



## The Children's Guild DC Charter School Board

Date: Monday, April 11, 2016  
Time: 6 to 8 p.m.  
Place: 2146 24<sup>th</sup> Place, Washington, DC

### Minutes

#### Attendees

Ragini Dalal  
John Ferguson  
Michelle Musgrove  
Lesley Nesmith  
Chris Zimmerman

#### Not in Attendance

Dana Baughns  
Ebony Broadwater  
Terry Carnes  
Jawauna Greene  
Ross Litkenhous

#### The Children's Guild

Dr. Duane Arbogast  
Susan McFaul  
Dr. Andrew Ross

#### School

Nakia Nicholson

#### Call to Order

Mr. Zimmerman called the meeting of The Children's Guild DC Charter School (CGDCPCS) Board of Directors (BOD) to order at 6:05 p.m.

#### Minutes

There was no quorum so the minutes were not approved.

#### Public Comments

There were no public comments.

#### Marketing Plan Update

The current enrollment is 248 students, however, those students must reenroll for next school year. This process has just begun and approximately 45 students have committed. Events are planned to spread the word regarding the school. There are 55 students on the wait list which are those who signed up after the designated application period.

Potomac Preparatory School is closing and a relationship has been created to help give their students and teachers a home for next school year.

Ms. Nicholson reported that on April 23<sup>rd</sup> a spring extravaganza will be held for families. There will be a job fair early in the morning from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. and the spring event will be from 1 – 3 p.m. The board is invited to attend.

On April 29<sup>th</sup> there will be a second community event for the school. The girls will be dressed up and will attend a tea, have an etiquette class and create vision boards. The boys will go on a field trip to do sports and brotherhood coming together. In May the roles will be reversed.

Today was a kick off for PARCC testing and students were able to run through a human bridge of staff to start the day. Career day presentations will be coming up and the board is invited to participate.

Dr. Ross referred the board to the marketing handout which was distributed. Recruitment includes attending various events and having boots on the ground. Given the special education population focus at DC Charter School, staff have been trying to make contact with organizations to create awareness. There is a parent engagement committee that is in need of a parent to act as chair. A neighborhood promotion committee is in place to make contact with the ANC in Ward 5, 7 and 8 to create awareness and participate in events that they are sponsoring. Staff are attempting to contact city council representatives to invite them to the school to help them understand what we have to offer. In addition, direct mail and radio advertisements are occurring.

Ms. Musgrove recommended putting goals on the plan to determine the level of success. This will be discussed at the weekly meeting on Wednesday. Metrics would be helpful to better understand what is working.

Dr. Arbogast asked the best way to track the success of each of the marketing efforts. Ms. Musgrove stated it is difficult to do on the back end but it is possible to use slightly different website addresses/vanity URL for each of the pieces and track the clicks. In addition, NL Tech might be able to track where the clicks are coming from. Dr. Arbogast stated that having strong data would be beneficial to better understand what is successful.

### **Building Expansion**

The architect has designed ideas for creating classroom space to house the anticipated 550 students. Classroom space should work with what we have and 6 additional rooms.

### **Environmental Designs**

Dr. Ross stated that the environment began in the front lobby with Voices. This was designed to help students better understand their own voice and also has a DVD playing to portray what having a voice means. This message is being carried out throughout the building. The center of the media center will be set up like spokes with highways to lead you to different areas of the media center such as books on tape, music, books, drawing, etc. The Design Team is trying to create a reading nook with comfortable furniture to encourage reading. The concept is to create 3D pop up books/portals to be engaging to the student. The portals are created with different themes and can be moved around and have books on that theme displayed within the portal. The team is currently researching the furniture for the room and will begin creating the environment this school year.

### **Resetting Goals**

Dr. Arbogast distributed and reviewed the current goals (see attached). He reported that the DC Charter Board is committed to delivering an excellent school. The conversation has been broached that our population is different so should be able to work from different standards. One conversation that is occurring is the definition of what qualifies for at risk flags. Currently it is limited. There are factors such as parents in jail or mental health issues that should qualify as at risk but currently do not. Homeless qualifies but transient does not and many of our families are constantly moving. In regard to the assessments one recommendation was to keep the goal but disaggregate it so that special education is compared fairly.

### **Monthly Metrics**

Dr. Arbogast reviewed the metrics and pointed out items that changed.

*Suspensions* – Suspensions have hit a plateau but are still at 13 (13 different kids). Ms. Nicholson pointed out there are issues when returning from breaks when students are off their medications and just anxious and more likely to fight. This seems to be a core group from month to month.

*Attendance* – The students that withdrew were the chronic absent students so some of the issues have decreased. The staff are working to identify some of the issues with the current student body. The attendance rate is currently 85% but we would like it to be in low 90s.

*Complaints* – This was a new area added this to the metrics. There are three families which seem to make up most of the complaints. Sometimes it comes down to an interpretation of the situation which is not usually as presented. Many parents have never had a voice so unfortunately they reach out with anger and immediately make a complaint directly to the charter board. Ms. Nicholson stated there is a need to learn the dynamics of the parents and to better understand them.

*Communication* – Staff are evaluating the best way to communicate with parents. Living Tree is great for the majority but need to gain a better understanding of what is best for all. There are lots of negative issues on social media which do impact the school.

*Enrollment* - The enrollment has dropped but the special education population has increased with 90 students.

*Staff Resignations* – There were two staff resignations in March. During the exit interviews the work load and stability for future were discussed. These departures will have a minimal impact on the students. There were some attendance issues with the one so a plan was in the works prior to the teacher's departure. The Board stated it is important to make sure that potential candidates have a clear understanding of exactly what it is like to work for our school. While it requires working with extremely challenging students the work is good and staff can be part of something great but need grit.

Dr. Arbogast stated we use DC's salary scale and there are no changes planned for the salary structure.

*iReady data* – Dr. Arbogast presented the current iReady data (see attached).

The DC Charter School has made progress and it is felt the reason for the gains, even with the loss of teachers, are accountability among leadership, proficiency with using technology, and a sense of belongingness that is here that the students aren't use to.

### **Principal's Report**

Ms. Nicholson reported there are lots of celebratory events for staff to give a sense of belonging and a year end celebration is planned. She described the morning Culture card meeting as almost spiritual with employees genuinely glad to see each other. A brain teaching study/training is underway which teachers will implement this school year and next. The date for career day is to be determined.

The school will conduct an ESY (extended school year) program over the summer. Students will meet every day in the month of July from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. To date, 50 potential students have been identified who can participate and most would receive transportation from OSSE. It is estimated that approximately six staff will be needed to conduct the program which OSSE would reimburse for.

### **Grievance Policies**

Mr. Ferguson will send out his recommended changes and the policies will be voted on at the next meeting. His recommendations included deleting the referral to the Planning & Assessment Committee and going directly to board and to include more detailed contact information to make the process easier to follow.

### **Book Drive**

Thanks to board members participating in the book drive and who are continuing to work to obtain more.

### **Adjourn**

Mr. Zimmerman adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m. The next meeting of The Children's Guild DC Charter School (CGDCPCS) Board of Directors (BOD) is scheduled for May 9, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Susan McFaul, Recording Secretary