

**LIBERTY COMMON SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
BUSINESS MEETING**

October 24, 2019

Liberty Common High School

2745 Minnesota Drive Dr. Fort Collins, CO

**ATTENDANCE**

- BOD:
  - Kelly Notarfrancesco, Chair
  - Tricia Diehl, Vice-Chair
  - Brad Kreikemeier, Treasurer
  - Elizabeth Barber, Secretary
  - Ben Friesen
  - Aislinn Kottwitz
- Administration:
  - Bob Schaffer
  - Sarah Hunt
  - Torgun Lovely
  - Kathleen Kearney
  - Robert Robinson
  - Dan Knab
  - Casey Churchill
  - Sandy Stoltzfus
  - Katrina Brossia
  - Bev Hanawalt
  - Bill Kranz
  - Brett Harkey
- Guests: Student Council representatives from LCS (Ella Notarfrancesco, Matyas Velgersdyk, and Maddy Zielke), Robynn Tello, Tori & Jared Romero, Lisa Willingham, Jim Hinkle, Todd Arndorfer, Charles Grant, Paige Gowing, Elissa Hersh, Cherie Pedersen, Jared Dybzinski, Jeremy Tullius, and Janice Garland

**CALL TO ORDER**

- Meeting called to order by Ms. Notarfrancesco at 6:05 p.m.
- Approve agenda – Moved by Mr. Friesen. Second by Ms. Barber. Passed unanimously.

**STAFF AND COMMUNITY COMMENT**

- Lisa Willingham, a Liberty parent who has volunteered to represent Liberty on PSD's District Advisory Board, shared gratitude to board and administrators for commitment to school. She and her husband compare Liberty's education to California's top-tier private schools.

**STUDENT RECOGNITION**

- LCS Student Council Representatives shared brief speeches about the role of Student Council at LCS. They perform service projects (e.g. recycling, Snack Shack, Penny Wars for Respite Care), practice leadership (e.g. give speeches, emcee Talent Show), and host fun events.
- They appreciate the wonderful opportunities provided by Student Council at Liberty and greatly appreciate their advisor, Mrs. Hersh. BOD offered tokens of gratitude.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Auditor Presentation by Jim Hinkle of Hinkle & Co.
- The auditor's job is to evaluate the school's internal accounting controls primarily looking for segregation of duties, then selecting random samples of disbursements to test 1) significant deficiencies and 2) material weaknesses.
- No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses were found—excellent.
- Audit report/opinion on financial statements is also clean and consistent with GASB.

- Process was smooth overall, all office staff/administration were very cooperative.
- Auditor explained governmental accounting requires three sets of financial statements instead of one, but most people focus on Gov't Funds Balance Sheet.
- State legislature has agreed to fully fund PERA (unfunded liability) over the next 30 years. This complicates accounting and makes financial statements hard to follow.
- Clarification from Mr. Hinkle that his CPA firm works FOR the board and WITH management and BOD is welcome to contact him at any time.

### **ROUTINE BUSINESS**

- Minutes approved from September 26, 2019 with no objections.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- **Headmaster Report – Mr. Schaffer**
  - Many visitors to our school this year which yields positive benefits all around.
  - Question about meeting with Mark Kennedy, CU President, former colleague of Mr. Schaffer, a classicist, interested in visiting Liberty.
  - Ms. Notarfrancesco spoke to Joann Ginal who visited Liberty and had a positive impression of the school. She asked many questions about charters, how they work, how they are different, etc. Possible opportunity to further understanding of charter schools.
  - Mr. Tullius shared about recent trip to NC Classical Symposium. Benefits included increased cohesion with own colleagues after discussing great ideas during shared time together, networking, etc. Expressed gratitude for how well Liberty embodies classical ideas and maintains a consistent vision K-12. Met with Rob Jackson, Great Hearts visionary, and other inspiring speakers. Read *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Tolstoy which has become centerpiece for year. A truly meaningful time.
  - Meeting on calendar to formalize new association of classical schools in CO at Golden View Classical Academy on January 31—details to come, all invited.
  - Mr. Schaffer attended the CLCS Board retreat. The board was self-reflective in the wake of Liberty's communication of concerns that CLCS is not promoting charter schools and charter school autonomy and may not provide much value to a school such as Liberty. It was noted that not all charter schools are equal. Some are very similar in nature to regular public schools. New initiative to promote charter schools that offer something different—true school choice. Liberty is known in CLCS as a school doing things differently.
  - Junior High sports successes were celebrated. Mr. Knab has a motto, “Stay together, play together, win together,” to encourage 8<sup>th</sup>-grade retention.
- **English Department Report**
  - Mr. Dybzinski and Mr. Tullius spoke on behalf of LCHS team that also includes Mary Renstrom, Lander Hultin, Renee Perschau, and Natalie Scarlett (not present). Ms. Hersh and Ms. Pedersen, for LCS.
  - After a full year of 100% reading logs off Great Books list, it has become new norm, part of Liberty culture. Learning curve at first, but all seem to have adjusted. Parents generally seem to be on board with only an occasional complaint. Students are making many connections to prior learning as they read from these lists. This is the development of mature literacy.
  - Mr. Friesen asked for rationale regarding what makes Great Books. Mr. Dybzinski explained that literature is a place that shows what is beautiful and true. Liberty has a partnership with parents to feed our students a steady diet of the true and the beautiful and develop their taste buds for what is great.

- It is an English Department philosophy that literature should evoke a confrontation, not merely develop a skill set. The chosen texts promote a hunger/longing for truth, goodness, and beauty. We do not want our students to be what C.S. Lewis calls “men without chests.” The difference between continence and virtue was noted. We want our students to love, to have affection for, the true, good, and beautiful.
  - Ms. Pedersen and Ms. Hersh switched grades and happily report no gaps in learning grammar from one year to the next.
  - Mr. Hultin has implemented helpful vocabulary (used in Lost Tools of Writing curriculum) to help students evaluate their own writing better than ever before.
  - Many anecdotes about students falling in love with great books.
  - Entire department expressed thanks for genuine and consistent appreciation and support from board and administration. They do not take it for granted.
- **LCS Library Report**
    - Ms. Gowing models excitement for the Great Books lists, makes them easy to access, etc. Her goal is to create a culture of appreciation for great books among parents and students.
    - Students attend library once a week for 30 minutes (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade) or 45 minutes. Fifteen minutes of each library session is spent on Typing Club in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> graders revisit Typing Club once a month.
    - Students are taught to find books via “Location, Dewey Decimal System, & Author.”
    - Ms. Gowing has taken responsibility to read some literature to students from Kindergarten teachers.
    - Ms. Barber expressed appreciation for efforts to build an early affection for great books. This shows continuity with 7-12 English Department.
    - Ms. Notarfrancesco expressed a concern regarding diminished library time due to the addition of Typing Club and cautioned that library time should not become media time. Ms. Stoltzfus offered assurance that the pendulum won’t swing that far.
    - Great Books Symposium next week—would appreciate board presence!

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- Kindergarten Update—Mr. Churchill
  - More details gathered and scenarios offered. Data on other charter schools, preferences among lottery families, financial impacts, etc. Very helpful.
  - Administration recommends Option 2: 2 Full Day classes of 26 students/each and 2 Half Time classes of 18 students/each to maintain a total Kindergarten program of 88. This is consistent with demand (roughly 2/3 of parents prefer Full Day and 1/3 prefer Half Time). Due to scheduling constraints, Full Day students would each have only 1 P.E. class/week with additional recess time instead.
  - Met with Kindergarten Team, all on board. Becky Kleen would move to Full Day and loft in her classroom would be removed to create space for more students. New clerical TA would be needed to be shared by entire Kinder team to balance impact of larger class sizes.
  - Board will vote on issue in November.

### **NEW BUSINESS (continued)**

- Fiscal Year End Audit Approval and Board Vote – Mr. Kreikemeier
  - A Motion to Approve Audited Financial Statements for Year Ending June 30,

2019 was made by Mr. Kreikemeier, Second by Mr. Friesen. Due to clean audit & no findings, no debate. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- The Audited Financial Statements for Year Ending June 30, 2019 were approved.
- Update to Board Policy Section 7.1 – First Reading – Ms. Barber
  - Suggestion by Ms. Barber to include “lifelong pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty” rather than mere college-prep language. Limited discussion. Mr. Lovely proposed a rationale for including such language. College students provide feedback that college preparation at Liberty encompasses more than academic exercises (wisdom and virtue). Ms. Barber and Mr. Lovely will offer alternative language to address this.
  - Board will vote during regular November meeting.
- Update to Board Policy Section 7.6 – First Reading – Ms. Barber
  - Mr. Schaffer confirmed that this policy update was mostly due to ensuring compliance with the law on student publications. No further discussion.
  - Board will vote during regular November meeting.
- Update to Board Policy Section 7.8 – First Reading – Ms. Barber
  - No discussion on the proposed changes to the Elective Courses policy.
  - Board will vote during regular November meeting.
- Board appointment criteria amendment vote – Ms. Notarfrancesco
  - Ms. Notarfrancesco moved “to amend the Board member criteria to be ‘receive a recommendation from the Headmaster’ for the time of the current vacancy appointment.” Mr. Kreikemeier seconded.
  - No discussion, all in favor, motion adopted.
- Board vacancy appointment candidate review– Ms. Notarfrancesco
  - Reminder: appointment, not election.
  - Chuck Grant – meets candidacy requirements per Bylaws, gave short presentation
  - Todd Arndorfer – meets candidacy requirements per Bylaws, gave short presentation
  - Board will appoint a candidate to fill the vacancy in November.

### **SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Academic Advisory Committee – *no meeting, no report*
- Financial Advisory Committee – Mr. Kreikemeier
  - Most recent meeting included extensive discussion of potential to retire Series 2014 B Bond of approx. \$1.6 million with fundraising dollars, Building Corp, and excess in General Fund.
  - Also discussed Kindergarten scenarios
- Development Committee – Ms. Kottwitz
  - First meeting of year, beginning to implement strategy, three recommendations
    1. Continue conversation Re: desired significant capital projects (need a better name for this).
    2. Recognize need to plan years instead of months at a time and consider forthcoming proposal to Governance calendar to support this need.
    3. Promote annual giving campaign!
  - Ms. Notarfrancesco expressed appreciation for development of better process.
- Political Committee – Mr. Friesen
  - Growing relationship with neighboring school, Ridgeview Classical
  - Will attend January 31 meeting to explore possibility of classical league
  - Offered assistance to Latinos for School Choice in Wisconsin, charters offer benefit to low-income students

- Ms. Notarfrancesco added that Liberty parents have been invited to attend District Advisory Board, committed to Nov. & Dec., goal to improve relationship with PSD.
- Student Data Privacy Committee – Ms. Notarfrancesco
  - Developing system for on-demand services is complicated. Progress is happening to develop best practices.
  - Mr. Kranz working faithfully to instill importance of student data privacy to entire staff. Very promising response.
  - Mr. Friesen asked question about use of Google specifically. Competition to Google is slowly emerging, but it is unrealistic to find alternatives this year.
- Parent Education Committee – Ms. Diehl absent, submitted Junta details and committee meeting minutes. All board members should mark calendars for November 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Governance Committee – Ms. Notarfrancesco prepping for January Strategic Planning Meeting and upcoming board training sessions.
- Soccer Committee Update – Mr. Churchill
  - Chris Pletcher recommended plan to repair soccer field via laser grading and new sod to greatly improve field performance and safety. Proposal forthcoming.
  - Per committee, school should budget maintenance to replace field sod regularly and high school should find another field option.
  - Next meeting on October 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - Ms. Diehl and Ms. Notarfrancesco researched City Council process for possible collaboration in the future.
- Building Corporation Liaison – Ms. Diehl absent, no report.

**TOP THREE ITEMS FOR COMMON SENSE NEWSLETTER** –owner: None (next update due December 18<sup>th</sup>)

**Meeting ADJOURNED at 9:04pm.**

**Discussion/Training** – Public School Finance – Ms. Brossia and Mr. Kreikemeier facilitated training for board members on this topic.