

**MASTERY SCHOOLS OF CAMDEN
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**August 20, 2014
6:30-8:00 p.m. Board Meeting**

**Held at DCM Architecture and Engineering
200 Federal Street, Camden, NJ 08103**

MINUTES

Called to order at 6:41 p.m.

Board Present: Judy Tschirgi, Graham Finney, Reuel Robinson, Stacy Holland

Staff Present: Scott Gordon, Joe Ferguson, me, Yonca, Irametta, Michael Farrell, Melinda Shorday, Kinyta Smalls, Meredith Howell, Kimberly Goldman, Jim, Brandon Cummings, Dan Bell, Averyel Sawyer

1. Approval of the Minutes from July 23, 2014 (pages 3-7)

Resolution #0814 – 01

Resolved, to approve the minutes from the meeting held on July 23, 2014 as presented.

Graham Finney, Second, Stacy Holland. Unanimous.

2. Hiring Approvals (page 8)

0814-02

Resolved, to approve Mastery Schools of Camden staff hired between July 19th and August 11th 2014 as presented.

Discussion of if there will be any additional hires before school opening. Staff discussed

VOTE to approve 0814-02: Stacy Holland, Second, Graham Finney. Unanimous.

3. Disbursement Approvals (Yonca Agatan) – (pages 9-10)

0814-03

Resolved, that the Mastery Schools of Camden Board of Trustees approves payment of \$75,239.75 for school start-up and operating expenses as detailed in the invoices listing (Board Document 082014-01)

Discussion that the Board would like the CFO to come back to the Board with some proposal for more detail

0814-04

Resolved, that the Mastery Schools of Camden Board of Trustees ratifies the payroll in the amount of \$36,399 for August 1, 2014.

0814-09

Resolved, that the Board of Trustees of Mastery Schools of Camden authorize the establishment of two petty cash funds for emergencies and small purchases; one in the amount of \$1,500 for North Camden Elementary, the other in the amount of \$1,500 for Cramer Hill Elementary. No single expenditure shall exceed \$250 and all expenditures must be authorized by the Assistant School Leader for Operations or the School Business Administrator. All disbursements from petty cash shall be reported annually to the Board of Trustees.

Motion to approve 0814-03, 04, and 09

Stacy Holland, Second, Reuel Robinson. Unanimous.

4. Policy and Operations Updates (Yonca Agatan)

- Presentation of salary scales for Mastery Schools of Camden for FY 15 (**page 11**)

Presentation included salary scales, benefits information, retirement information, and certification status for Camden staff

Discussion – Board members interested in differences in the salary scales between NJ and PA. Staff noted salaries are approximately \$2000 higher per position but NJ staff must pay 1.5% toward salaries.

Why do we not have ASLs for Operations? Joe Ferguson noted that we have traditionally been able to identify and hire folks in the spring prior to opening; noted that we do have plans to hire a second network support person for operations who can support much of the onboarding; Scott Gordon noted that the original intent was to hire instructional apprentices.

Do we have a sense if the Camden City salary scale is competitive with the surrounding suburban districts? CFO noted that we did not look at suburban scales but we can do so. However, Joe Ferguson noted that 80% of teachers live outside the district to suggest salaries are competitive.

What percentage of staff are in each of the three retirement plans? CFO responded that roughly 80% of staff will be in the TPAF plan. Board mentioned that we should keep our eye on the number of employees going into the PERS plan (requires a 12.2% employer contribution).

- Final version of the parent and student handbook was forwarded to the Board on August 12, 2014 as required by Board resolution #0614-14 approved on June 16, 2014.

0814-05

Resolved, to approve the salary scales for Teachers, Support Teachers, Leaders, Apprentice Leaders, and Culture, Administration and Operations staff as presented for Mastery Schools of Camden for school year 2014-2015.

Motion to approve 0814-05: Graham Finney, Second, Reuel Robinson. Unanimous.

5. CEO Report – presentation (slides attached)

a. Legislative & Political Update

Scott Gordon presented about the status of the Urban Hope Act legislative changes with final approval still pending the governor's signature. As of yesterday the Senate leader said he will support bill passage without early retirement incentives and the Republicans originally not in support may now support the bill. There is a lot of misinformation about Mastery (and Uncommon) being spread by NJEA. The Education Law Center is likely pursuing a lawsuit to stop opening in temporary facilities. We will proceed with opening.

Discussion about if this will jeopardize opening? Staff responded that we have a contract in place with CCSD approved by NJDOE and we will continue forward.

b. Facilities Update

Discussion of renovation projects in the two schools on time for 8/27 opening.

Questions about IT updates for the two buildings. Joe Ferguson discussed that it will be running for opening, but is in progress.

Original plan included a K-6 elementary school near Kroc Center for the first new construction, however, changes to the legislation mean we must have a larger facilities and it may not be possible on the original site. We are considering four other properties that allow us to have a larger facility.

Question about who owns the property and how we finance it. CFO responded with a variety of financing vehicles and that we are engaging a real estate finance consultant to help with a financing strategy. Thomas Johnston (counsel) noted that there are options for either the school entity owning the building/land and for creating a special purpose entity with an arms length relationship to lead real estate transactions. The Board asked for significant education about the financing structures as we prepare to bid on land. Counsel advised we do not need Board action to make an offer and to enter a due diligence period on a new property.

Additional discussion from the Board about the idea of the relationship of any new entity and the current Board. Staff agreed to have counsel present on the roles and

responsibilities of the Board, school based staff, management entity, etc. in terms of authority lines, etc.

- c. Opening Update
- d. Meet School Leaders

School leaders introduced themselves and their staff and discussed some opening updates.

Updates for Cramer Hill – will open K-2; School Leader Howell-Turner participated in the start up of Mann and Pastorius, so this is her third start up and her first as the primary school leader. They are fully staffed and 100% of the teachers have prior teaching experience and some have worked in Camden City schools before. 83 families are fully enrolled with 6 additional pending full enrollment. They are pushing to capacity of 100.

Updates for North Camden – School Leader Brandon Cummings was a teacher for six years in Atlanta, turnaround principal in Cleveland, Ohio and came to Mastery as an Apprentice School Leader last year at Smedley Elementary. They are fully staffed for school opening. Enrolled with 282 students and have about 24 students they are working to add to the full enrollment. They focused on outreach in the orientation plan and teachers and leaders are currently conducting home visits to build relationships with families prior to school opening. 100 parents attended new parent orientation and they have had approximately that many families at each event this summer. Members of the team have been to every one of the 282 families' homes this summer.

School opening 8/27 with kindergarten opening on 9/2.

6. Contract and Legal Document Discussion (Joe Ferguson & Courtney Collins-Shapiro)

- a. Ratification of contract for legal services (**pages 12-14**)
- b. Leases with Camden City School District - Pyne Poynt and Washington - Still pending
- c. Management Agreement with Mastery Charter High School – Still pending

0814-06

Resolved, to ratify the agreement for legal services with Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, P.C. for the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 at the rates and for the services detailed in the attached agreement and as approved by the Board in resolution #0614-06 on June 16, 2014.

How will our counsel and the board engage in the disciplinary process? Staff will present on this

Motion to approve 0814-06

Graham Finney, Second, Stacy Holland. Unanimous.

0814-07 As revised

Whereas, pursuant to the application approved by the New Jersey Department of Education to form a renaissance school, Mastery Charter High School shall manage the operations of Mastery Schools of Camden, Inc. effective the 2014-2015 school year; and Whereas, Mastery Charter High School and Mastery Schools of Camden, Inc. have reached agreement on all material terms and conditions related to said management service.

Now therefore be it **resolved** that Mastery Charter High School be and hereby is authorized to commence performance effective July 1, 2014 pursuant to the draft Management Agreement, pending the appropriate finalization of the agreement.

Motion to approve 0814-07 as revised.

Graham Finney, Second, Reuel Robinson. Unanimous.

0814-08

Withdrawn

7. Adjourn at 8:01 p.m.

Motion to adjourn: Stacy Holland, Second, Graham Finney. Unanimous.