

BTN Meeting Minutes 9.22.14

In attendance: Elijah Etheridge, Chrissa Carlson, Shanelle Hopkins, Eric Rice, Rev. Wanda Bynum-Duckett (potential board member), Jared Thornton (potential board member), Kia Harper, Armand Waiters (potential board member), Matt Wernsdorfer, Leah Abrams (guest), Kelly Caswell, J.T. Thornton, Helen Atkinson, Ron Howell, Avery Smith, Mark Matthews, Danise Robinson (office manager of BTN), Matrice Gandy

5:10pm Motion to accept August meeting minutes, seconded, unanimously approved.

5:15pm Introduction of potential board members

5:20 School Leader Reports

Connexions

Enrollment issue - 445 total student enrollment; 12 withdrawals have happened. School only being paid for 395.

How to prevent over-enrollment again, especially 50 students over (equal to \$500,000)? Lottery process plus enrollment through Office of Enrollment, Choice, and Transfer outside of school's knowledge. They should provide us with more money, but OECT has said that they will not give the school the additional money.

Plan to increase Connexions' enrollment cap to 500 and not to get higher than 450; making sure that the school gets the money it is supposed to. Kia and Elijah need to get to the bottom of this enrollment number issue and to meet with OECT to get the payment for the students. OECT had no right to enroll students in Connexions without the school's approval.

Increase in Special Education students - up to 111. What is the effect on staffing? School will probably qualify for two additional Special Educators after true up, but in the meantime, Connexions still owes the Board money from last year.

Eric Rice will initiate a meeting with the Office of Enrollment to rectify this issue and to solidify policy regarding this issue for subsequent years.

Connexions did submit the Teacher Evaluation waiver after consulting with Mike Chalupa at City Neighbors; still need to see if the staff will approve it or not.

Meeting with MSDE regarding arts credit with Guidance Dept of BCPSS in addition to Marc Etienne to make sure that Connexions students receive full credit for their arts courses. Martial Arts will count under Fundamentals of Art, for example, and African Drums will count under Dance.

Partnership with Middle Grades Project with Friends and Hampstead Hill is under review. Undecided whether partnership will continue.

5:40pm Independence Report

Baltimore Urban Debate League scholarship for \$4000 to offset \$10,000 cost of membership.

127 students enrolled; pulled in 5 last week. Enrollment cap of 130. Over budget by a decent number. There are enough rooms in the building (7-8 classrooms); will be a problem when the school grows to 8 advisories.

Meeting with school leaders - construction to begin April 2016 with completion projected for spring 2017.

SY 2014 budget - have to pay \$20,000 to offset system mistake over students with disabilities.

Back to school night on 9/25 - need members of BTN to attend.

Need BTN representative for School Review.

Added courses: conversational Spanish, Pre-Calculus

Starting to plan for staff PD - may involve going back to High Tech High

CTE designation awarded for Environmental Studies

Governance Committee - currently one student; ideally wants one student per grade level and perhaps one per advisory

5:55 Financial Reports

New policy that the accountant for BTN attend the meetings during the time that school financial reports are discussed.

Independence - grants received not listed; BCPSS benefits; Federal Unemployment tax reimbursement - reason for negative amount in Extra Duty Stipends.

BTN Budget - Original budget projected based on higher student numbers; 50,000 projected in Development without Board Contribution; 10% surplus

Connexions - How was it possible to cover the \$500,000 budget gap? Projections - \$125,000 for the year. Example - Instead of having two computer labs fully stocked, now there is only one. One support position was released - minimal casualty.

In November, can submit a request for next year that enrollment be capped at 415. (Plan to cap at 500 to get every single dollar per student to which we are entitled.)

6:15 Discussion of Charter School Renewal Process

In response to late submission of charter renewal application. Executive Director was excluded from development of the charter renewal document. Upcoming renewal for Connexions will happen next year, and we need to have procedures in place.

Suggested that the timeline for the renewal process be doubled - twelve weeks rather than six weeks, 3-4 month period, divide tasks into phases rather than "weeks."

Motion to adopt school renewal process, seconded, unanimously passed.

Baltimore Teacher Network Organizational Structure - needs Board discussion

Affordable Care Act - Mandatory for staff who work over 30 hours. Discussion of health care options; Jared Thornton will look further into health care plans that work for BTN staff.

6:42 Voting in of new board members

Question about whether we should disregard the bylaws that require future board members to attend a board meeting prior to being voted into membership.

Decided to waive bylaws to accept new members and vote them in.

All unanimously voted in.

6:50 Approval of Site-Based Governance Policy

Schools create their own bylaws tailored to each school's needs.
Approved, seconded, unanimously approved.

6:55 Presentation of Fundraising Plan

Partnership with M & T Bank, RFP submitted for \$25,000 (9/18/14).
Campaign for Student Council at Connexions.

7pm Executive Session - 7:30

Chrissa Carlson - resigning as president of BTN, Matt Wernsdorfer will serve as interim president.

7:40 Move to adjourn, seconded, passed unanimously.