

Convened at Muddy Creek Charter School

Inavale Community Partners Board Meeting called to order at 7:05pm

Present: Anita Grunder, Morning McCreary, Christine Horning, Tanya Freeman, and John Knight, Ron VanOrden, Stephen Lancaster, Rob Hinton (9:15pm), Elisa Fairbanks (8:45pm), Carrie Kart (8:45pm), Angela Baker (8:45pm), Kelly Bell (8:45pm), Nikki Lancaster (8:15pm), Melanie Kelley (8:45pm), Terina McLachlain (8:45pm), Payton James-Amberg (8:45pm), Melissa Platt (8:45pm), Lisa Steffey (8:45pm), Kat Lugo (8:45pm), Megan and Kenny Rolfe (8:45pm), and Shayna Huter (9:00pm).

Welcome to our guests.

Meeting Minutes Approval: Motion to approve minutes of 11/5/09 (Morning), second (Tanya); passed fists of 5's.

Consolidated Action: Motion to approve (a) posting of positions by the Executive Director for Administrative Assistant, Janitor, and Bookkeeper at the same rates last advertised; (b) approve John Knight's recommendation of 6 months extended sick leave for Kriste York in keeping with the extended sick leave policy (Anita), second (Tanya); passed fists of 5's & 4.

Introductions & Public Comment (7:20-8:10pm):

- Terina McLachlain: Called for a PTO, which will help rebuild the sense of community that MCCS seems to be losing. She will start a "Yahoo" listserv group available only to parents that will help build common ground by having parents tell their story and why they came to MCCS and get to know each other. Her kids love the campouts and would attend one every week! Concern was expressed for those families that don't receive MCCS news via email, and it was agreed that community access to library computers can be made available.
- Christine Horning:
 - First wanted to say thank you to Anita Grunder and Jenny Swanson for organizing the Giving Thanks Potluck. The pie auction was a particular success!
 - Second wanted to announce that the Benton County Farm Bureau had a resolution on its ballot last evening at the annual meeting to vote whether members supported charter schools. In general the ag community does support them because charter schools are seen to include more rural, vocational, and conservative values than regular public schools. This resolution if passed would inform policy at the state level.
- Stephen Lancaster: Wants to follow up on who dispenses discipline at MCCS. Disagrees with the policy we currently have and asks the Board to separate those duties. Believes that only teachers should have disciplinary responsibility.
- Carrie Kart: Asked the questions, "What does the Executive Director do? What is the structure of the school?" Believes the administrator should not be doing discipline because the teachers are the heart of the school. Feels that skipping the Head Teacher in the disciplinary chain is a concern.

- Morning McCreary: Informed us of a new program called "Safe Schools Program" which has grants available for training parents and teachers. She wonders if Benton County is participating, then could MCCS apply? **AI-1: Elisa Fairbanks** will look into how we can access information about this program (which is offered through the Linn County Mental Health Dept.).
- Megan Rolfe: Asked about playground supervision since such a large percentage of students were involved. Suggested a "peer mediator" program: kids solving problems with other kids would also develop leadership qualities in children. She would be willing to volunteer to help get this going. Expressed that partial knowledge regarding the incident (particularly for kindergarten parents) was confusing. Also suggested having a "drop-in place" for parents to talk afterwards. Can we have more volunteer parents on playground; develop a "yellow-shirt safe" person for children to go to. This would free up staff to supervise while parents play.
- Rob Hinton: Suggests a school meeting where behavior expectations and consequences are clearly explained, which empowers kids to make better choices.
- Kat Lugo: Better communication from the school regarding where volunteers are needed and how do families get involved? Need a better volunteer coordination effort.
- Angela Baker: Asked why did we lose 2 employees in 2 days? Felt this was alarming and that the parent community should have been notified sooner

A general discussion ensued regarding discipline at the school and the recent playground incident of 11/4 that involved many children. The following preferences were expressed by parents: to "err" on the side of notifying parents as soon as possible with as much information as possible, that there needs to be sufficient training of staff interacting with the discipline of children with special needs, and that a Discipline Policy Committee shall be formed to review school discipline policies. **AI-2: Anita** will get the ball rolling. A call for volunteers went out and the following people were identified: Megan Rolfe, Terina McLachlain, Carrie Kart, Stephen Lancaster, Kelly Ball, the Executive Director, and possibly the Head Teacher.

Reports:

- Charter Renewal Workshop: Morning reviewed the timeline for renewing the charter and some of the key features of the renewal process. Her summary presentation is attached to these minutes (Attachment #1). **AI-3: John** to ensure that the Annual Report is posted on the website. **AI-4: John** to conduct the internal financial audit. **AI-5: ?** to review fall testing results for possible remediation. It was decided that we will need to form the Renewal Committee in the Spring to work through the summer since the first deadline is October 2010. Parent input included asking whether this would be the time to add on a middle school as well as raise the enrollment cap to 100.
- MCCS School Report (John):
 - Enrollment: We have 75 students, which includes the addition of a new family with a 1st and 2nd grader. Vacancies remain in 2nd grade (1) and 3rd grade (3); waiting list for K has 3 names.

- Hiring Update: All three positions have been posted; we are receiving applications; Hiring Committees have been formed, and they are close to the interviewing stage for the Custodian position.
- Internal Audit Update: The October internal audit has not yet taken place.
- ADMr & Enrollment Projection Reports: Submitted to district on time.
- TAG Testing: All grades are being tested since MCCS did not do this last year.
- Incident Report: None to report.
- Financial Report: Budget Reports were submitted to CSD on Nov. 16, 2009 (on time). The budget spreadsheet was projected, and the school is both within budget and operating in the black.

**Most parents left after the School Report.

- District Meeting with Kathy Rodeman: Anita reported on the meeting between Kathy Rodeman, herself, and John regarding the retroactive \$3,000 withholding for the audit penalty. CSD will be returning the \$3,000 with the next ADMw payment and would like to revisit the language of the contract to agree what recourse is in order in the event of a late audit. At this meeting, Anita also made the district aware of the \$1600 that MCCS was billed late for ADA facility compliance costs, making us unable to take it out of grant funds as we had budgeted.
- ICP Treasurer's Report (Morning):
 - ICP has a balance of \$769.00. See attached financial report (Attachment #2).
 - Morning is now a check-signer for MCCS and has received her credit card. There are currently two corporate credit cards, held by Morning and Payton. **AI-6: Anita** to remove Payton as an MCCS check-signer. This now means that we will have to plan for check-signing since Morning, Anita, and John are the check-signers, and only John is on-site. **Motion to authorize** Payton to make credit card purchases authorized by John Knight and to remove her credit card when she is no longer serving as interim bookkeeper (Anita), second (Tanya); 5's & 4.
 - Future action: We will need to write a new financial procedure authorizing a single check-signer under \$500.

**Shayna Huter left the meeting.

ICP Business

Leave of Absence: Kathleen Westly requests a leave of absence from the Board until June 2010 due to a family medical problem. **Motion to approve** her request (Anita), second (Morning): passed fists of 5's & 4. We next worked to distribute her Offices and AIs.

Motion to appoint Christine Horning as interim ICP Secretary (Tanya), second (Morning); passed 5's. Anita will take over Kathleen's District Liaison role. We next discussed a solution to the time-consuming task of note-taking and minutes. Christine suggested we have the Admin. Asst. take notes and type up minutes, and then she could review and distribute. Rob Hinton thought that volunteers could be found to handle this task and appointed himself head of a task force to do so. (Thank you, Rob!)

Kathleen's AIs:

- AI-3 from 10/15: John to turn this into an item for the ED Accountability Calendar financial task.
- AI-20 from 10/15: Christine will take over. Will meet with Anita to plow through.
- AI-25 from 10/15: Anita takes over as owner for this policy. We need to get notes Kathleen took at the Board Retreat.
- AI-10 from 11/5: Has been resolved.

Head Teacher Responsibilities: Christine presented a table to allocate Head Teacher tasks and compensation. She had reviewed the chart with Kriste over email, who agreed that she could assume those responsibilities starting in January 2010. The chart was then modified through discussion and presented for a vote. **Motion to adopt** the budget and allocation of Head Teacher duties chart as per discussion (Christine), second (Tanya); passed fists of 5's. Final approved draft is attached to these minutes (Attachment #3).

**Rob Hinton left the meeting.

AAP Sliding Fee Scale: We reviewed the two proposals presented by John for increasing enrollment fees in the Afternoon Adventures Program so that we can continue the program on a sustainable basis. **Motion to adopt** the hybrid AAP proposal with a sliding fee scale and no additional students required (Anita), second (Morning); passed fists of 5 and 4's. See Attachment #4 for chart. We agreed that we will revisit the scale as enrollment fluctuates.

Enrollment Caps Discussion: We reviewed a "propagation chart" prepared by Christine of the long-term effects on enrollment of adding 2 more students to Kindergarten. **Motion to exceed** the Kindergarten cap by 2 as delineated in Enrollment Cap Record #05001e for the remaining 2009-2010 school year (Anita), second (Christine); passed fists of 5 & 4's.

Morning recused herself prior to the discussion and vote stating conflict of interest; she wants to enroll her son as a 1st grader at MCCS next year and fewer slots would be available if the vote passed.

Review of Action Items: Deferred.

Grange Report: Deferred.

Calendar:

The next ICP Board meeting will be **Thursday, December 3** at 7pm; there will also be a one-hour closed session at this meeting to discuss the Staff Survey Report. Please mark your calendars. There are several Board Training Workshops coming up. Tanya will attend the NWCEO Workshop for us on Friday, Dec. 4th. **Motion to spend** \$150 from ICP funds to send Tanya to NWCEO Board Effectiveness Workshop on December 4th (Christine), second (Morning); passed 5's & 4. **AI-7: John** to investigate what membership in the organization involves.

Table of 509J attendance: **Dec 7 Anita** (semi-annual report?), Jan 11 Christine, Feb 8 Tanya, Mar 8 Anita, April 15 Christine, May 3 Morning, June 21 Anita

Persons present at the end of the meeting: Anita Grunder, Tanya Freeman, Morning McCreary, Christine Horning, John Knight, Ron VanOrden, and Stephen Lancaster.

Meeting adjourned at 10:06pm.
Minutes submitted by Christine H. Horning

Future agenda items

Semi-Annual Report?, SDP, Policy for Complaints Against Charter School, RACID update and vote; Exit Interview Policy, ICP Board Accountability Calendar, Board Member Appointment Policy revision, Procedure for Signing Checks under \$500

CARRYOVER OF INCOMPLETE ACTION ITEMS:

Carryover AIs from Minutes of August 20th:

- AI-11:** Anita will research some extended leave policies for possible models.
- AI-20:** Christine to compile a confidential notebook of all interview questions to be archived in locked file cabinet in ED's office.

Carryover AIs from Minutes of September 3rd:

- AI-2:** John to form a subcommittee to create the Staff Handbook.
- AI-10:** John to review the following procedures for suitability since they are considered to be in place but have not yet been implemented at the school: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21.
- AI-14:** John to hire Teacher Mentor Consultant.

Carryover AIs from Minutes of September 17th:

- AI-3:** John will prepare communication to school community about flu outbreak readiness.
- AI-6:** Anita needs to review procedure for orientation of new board members and orient Morning.

Carryover AIs from Minutes of October 1st:

- AI-1:** John to follow up on the rotten siding issue.
- AI-10:** John to present AAP budget proposals for a sliding fee scale and a marketing plan to recruit more children. (Nov. 5th meeting)
- AI-11:** Christine to draft a new Exit Interview Policy and circulate.
- AI-13:** John to provide April with an exit interview on her last day.
- AI-15:** John to update the Policy Log.

Carryover AIs from Minutes of October 15th:

- AI-1:** John to advise Chana to follow up with Kim to schedule meeting to review work order system.
- AI-3:** John to turn this into an ED Accountability Calendar item: follow up to make sure we receive maintenance account report from Vicky Taylor and that Jeanne, Kim and Greg are cc'ed about getting a balance.
- AI-4:** Grange Task Force to pursue with Grange the disposition of the building and make recommendations to ICP.
- AI-7:** Payton will get an ICP locking cash box for non-MCCS money to be kept in the firesafe file cabinet.

- AI-11: Anita** to ask Kathy Brewer to give a report on EAT/Sustainability Coalition for us.
- AI-18: Anita** will follow up on the breach of contract issue to clarify our obligations between the law (ODE & TSPC) vs. our contract regarding compliance issues.
- AI-19: John** to draft an "Offer Letter Procedure." Letter should stipulate the phrase "license in hand" for all applicable positions.
- AI-20: Christine** to match the Start-up Spreadsheet from Charter Starters with our existing Policy Log to see what other policies need to be worked on.
- AI-22: John** will discuss the Head Teacher duties that need filling at the Staff meeting the week of Nov. 5th.
- AI-24: Anita** to draft an Extended Leave Policy for Nov. 5th
- AI-25: Anita** to draft Written Policy for Resolving Complaints Against Charter School for Nov. 5th
- AI-26: Christine** to revise the ICP Board Member Appointment Policy and present Nov. 19th Consider how the "Board Composition" component of this policy may affect the By-laws as well.

New from Minutes of November 1st:

- AI-1: Anita** will follow up on the electrical bills with Grange.
- AI-2: Anita & John** will follow up with the district regarding the retroactive \$3,000 that was deducted for this year's audit.
- AI-3: John** needs to update the MCCS Accountability Calendar to include the bi-annual internal audits and present to the Board for a vote.
- AI-4: John** to follow up with Laurie Corliss and/or Mike Strowbridge at the district regarding MAP testing for last year to 1) get the actual printed reports for parents and 2) make sure last year's results are recorded and available.
- AI-5: Anita** to write a letter to MCCS families regarding breach of contract notices for Board to review and then send to Chana for mailing by noon Monday, Nov. 2nd.
- AI-6: Anita and John** to send a letter on behalf of MCCS to the 509J Board regarding breach of contract notices, copied to Jeanne Holmes and Kathy Rodeman.
- AI-7: Anita** to contact Donna Brandt at ODE to find out any further steps regarding breach of contract notices.

New from Minutes of November 5th:

- AI-1: John** to send a copy of the audit to ODE and the Secretary of State with appropriate fees by November 30th.
- AI-2: John** to send two AAP budget scenarios and corresponding sliding scales (a "flush" vs. a "low margin"), including how many students would be needed to make each work, to Board members by Thurs., Nov. 12th.
- AI-3: John** to follow up on Nov. 4th incident report in keeping with MCCS protocols.
- AI-4: Jenny Swanson** to look into the CEC's Farm to Table program.
- AI-5: Tanya** to send Policy 00027a to Board and John to post.
- AI-6: Anita** to ask Kriste for clarification of the section in her email regarding mentoring of ED and also to work to bring Kriste into compliance with the newly passed "Extended Sick Leave Policy."
- AI-7: John** to ask Michelle if she can continue as 4/5 substitute until the end of the year and find out whether she would be interested in benefits should they become available.

AI-8: John to hold a dedicated teachers' meeting about Head Teacher's duties by Thurs., November 19th.

AI-9: John to schedule an all-day teacher planning in-service day with substitutes and/or an all-school field trip before Winter Break.

AI-10: Kathleen to find a lawyer to tell us how hard we can push to have the \$3000 returned based on contract language.

AI-11: Christine to notify Kathy Brewer to announce the inter-district transfer period in the next MCCS Newsletter.

New from Minutes of November 19th:

AI-1: Elisa Fairbanks will look into how we can access information about the Safe Schools Program (which is offered through the Linn County Mental Health Dept.).

AI-2: Anita will get the ball rolling on convening a Discipline Policy Review Committee.

AI-3: John to ensure that the Annual Report is posted on the website.

AI-4: John to conduct the internal financial audit.

AI-5: ? to review fall testing results for possible remediation.

AI-6: Anita to remove Payton as an MCCS check-signer

AI-7: John to investigate what membership in the NWCEO involves.

Charter Renewal (Attachment #1)

First Renewal – Same term as previous one (in our case 3 years).

Timing/Process

(Both parties can agree to a different timeline but it has to be amended into the charter. The charter agreement overrules the law in this regard.)

- Submit request at least 180 days before expiration (By December 30)

Realistically, the charter school should have a complete packet ready to submit to the district with the initial letter of request for charter renewal. Ideally, negotiation r.e. contents of new charter should be occurring during this entire time line in order to have enough time.

- School District must hold public hearing within 45 days after request. *(Budget 40 days. Does not have to occur at a board meeting as long as it is advertised to the public. Public is not commenting any aspect of the specific charter, solely whether they think there should be a charter school of any kind in the district.)*
- Then has 10 more days to notify charter of *intent* to grant or renew charter (This is intent for willingness to negotiate a charter. It doesn't mean they are agreeing to approve the charter.)
- Ten days later the district/board approves or denies the request for renewal and triggers the contract negotiation process.

If they choose to “**deny**” it means they are not willing to negotiate a new contract and the charter school then has a choice of revising the request letter and re-submitting to the district or appealing to the State Board of Education for an answer to whether or not the district is reviewing the request in good faith. This is only a procedural evaluation. They do not mediate or force. The weight of this has not been tested as no charter renewal in the state has reached this step.

If they say “**yes**,” then district and charter school have 90 days to negotiate a new contract unless both parties agree to an extension. If there is no contract agreement after this 90 day period, then it constitutes denial and then goes to the state level.

Following this time line exactly would put the final ratification date at May 30. Obviously, we are going to want to have a result before that as the district, families and us are making decisions about placement for the coming year.

Basis of Decision

Renewal decision should be based on “Good Faith Evaluation” that examines:

- a. Compliance with laws
- b. Compliance with contract
- c. Meeting or working toward meeting student performance goals
- d. Fiscal stability
- e. Compliance with other specified criteria

A “good faith” evaluation should look objectively at all the information required by state law and the contract with the district. A “good faith evaluator” is someone who is a “reasonable person informed of the law” who evaluates the facts before that person in an objective way and is not influenced by other information.

Materials to be presented

- Letter requesting renewal
- Charter Contract Proposal
- Supporting Documentation
 - Annual performance reports
 - Annual Audits
 - Annual sponsor visit and review evaluations
 - Keep track of visits from district and any documentation
 - Keep track of invitations sent to district and board members
 - Schedule classroom visits by the board
 - Other information that both parties mutually agree should be included
 - “Hit them with paper”
 - Show how we are accomplishing the goal of Educating Children
 - Collection of newspaper articles and supportive letters

Be honest – don’t surprise your district

Lay it out – if you aren’t doing so hot in one area, explain the situation and how you are going to fix the situation

Renewal Realities and Strategies

Relationships – build it, make it better

Record – collect all the info, make it pretty and sensible

Roles – who is doing what? Who do you talk to

Timing – don’t wait until Christmas Break

Rationale – all needs to tie back to your reason for being – for the kids and academic achievement.

Recommended Time Line for Muddy Creek Charter School

Now

- Institute all recommendations of the financial audit
- Conduct internal audit

Review fall testing results to see if remediation is needed for anyone
Meet with district to discuss school improvement plan
Consider signing up with the charter school that has a grant to help schools write their school improvement plans. They are particularly interested in helping us through the process of improving the fourth grade writing scores. This is all good stuff to include in annual report and the next SIP report (and by default the renewal request).

This Spring

Form renewal committee
Conversation with district about the process
 Create a Time Line of Process
 Discuss contents of renewal package
 Introductory talks on the contents of new charter contract
Review testing results
Annual Report?

Summer

Audit
Rewrite charter to reflect reality. Can be more precise and included as part of contract.
Work on rewriting charter contract. (Thinking about what we want)

Fall

Submit Audit by September 30 (shoot for Sept 15)
Submit School Improvement Plan by October 15 (shoot for Oct 1)
Submit request for renewal with supporting materials – October 15 or Nov 1

Note: “When a decent agreement is reached, both parties will feel somewhat dissatisfied.”

ICP Treasurer's Report – November 19, 2009 (Attachment #2)

October 2009 Reconciled Activity – ICP Checking Account

Opening balance: \$480.00

Deposits: none

Withdrawals: \$50 WGCA Corporate Renewal, check #993

Fees: none

Transfers: \$314 from MCCS savings account, building usage fees from last fiscal year.

Current balance: \$744.00

October General Journal Entries: none additional since last report

November 2009 Activity thus far:

Opening Balance: \$744.00

Deposits: \$25 (building use fee)

Withdrawals: none

Fees: none

Transfers: none

Current Balance: \$769.00

November General Journal Entries: none

Annual Taxes/Forms Update

Federal 990 Annual Return: extended until Feb 15, 2010

Oregon CT-12 (Dept. of Justice Charitable Activities Form): extended until Feb 15, 2010

Internal Compliance

ICP Policy dictates an internal audit twice a year. One was supposed to be scheduled in October. This should be completed ASAP.

Credit Card Update

Morning has completed the authorized user form. Payton has signed, relinquishing her as the authorized user. Morning's card is in process; Payton's is still active.

Morning would like to request that the board authorize Payton to use the credit card to make purchases approved by John Knight (according to budget and amounts he is authorized to approve), authorization to end when Payton is no longer serving as interim bookkeeper.

**ALLOCATION OF HEAD TEACHER DUTIES & BUDGET
 (Attachment #3)**

TASK	BUDGETED AMOUNT	WHO
	\$16,025 Total	
Design Curriculum & Train Staff 1. Social Skills 1. Writing (6+1) 2. Math 3. Project & Place-Based	1. \$1500 1. \$1500 2. \$ 500 3. \$ 500	Kriste
Consulting Fees (school systems, procedures, discipline, classroom mediation, academics, teacher evaluation paperwork/collaboration)	Up to \$2000 pd. on an hourly basis	Kriste
Teacher Mentoring (meetings/conversations/observations)	\$2,000 (includes 4 classroom teachers and PE teacher)	Kriste
Field trip Coordinator/ Partnerships/Information Clearinghouse	\$1500	Miss Jenny or Seneca?
Supervision of aides (Angie, Shayna, Seneca in Math)	\$1000	Kriste
Discipline Documentation (when Director is absent)	\$500	Michelle
Testing Requirements met	\$750	John—oversight, reports Kriste—standards alignment
Remediation & Interventions: 1. ensures implementation of IEP objectives for indiv. Students 2. develops a system for handling remediations. + interventions	\$1250	1. classroom teachers / John 2. Kriste or hired Spec. Ed. consultant?
4/5 Classroom Planning	\$1000	4/5 long-term substitute teacher
	= \$14,000 +	
Head Teacher Sub Days	\$2025 available (13.5 days x \$150/day)	
4 Literacy Days (grades 1-5)	\$1800 (3 subs x 4 days @ \$450/day)	
3.75 visits for Tcher Eval. Consultant	\$225.00 (\$15.00 x 4 hrs. per visit)	

Attachment #4

Afternoon Adventures Program Rates

		Current	New
Lunch Status	Attendance	Current Rate	Rate, beginning 1 Dec., '9
Full	M-F	\$ 245.00	\$ 300.00
Reduced/Tier 1	M-F	\$ 25.00	\$ 75.00
Reduced/Tier 2	M-F	\$ 25.00	\$ 50.00
Free	M-F	\$ -	\$ 25.00
	T-F	\$ 197.16	\$ 241.42
	Daily	\$ 15.00	\$ 18.00
	Hourly	\$ 4.50	\$ 5.50
	Staff/Vol. Hourly	\$ 2.50	\$ 2.50

For those with reduced lunch status, the range from free to full paid lunch has been divided into two tiers to account for higher or lower levels of income.