

# PATHWAYS CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

September 4, 2008 – Call to Order: 6:32 PM

Coffee Learning Center  
620 Hoen Ave.  
Santa Rosa Ca. 95405

**Pathways Charter School Board of Directors' meetings are open to the public, except for certain subjects that are addressed in closed executive session in accordance with the Brown Act. If any member of the public wishes to attend and requires special accommodations due to conditions outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the School Director at least 2 working days prior to the meeting.**

## **1.0 Call to Order: 6:32**

## **2.0 Roll Call: All present**

## **3.0 Approval of the Agenda**

## **4.0 Comments from the Audience**

Visitors are allowed to address the Board for up to three (3) minutes on items not on the agenda for a total of 20 minutes per topic. With Board consent, the President may increase or decrease the time allowed for public comment. The Board does not respond or take action on these comments.

## **5.0 Interviews and Appointments of Interim Board Members- (Action)**

The Board will interview prospective interim Board members and consider appointments to fill current Board vacancies

**Eva Pintor and Mike Panas were elected to the board as interim board members with a majority vote.**

## **6.0 Closed Executive Session 6:50**

6.1 Special Education due process complaint- Name withheld because exposure would jeopardize student confidentiality - Due process complaint was discussed

6.2 Pending Litigation: **Confidential reports on the Audit Exception were discussed**

## **7.0. Reconvene Open Session :7:25**

Report from Closed Session

## **8.0 Comments from the Audience**

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## **9.0 Reports and Correspondence**

9.1 Director's Report: See attached report. **Enrollment is down lower than expected but still hoping to increase it.**

9.2 Administrative Team Reports. **See attached. College Prep is still being tweaked slowly and gently to maintain its quality and make it workable for the ISTs.**

9.3 Board Member Reports. **See attached recommendations.**

## **10.0 Discussion/Action items**

*Some items may require Action from the Board and are noted as such.*

10.1 Approval of minutes from August 7, 2008 (Action) (need to review the school-wide action plan in the next board meeting. M/JL, S/AG, 4 ayes, 1 abstention

10.2 Filling fall-term Board member positions (Discussion)

**Advertised via ebulletins and fliers distributed. May need to send another**

10.3 Approval of Unaudited Actuals for 2007-08 (Action): **M/AG, S/EP, unanimously approved.**

10.4 STAR data report for 2007-08 school year (Discussion)

**The director presented a report of the results the Star data. We met our API goal. We did not meet AYP. We need to address the math results in our school-wide plan.**

10.5 Learning Centers Update (Discussion)

**Working to increase Sonoma' enrollment through advertising**

**Working on getting a declarative judgment (see director's report)**

**Continuing to explore alternative sponsors for the Solano group**

10.6 Audit Exception Update (Discussion)

**We are awaiting the Judge's recommendation for the EAAP panel. The director feels that the meeting went well and that we made a good case at the hearing.**

10.7 Upcoming CSDC training (Discussion)

**The director will email Eva about the workshop in Rohnert Park**

## **11.0 Consent items**

*Consent items are routine, non-controversial agenda items that will be approved or rejected as whole, without extensive discussion or debate.*

11.1 Budget transfers

11.2 New vendor course instructors (VCIs)

**Liz Anderson, Jennie Rose, Katy McAllaster Weaver, Michael and Kelley Schwagerus of Kid's Can Music, Rose Laugtag, Jennifer Deutsch,**

11.3 Modifications of employee contracts for 2008-09.

11.4 Approve Admin Asst. 80%

## **12.0 Adjournment 9:02pm**

**Lake/Upper Napa Report to the Board**  
**Sept 4th, 2008**

- **Enrollment:** We currently have 124 students, 50 are high school and 74 are elementary. Our target is 125. We had at least 5 last minute withdrawals. There are 3 interviews pending and that will exhaust our current request to enroll list. In years past, we have had more waiting at this time of year.
- **Staff:** Our enrollment allowed the change in FTE of one IST from 50% to 80%. Also, Linda Lutes is taking Allison Greene's place as our class coordinator for Upper Napa.
- **Center:** Everyone is so thankful that we still have our learning centers. Our class list includes a biology lab and a conceptual physics lab. We are also targeting our students who will be taking the STAR writing test by offering an elementary and a middle school writing class. We have a need for a part-time site secretary, should the budget allow.
- **Special Events:** Our back to School Blast/Parent Orientation will be Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> at the Lake site. We will have a book display, parent training on critical thinking skills, and an elementary and a high school breakout with refreshments and door prizes.

1. Start of School

On Wednesday August 27, there was an all-school in-service for Pathways Staff. The school refined its Mission Statement; reviewed STAR data; reviewed WASC, College Prep, Clear Writing, and Response to Intervention; and took training on using higher order thinking skills in the classroom. Also, the staff and student handbooks were updated and distributed. There was another regional in-service on Thursday August 28 at local sites. School began on Tuesday September 2. It was a very smooth start.

2. Learning Centers

All learning centers are open and operating. Lake and Sonoma learning centers do not seem to have been adversely affected by the on-going turmoil; however, the Solano center has had a larger than expected decline in student withdrawals. I have been working with our attorney to file a Declarative Judgment on the meaning of "majority." I am also working with APLUS+ and private contributors to help finance the potential legal judgment, as it affects other non classroom-based charter schools operating in California. Also, in an effort to increase attendance in Sonoma County, we will begin advertising our program in the Sonoma County Homeschooler's Association Newsletter.

3. Audit Exception Appeal

Pathways had its audit exception appeal on Friday August 29. The hearing went as well as could be expected. I was satisfied with the testimony, the manner of the judge, and the expertise of our attorney. I think we presented a strong case for substantial compliance. The Administrative Law Judge will render a recommendation within 30 days and forward it to the Education Audit Appeals Panel. They will have 60 days to schedule a hearing to make a determination on the appeal. We should get a copy of the recommendation when he makes it. Let's hope it is favorable.

4. Staffing

Jesse Flaherty, the science librarian and science teacher at the Solano Center, has resigned her position to take a new job as an Engineer at an oil and gas company. We will miss her. We hope to fill her vacancy with existing staff. Due to increased enrollment in Marin and Lake County, we have increased a part-time teacher in each area to 80%.

5. HUSD Relations.

Due to a scheduling conflict, I was unable to attend the August Board Meeting at Harmony. I will attend the September meeting.

5. Budget

Sharon and I spent a week at a finance retreat sponsored by the Charter School Development Center. It was very informative and we learned several ways to improve attendance ADA and seek out additional funding sources. We are closing out the books for the 2007-08 school year. You will receive a report by separate cover.

**Sonoma/Marin County Board Report**  
**September Meeting 2008**

**Student Services Dept.**

**Staffing**

We currently have 41 students with active IEPs and 6 new students being interviewed. Sonoma County is being served by both Davida Elsbree and Dianne Pickford. Davida is working 60% time which allows her to have 15 students on her caseload. She presently has 9 students. I will be moving around some students to even out the caseload distribution.

Dianne Pickford serves the following counties: Sonoma, Lake, Upper Napa and Marin. Dianne is at 80% which allows her to have 24 students as a full caseload. She presently has 21 students.

Melissa is serving lower Napa and Solano County. She is working full time and has 19 students with IEPs and is also working with three students as an IST. 28 are considered a full caseload. If her caseload continues to grow we may assign her regular ed. students to another IST.

**Population Trend**

See attached page

**Other updates:**

I have spent the past month familiarizing myself with Pathways and getting to know some of the staff. We had our first regional staff meeting on August 28<sup>th</sup> in Santa Rosa. Our focus as a department thus far is to create a master calendar for scheduling IEP meetings, getting clarity on the process of admitting new students with IEPs, ensuring that DIS providers meet our timeline requests with regard to providing us with reports prior to meetings and making themselves available for meetings. My on-going annual goal is to continue to work with RtI implementation at Pathways Charter School.

I have also been attending the SCOE Steering Committee Meetings and attended the SCOE/SELPA retreat with Robert in August. It was a great opportunity to meet the other Coordinators and Directors in Sonoma. I joined the Interagency Consultation Committee and I also joined the Spirit of Education Awards Committee which meets 1-2 times a year. It provides the opportunity for me to visit other schools in the county. I will also be attending the CSDC conference at the end of the month.

I am very happy to have this opportunity to work at Pathways Charter School.

Elizabeth Sanchez Edson

## **Special Services Dept September 4, 2008 – Board Report**

### Population trend:

- Enrollment of Special Ed Students is down by 30 from last year (07-08).
- We had 71 Special Ed students enrolled over the course of the 07-08 school year.
- As of 9/2/08 we have 41 Students enrolled in the 08-09 school year.
- We have 4 NEW students enrolled this year.
- And we have potentially 6 more NEW students enrolling, who are on the Pre-Enrollment List and who have been interviewed or are waiting for an interview.

<b>08-09 Enrollment Data</b>
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- 41 Total Students enrolled as of 9/2/08
- 4 of which are newly enrolling in the 08-09 year
- 2 of which are Seniors

### Breakdown by County:

- Lake = 3
- Marin = 2
- Napa = 4
- Solano = 15
- Sonoma = 17

### Breakdown by Disability:

- Autistic = 1
- Emotional Disturbance = 3
- Other Health Impaired = 5
- Specific Learning Disability = 21
- Speech and Language Impaired = 10
- Traumatic Brain Injury = 1

<b>07-08 Enrollment Data</b>
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- 71 Total Students enrolled
- 6 of which Graduated in 07-08

Breakdown by County:

- Lake = 4
- Marin = 3
- Napa = 8
- Solano = 24
- Sonoma = 32

## **Lower Napa/Solano County Board Report** **September Meeting 2008**

### **Enrollment**

We have had daily changes to enrollment in Solano. There have been constant changes with incoming students and withdrawing students. We currently we have **164** students enrolled from the Solano and Lower Napa County areas, **25** students from Lower Napa County and **139** students from Solano County. This is a decrease from the approximately 207 students enrolled at the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Most of the students that withdrew went to Visions or back to Benicia schools. I interviewed 4 students this week and have interviews scheduled in the coming weeks.

### **Staffing**

The only change in the level of staffing reported to the Board in June, is the loss of our Science Librarian (Jesseca Flaherty), who chose not to return to Pathways this school year. We will not increase FTE until all current teacher contracts are full. We have one 80% teacher that wants to increase to 100% if possible.

### **Center**

We are offering a variety of grade-level and subject-area courses this semester and currently have 94 students registered for at least one class at the Learning Center. We have acquired a very experienced VCI instructor to teach our high school chemistry class and are utilizing our current science VCI to teach the middle school science class, classes Jesseca was going to offer. The multi-media class has been cancelled but we are discussing another technology class that might be added to the class offerings at a later date.

We have not worked out the details of who will oversee the Science Library, due to the departure of Jesseca, however, our new Administrative Assistant (Eleanor Meadows) and our Curriculum Librarian (Alyssa Payne) spent time with Jesseca last week and have become familiar with the Science Library and its contents as well as the routine for checking science material in/out, therefore, there should be no disruption in that process. We may consider offering Science Library hours which will coincide with the Curriculum Library hours to make it convenient for parents and teachers to visit both libraries on the same day.

### **Other Updates**

We had our Parent Orientation at the Learning Center on August 28th and had a great turnout with more than 70 parents, students (new and returning families) and staff personnel attending. All of our Solano IST's were in attendance, along with several center teachers and local VCI's, who presented information about their classes or services they were offering this semester. We had an ice cream social with a general session where Center rules were reviewed, and upcoming social

events were presented. Everyone appreciated the opportunity to socialize, gather information, and speak with their classroom teachers, IST's and VCI's. It was a wonderful networking experience.

I am pleased to see the support of our parents, students and staff, and their enthusiasm for the new school year.

TO: PCS Board of Directors  
FROM: Michele Blaisdell  
DATE: 2 September 2008  
RE: Curriculum Coordinator Report

As part of my transition into the Curriculum Coordinator position, I accompanied Karen to the June 08 Department Chair and Admin Team meetings, and I expect that I will turn to her from time-to-time for support and collaboration, especially re high school matters.

Below please find a brief recap of activities and projects – both ongoing and planned – in each of the general areas w/in my purview. Also, as a member of the WASC committee, I will be addressing many of these topics as they relate to our progress report and noting areas where we need to improve and/or make changes.

College Prep: The Department Chairs met on August 28, and will continue to meet on a monthly basis, w/additional meetings as needed.

- Essential elements are the same as last year (i.e., approved texts, course outlines, portfolio requirements, review by Department Chairs), w/a few additional course outlines available
- Earlier mid-semester progress assessment (mid-October) to access support from Chairs earlier in the year
- Emphasis on Chair support and peer collaboration vs. top-down supervision, no Chair grade approval, Chairs to attend September staff meetings, all forms and supporting documentation to be available on the website (w/o login, so teachers, students, and parents can access)
- Working w/Chairs to develop suggested assignments/projects to prepare grade 8 students for the transition to high school work
- Working w/Chairs, others to update high school objectives (especially re core and/or college prep courses)
- For the future: investigate online course options, virtual environments for synchronous access to Chairs, confirmation of current IS and charter requirements

Clear Writing:

- Essential elements are the same as the previous two years (i.e., persuasive essay w/research and documentation of writing process, teams of readers score and provide feedback, fall and spring participation for all high school students [unless scored out or excepted])
- Readers from all counties except Napa: Aileen (Lake), Michele (Marin), Pat and Sue (Solano), Karen, Lisa, and Tammy (Sonoma)
- Earlier due-date (same as CP mid-semester check in October) to access support from CW readers, English Chair, others earlier in the year

Assessment:

- Reviewing STAR scores w/Robert to determine areas of needed support (e.g., math)
- Continuing w/AimsWeb this year, but looking at ways to make it more meaningful, use w/RTI (Response to Intervention) process
- For the future: investigate new and/or additional assessment tools that would provide useful feedback for students and teachers in our program

Curriculum: Working w/Paige, others to create a list of recommended resources, including information re materials that engage higher order thinking skills and/or different learning styles

WASC:

- Investigating ways to modify our monthly assignment sheets to include explicit attention to standards, higher order thinking skills, ESLRs

## Teacher Rep. Board Report September Meeting 2008

### Staff concerns

Through the several phone calls I've received throughout the past month, it has come to my attention that our HR policies and procedures need to be reviewed pertaining to the diminishing and increasing of staff hours and/or teacher rosters.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is my recommendation, as the Staff Representative, that our Human Resource Policies and Procedures be reviewed and placed on the Agenda for the October Board Meeting.

### Acknowledgments:

- Teachers:
- Paige Lieberman for her hard work on matching curriculum to each Learning Style across the curriculum.
- Tammy Dier for her wonderful website for the CP and non CP English support schoolwide.
- These teachers continue to add quality resources for our Individualized Education while meeting the high standards Pathways' provides.

- **RECOMMENDATION:** Letters to be sent to each of these teachers thanking them for their extra efforts in providing these quality services to students and teachers.

### **Office Staff – Ellen Conrad, Sharon Beretta, Jenny Feige, Di Makin and Rina Fabros**

- To our office staff for working so hard at this time of year pulling everything together on limited schedules for enrollment, budget, ordering and overall Student Services.

- **RECOMMENDATION:** To increase hours in our Human Resources Department and in the front office positions as CBEDS are in the near future.

### Regional Staff Meetings:

In order to better serve our staff, I would like to hear from each of them pertaining their job satisfaction and work environments.

**RECOMMENDATION:** A questionnaire to be given to staff members and collected by the next Regional staff meeting. Results will be compiled and reviewed for the Board Report in November.

