexplained.
- The teachers were to be notified in the employee handbook.
- This occurred after the fact of the employee handbook. The evaluation component has been added.
- This issue merits more discussion than what should be done in the Academic Committee.

Discussion 12. Organization Chart Modification

- There have been minor changes made to the chart.
- Job descriptions have not changed.
- The high school principal will be responsible for special education.
- The elementary principal will have responsibility for ESL.
- The chart should indicate that the FSL position supports high school and K – 8.
- Special education personnel are supervised by the high school principal except the paraprofessionals.
- This gives the K-8 principal more time to work with the Bilingual program which will be supported by a committee which includes parents.

Discussion & Action 13. Plan for Professional Development

Motion: LaShonda Milton – **Request a professional development plan be developed for teachers who are performing at an unsatisfactory or basic level in order to grow their performance to proficient or better.**

2nd: No second, motion dies.

Vote: No vote.

- Discussion:
- The plan uses the schedule that was used last year with different topics of discussion.
 - The goals from the strategic plan align with the goals.
 - A timeframe is included in the PD events.
 - There will be a follow-up section.
 - The professional development plan included Title II funds.
 - Teacher individual training budget activities are determined in September with the teachers and are consistent with their goals. The goals are then approved by the administrators. The individual goals are not in the plan but they will be related to the school goals. It is too cumbersome.
 - Each teacher has a \$750 budget regardless of performance level.
 - The Committee believes that teachers performing at an unsatisfactory or basic level should have a plan with more funds associated with them. The professional development for those teachers should be based on a need to improve the performance level.
 - The purpose of the professional development was to see if that was incorporated.
 - The Committee would like to see who the teachers using the Title II funds and what conferences they will be attending.

- Teachers will attend one conference each and will present the conference information to the entire staff. There are about 7 conferences and 35 teachers that will be used with Title II funds.
- The majority of the conferences will be in calendar 2017.
- The strategic goals should be indicated directly on the plan.
- The goals are not numbered in the plan.
- Some funds are set aside for consultants for math.
- Teachers are encouraged to attend at least 2 external professional developments.
- Edviate 360 is a service that is used to house the information on goals and the system used for observations and evaluations.
- Individual professional development plans are designed to improve performance levels.
- It is not clear whether evaluations are done according to the State.
- Management will check if there is a remediation process in place.
- It may not need to be defined as a remediation plan but it should be a specific plan in the form of remediation.
- This has been done for specific individuals.
- School districts are bound by the State for remediation plans. If the school does not, it should parallel the State process.
- Management can provide a model at the next Academic Committee meeting.

Discussion

14. Use of CVCS Academic Plan instead of the CPS Continuous Improvement Work Plan

- The school has an academic plan process with K12 that is well documented.
- The plan addresses various components including instruction, assessment, staffing, observation and feedback, data-driven instruction, culture and professional development.
- The 7 areas are similar to what is the CPS continuous improvement work plan (CIWP).
- CVCS is not required to write a CIWP plan for CPS.
- Managements requests to use the K12 academic plan. It is consistent with the school's efforts.
- Measurement of the components take place every other week.
- The Committee will want to know what strategic goals are met.
- The Committee would like to see the initial plan to see that there are milestones and strategic outcomes with a deadline.

Discussion

15. PAARC Scores, One Year Drop-out Data

- The Committee needs to know what the numbers mean.
- There needs to be a legend for the scores.
- This is the 1st year that the scores have been reported and used for accountability.
- Trends can be seen with relative performance.
- Sixth grade is a big concern.
- Another type of graph can be presented that included a legend.
- We are performing below state level in most categories.
- We are underperforming CPS in 6th grade and it is a concern. This will be a focus for this school year.

- Cross state average scores include other states.
- Sixth grade is a problem in a lot of districts in Illinois.
- The graph presentation provided better information.
- There is a variance of only a couple of points when compared to other schools, except at the state and cross state levels.
- There is not yet sufficient data. There will need to be more cycles before we can really see where we are.
- When there is data specific to learning objectives we can improve planning.
- We are at least and slightly above where everyone else is.
- The 2011 school year one year dropout rate was 18.3. There was then a huge spike to 28.3. The rate was 10.8 in 2016. A regression analysis generated a slope of a 2.61 annual decrease in the rate. There was an anomaly in the 2012 rate.
- Some students return to home schooling and can be classified as dropouts if that is not reported to the state.
- We just received freshman on track data from CPS. Management will provide the data once it has been verified.
- Freshman on track was not accounted for at CPS because it was the 1st year that charter schools were required.
- This is the 1st year that schools are allowed to review the data.
- The school was identified as one of the top schools in CPS.
- The other scores are currently embargoed by CPS until there is a press release. The preliminary data cannot be released.

Discussion 16. Change in Session Time Proposal

- The Head of School's recommendation has been accepted.
- It will not be changed this year.

Discussion 17. Learning Coach Handbook – Attendance Policy

- This was discussed in the last Board meeting.
- Management is scheduling a meeting with CPS to see if we can continue to use our 1,500 minutes per week for attendance taking.
- Parents will still be allowed to input their attendance as they have been.
- One part of the handbook indicates attendance on a daily basis and another states that we do it on a weekly basis.
- The reference to weekly or daily may need to be changed.
- Minutes have to be allocated to back days.
- The issue with CPS is about the flexibility of the schedule.
- Parents can log attendance on a weekly basis.
- We need to make sure that it is done consistently.
- We want to get clarification from CPS.
- The aesthetics of the learning coach handbook need improvement and need to be more professional looking.
- The document need closer editing.
- This has implications for how we present ourselves.
- Margins, spacing and fonts need to be consistent.

Discussion

18. Related Service Provider Update

- All the contracts for review have been returned from the Board Attorney.
- The changes have been sent to the providers but not all of them have been returned by the providers.
- The school has secured all the service providers needed.

Discussion & Action

19. Curriculum Audit

Motion: Angela W. Richardson-Bryant – **Recommend that the proposal is presented to the full Board for approval.**

2nd: La Shone Kelly

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

Discussion

- There have been attempts to receive quotes from vendors other than the Curriculum Management Audit Center at Phi Delta Kappa (PDK).
- The other organizations stated that they could not perform the audit because they either audit at the school district level or they also use PDK.
- The Board Administrator recommends that we contract with PDK for \$21 thousand.
- Other districts form their own audit committees.
- PDK is the industry standard.
- The scope of the audit is extensive and provides a timeline.
- The value of doing this is that we get an external review that will focus on a number of standards that are well recognized. The outcome should set us up for a revision of our long term strategic plan.
- There will be a lot of requests for information from management.
- We work with a copyrighted curriculum. PDK may want to review online lessons.
- They typically will spend time interviewing various stakeholders.
- The Board needs to know how effective the curriculum is working.

Discussion

20. Public Comments

- We should make sure that CPS’ new policy is that we are to report on a daily basis and that we are not out of compliance.
- This is not a new policy in terms of how 300 minutes account for a day
- What we are questioning is the way we have been taking attendance which has been to use the 1,500 minutes per week and then allocating those minutes to different days. At some point there was a proposal that attendance is logged on a daily basis to make sure that we are in compliance. At some point during the audit it was not going to be an issue.
- We need to confirm CPS compliance and implement it and move on. We need to be sure that we have it documented.
- That is the goal of the meeting with CPS.
- There is a concern about the new D2L middle school platform. There may be glitches in teacher training.

Discussion 21. Adjournment
& Action:

Motion: LaShonda Milton – **Adjourn the meeting.**

2nd: Renee Nash

Vote: Voice Vote, Unanimous Aye.

Time: **9:04 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted:



Board Secretary