



## East Point Academy Public Charter School Regular Board Meeting Minutes

August 27, 2014

The East Point Academy (EPA) Board of Directors convened at the EPA Primary School at 6:27 PM on Wednesday, August 27, 2014.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Chair Dr. Edward Davis, Vice Chair Dr. Daniel Avosso, Secretary Mrs. Susan Kuo (arriving at approximately 7:45 PM), Officer-At-Large Mrs. Beth Richardson, Treasurer Dr. James Knapp, Dr. Ling Gao, Mr. Tom Queen, and Dr. Xian Wu

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Director/Founding Principal Mrs. Renee Mathews, Elementary Assistant Principal Mr. Jordan Knight, Primary Campus Supervisor Mrs. Autumn Perkins, Development Officer Ms. Megan Monts, Coordinator of Special Education, Federal Programs and Testing Mrs. Lisa Smith, Ms. Anne Sinclair of Resource Associates, Inc., Mrs. Lora Prill of ADCO, and Board Attorneys Mr. Ken Childs and Mr. Tyler Turner of Childs & Halligan.

### 1.0 CALL TO ORDER GENERAL SESSION

Dr. Davis called the meeting to order.

### 2.0 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Board members made motions to (1) postpone the swearing-in of board member Dr. Jijun Tang; (2) postpone until the September meeting discussion of the HVAC Contract; and (3) move discussion of the building lease to executive session.

The Board voted unanimously to amend the agenda in accordance with the motions above.

### 3.0 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Meeting notices and agendas were posted at the front office of the EPA Elementary School, at the EPA Primary School, and on the EPA website [www.eastpointsc.org](http://www.eastpointsc.org).

### 4.0 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the July 24, 2014 board meeting were included for board approval.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2014 meeting.

### 5.0 PUBLIC INPUT

Mrs. Mary Baylor expressed concerns about the process by which her children were withdrawn from EPA. She submitted a copy of her comments to Ms. Monts.

## **6.0 JULY BUDGET REPORT**

Dr. Knapp reported that he continues to gather information about retirement services offered by the Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company (VALIC).

Mrs. Mathews discussed the new financing formula from the Education Finance Act. The new funding model is based on four categories of students: (1) those receiving free and reduced lunch; (2) special education students; (3) gifted and talented students; and (4) students for whom English is a second language. Because weightings are no longer based on student age or grade level, EPA will lose \$10,000 from the FY 2014-2015 budget. The South Carolina Public Charter School District, however, allocates "hold harmless" funds to address the loss of funding for charter schools, and, due to an increase in enrollment, the school's revenues will increase by \$172,000.

Mrs. Mathews reported on new expense lines reflecting a change in purchase services, expenses for the 2014 summer camp staff, and the facility lease. Next year's budget is based on enrollment and the cost to use the Primary Campus parking lot.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the budget as presented by Mrs. Mathews.

## **7.0 BRAGGING FROM THE BOARD**

Dr. Davis explained that the new Bragging from the Board agenda item was created to tout the accomplishments of the faculty, staff, students, teachers, and school volunteers. Dr. Davis congratulated many faculty and staff members for contributing to the successful start of the 2014-2015 school year and spotlighted EPA staff member of the month, Mrs. Lacy Hinson. Mrs. Hinson is Director of Guidance and Human Resources.

## **8.0 BOARD MEMBER RECOGNITION**

Dr. Davis presented Dr. Wu with an award from the Board for his many years of service to the school.

## **9.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTANT ANNE SINCLAIR**

Dr. Davis introduced Ms. Sinclair to the Board. Ms. Sinclair will work with the Board, school groups, and other stakeholders to develop a strategic plan for EPA.

The Board discussed the importance of strategic planning to facilitate the expansion of the Elementary Campus and the AdvancEd accreditation process. Board members also discussed the formal strategic planning process, which will be noticed and open to the public.

## **10.0 DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### PASS Results

Mrs. Smith presented information about the school's PASS test results from 2013-2014 and provided information about school curriculum responses for 2014-2015. She will compile and make available data detailing PASS test results for neighboring school districts.

### Draft Goals 2014-2015

Mrs. Mathews discussed her Goals Based Evaluation for 2014-2015. Goals emphasized pertain to academic achievement, human resources, institutional development, facilities, and communications. Academic achievement goals will be based on MAP test results: math and reading achievement goals will mirror 2013-2014 goals; science achievement goals will be added. Professional development goals include enhancing cultural understanding among staff by providing brief Mandarin language lessons during staff meetings and using the Confucius Classroom to provide additional staff training on immersion education. Mrs. Mathews also emphasized the importance of team building among staff (to improve employee retention), strategic planning, and completing the first phase of the AdvancEd accreditation process.

### First Steps Proposal

Mrs. Mathews provided an update on the progress of the First Steps Proposal, pursuant to which the school would offer a class for qualifying 4K students at the Primary Campus. She is awaiting further information from the SC Department of Education.

### Housing of First Grade 2015-2016

Due to space concerns at the Elementary Campus stemming from the planned addition of classes for sixth grade students, the Board considered a proposal to house the first grade at the Primary Campus during the 2015-2016 school year. Once construction of the Middle School is complete (Fall 2016), the first grade will relocate to the Elementary Campus. The Board discussed a variety of options for housing students, including the use of portables at the Elementary Campus.

The Board voted unanimously to accept the proposal to house the first grade at the Primary Campus during the 2015-2016 school year.

## **11.0 UPDATES**

### Website Development

The Board discussed the rebuilding of the school's website with Mrs. Prill, who confirmed a target date of January 2015 for project completion.

### Architect Meeting

Dr. Davis and Mrs. Mathews reported on their meeting with the architect for the facilities expansion, Mr. Joel Carter of Jumper Carter Sease. Construction is anticipated to begin by Fall 2015. The school is considering the purchase of additional properties to the right (possibly for athletic fields) and in front (possibly to house the Primary School) of the Elementary Campus. A parent-faculty group will consider the uses to which the new building may be put. Further discussion is needed to determine what is financially feasible.

### Board Training

The Board discussed engaging a professional to provide board training. Mr. Childs recommended Dr. Wayne Worner. As stated by Mr. Childs, Dr. Worner would meet individually with board members and Mrs. Mathews. He would then prepare a report summarizing his findings and suggesting how best to proceed with the training. Training

would be scheduled subsequent to the strategic planning process, which will take place in October. Board members confirmed that funding could be reallocated to cover the costs of this endeavor.

The Board voted unanimously to engage Dr. Worner and to transfer funds from the surplus fund balance to pay for the expense of board training.

## **12.0 POLICY READINGS**

### FOIA, Nepotism, and Gift Acceptance Policies (Second Readings)

Mrs. Richardson presented the policies and thanked Mrs. Bonnie Loomis for providing input on the FOIA and Nepotism policies.

The Board unanimously voted to adopt the FOIA, Nepotism, and Gift Acceptance policies.

## **13.0 BYLAWS REVISIONS (SECOND READING)**

Dr. Knapp reported on the Bylaws Revisions drafted to establish standing committees and expand the size of the Board.

The Board discussed postponing further consideration of the Bylaws Revisions until completing the strategic planning process. Ms. Sinclair and Mr. Childs noted that special committees are preferable to standing committees for school boards and recommended that the Board consider the proposed revisions after the planning process is complete. The Board also discussed establishing a finance and audit committee. Mrs. Mathews pointed out that the Board's fiscal procedures do not require the finance committee to be a board committee.

The Board voted unanimously to postpone consideration of the bylaw revisions until a later date.

## **14.0 OLD BUSINESS**

The Board discussed sharing the task of drafting Board Bytes. Ms. Megan Monts elected to write the Board Bytes; Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Kuo agreed to review them prior to distribution.

## **15.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### Proposed Board Meet and Greet for Staff

Mrs. Richardson proposed that the Board host a "meet and greet" event for board members and school faculty and staff.

The Board discussed the possibility of hosting a breakfast or lunch drop-in and bringing food for staff. Mrs. Mathews stated that EPA staff would appreciate a Board gesture of this nature.

Mrs. Richardson will circulate possible dates and times to the Board.

## **16.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Dr. Davis called for a motion to begin executive session to discuss board matters pertaining to a letter from the public charter district, a personnel update and salary reports, an individual student matter, and changes to the building lease.

The Board voted unanimously to begin executive session at 8:36 PM.

Prior to discussion of changes to the building lease, Dr. Wu recused himself from executive session, citing a conflict of interest stemming from his role as a partner in LWZ, East Point LLC, which has an ownership interest in the elementary building.

Dr. Davis called for a motion to adjourn executive session and return to general session.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn executive session and return to general session.

## **17.0 GENERAL SESSION**

The Board voted unanimously to accept the personnel update including salary reports.

## **18.0 NEXT MEETING**

Our next meeting is scheduled on September 25, 2014 at 6:00 PM at the EPA Elementary School.

## **19.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Davis called for a motion to adjourn at 9:28 PM.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the August 27, 2014 meeting.