

The Children's Guild DC Charter School
Board of Directors Meeting
April 13, 2015
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
WMATA Headquarters

Attendees

Dana Baughns (phone)
Kat Calvin
Meghan Cosier (phone)
Ragini Dalal
John Ferguson
Jawauna Greene
Chris Zimmerman
Michelle Musgrove
Lesley Nesmith

Not in Attendance

Ross Litkenhous

Children's Guild

Dr. Andrew Ross
Dr. Duane Arbogast
Sarah Davis

School

Hillary Garner, Principal

Other Attendees

Sian Jones
Nathan Uldricks

Call to Order

Ms. Greene called the meeting of the Children's Guild DC Charter School (CGDCPCS) Board of Directors (BOD) to order at approximately 6:10 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Cosier moved to approve the minutes for the regular Board meeting held March 9, 2015;
Ms. Calvin seconded. Motion passed without objection.

The Culture Card

Dr. Ross explained what the Culture Card is and how other Children's Guild schools use it. The Culture Card (attached as Appendix) has four main panels. One contains the Children's Guild's Purpose, Mission, and Vision. Another contains "The Nine Wisdom Principles". Another contains a statement regarding Transformation Education and its Foundational Beliefs. The final panel contains sixteen "Workplace Expectations".

At school staff meetings and Board meetings, a Principle, Foundational Belief, or Workplace Expectation is highlighted. The speaker tells a story from his or her work with the Children's

Guild that illustrates the component being highlighted. When the speaker is done, the floor is opened for discussion about the component and its role in the operation of the school, the Board's work, etc. Dr. Ross suggested that the DC board adopt this practice at board meetings.

Board Member Update

Lesley Nesmith, the newest board member introduced herself. Ms. Nesmith is an occupational therapist who lives in Ward 5.

Dr. Linkous has resigned from the Board for the time being because her teaching schedule will not allow her to participate in meetings at the chosen time for the rest of the year. She tendered a letter of resignation on March 16, 2015. She will consider rejoining the Board in the event that the meeting date changes.

Student Recruitment Strategy

Sarah Davis of the Guild is helping with recruiting. Dr. Arbogast gave an overview of DC's charter school lottery and the Guild's participation thus far. The first round included approximately 17,000 students. The second round involved approximately 7,000 students. The Guild cannot attempt to recruit students who were not matched with the school until after May 8. Because students can do late switches to schools with availability, we won't know final enrolment until the end of September. A description of the lottery system can be found at <http://www.myschooldc.org/faq/faqs/>.

In round 1, 240 students selected the Children's Guild as a preference, but only 130 were "matches". Matches are when the highest preference matches an open seat. Students who were not "matches" can reject their match and enroll with the Children's Guild. We have reached out to all Round 1 families.

Round 2 is made up of students who did not participate in round two. As of 4/27/15, there are 121 students who have selected The Children's Guild. Round 2 closes on May 8. Then begins Round 3, which is open enrollment for all students.

Radio spots have been a good recruiting tool. We are seeing about 7-10 registrations a day and there are usually bumps in applications after radio spots air.

Ms. Garner has been getting calls regarding the school from the general public. She senses that there is general malaise regarding DCPS (particularly its discipline policies) and that parents are interested in alternatives such as the Guild's school. Parents also seem interested in the fact that the Guild school plans to have an extended schedule (open until 5 PM). They also like the fact that the Guild would offer one free uniform shirt to students.

There was also discussion of partnering with the YMCA to do programs (e.g. free summer program). The school would have to pay for the programming but the Y has staff and programming experience. There could also be recruiting benefits because the Y is a known brand in the community. If kids come to a summer program and like it, they might be inclined to apply for enrollment in the school.

There was also discussion of connecting with a business that employs a large number of parents with school-aged children for transportation. The idea would be that the Guild would arrange bussing from the business so that the parents could take their kids to work and the busses would pick up and drop off there. One possible target for this strategy is a company called Union Kitchen that is opening a location in DC. The company has a representative named Jonas Singer.

A suggestion was made to do recruitment handouts and have tables at local libraries, public pools, and other events. There was also discussion of doing something like a block party with a bouncy castle in the parking lot outside the school when it gets warm for recruitment. Another suggestion was made to do recruitment at DC General (homeless shelter).

Ms. Nesmith asked if there was any discussion of a Pre-K. Dr. Arbogast responded that it is not currently in the Guild's charter but that there is provision for expansion in the future.

In terms of numbers, in order to get the per pupil funds necessary to provide quality services, we need to have 450 students by the cut-off date in September. Mr. Zimmerman asked if the money currently being spent to get the school started would have to be recouped from the funds the school will get from DC after enrollment is complete. Dr. Arbogast responded that the Guild has a grant that is covering some costs such as Ms. Garner's salary but the balance will have to be repaid.

DC Public Charter School Board Chair Scott Pearson was on the Kojo Nnamdi Show and mentioned both the Children's Guild school and the fact that lottery numbers were higher than they have been.

Other Updates

Construction

Construction is a week ahead of schedule. The schedule is on Dropbox. Ms. Greene asked if the Guild could bring a blueprint/schematic to a future board meeting to show everyone the plans.

Publicity

School representatives have spoken with *Washington Business Journal* about doing a feature. No details on when that will occur, however.

Financial Update

The Board would like to start having financial updates. A finance committee will be formed at the Retreat and will be giving updates at future meetings.

Retreat

The best date for the most people is May 3. Please send Ms. Greene topics for discussion.

Faculty Recruitment

Ms. Garner reported that there were 48 people who had made it through the last round of interviews who were "waiting in the wings" for when the school finds out how many teachers it can hire. Ms. Garner is still recruiting potential staff/faculty though. The "fully-staffed" school will be 40 teachers/staff. The school will be paying "DC scale" – which is high and has been a good recruiting tool. Ms. Garner is seeing diversity of race, age, and ethnicity in staff recruitment. Offers will be made in the summer.

Legislative Update

Developments in Maryland are not good for the Guild's Maryland schools. In the District, the Catania bill will go into effect at the beginning of June and this will be good for recruitment next year because special education students will have a different enrollment process.

The DC Public Charter School Board approved the school's Charter Agreement.

Adjourn

Ms. Greene adjourned the school board meeting at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by:

Sian Jones
Charter Board Partners Fellow