

Larchmont Charter Schools
MINUTES
Regularly Scheduled Board of Directors Meeting
1265 N. Fairfax Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90046
February 1, 2011

OPEN SESSION

- The meeting was called to order at 6:17 P.M. by Danny Corwin, Chair.
- Names with “X” indicates present:

Board of Directors:			
Dragon, Kriste	X	Francis, Marya (Sec)	X
Straub, Gene	X	Loeb, Gabi (Treas)	X
Boylston, Heather	X	Wright, Richard	X
Cade, Carl	X	Young, Amber	
Corwin, Danny (Chair)	X	Lara, Alicia	X

Larchmont Schools & ExED Staff:			
Brian C. Johnson (Executive Director)	X	Kristin Droege (LCW Principal)	X
Dolores Patton (LCS – Head of Elementary School)	X	Rick Esquivel (LCS – Head of Middle School)	X
Joe Meza (ExED)	X	Rebecca Bailey (Deve. Associate)	X
Myra Salinas (Assist Principal)	X		

- **Quorum:** Yes

1. Approval of the January 11, 2011 Minutes

- A. Gene motioned to approve the minutes contingent that the footer is revised to reflect the 1.11.11 meeting date; Gabi seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously, contingent upon the footer change.

2. Governance-

- A. Danny stated that he is extremely excited to have a potential Board member of Nicole Jaeger’s caliber.
- B. Marya Francis shared Nicole’s background as a Founding Parent (FP) of LCW who remains passionate and dedicated about the school.
- C. Carl Cade motioned to approve the following to the Board of Directors for a one year term: Danny Corwin as Board Chair, Marya Francis as Board Secretary, Gabi as Board Treasurer and the following as Board members: Nicole Jaeger, Kriste Dragon, Amber Young, Carl Cade, Gene Straub and Richard Wright; Gene seconded. The nominees were approved for review at the March 1, 2011 Board of Directors meeting.

3. Finance

- A. Approve January 2011 Financials
 - A. Brian presented the Development Update, noting that the Pledge Drives at both schools are exceeding expectations and have surpassed benchmarks as of the beginning of January.
 - B. Joe Meza presented the January 2011 Financials to the Board.

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- C. Joe stated that LCS is projected to have \$300,000 less cash at the beginning of the new fiscal year than originally projected at the beginning of the fiscal year. Brian reminded the board that this was due solely to the state deferrals. The schools were operating a healthy budget with more projected net income than budgeted..
 - D. Joe noted that a 6% increase in state provided funding was not included in the budget and that because there will most likely not be mid-year state budget cuts.
 - E. Gabi motioned to approve the January 2011 financials; Gene seconded. The financials were approved unanimously.
- B. Approve 990
- Joe noted that there are 7 donor addresses missing from the 990 and that they will be included as soon as possible.
 - Gabi motioned to approve the 990; Gene seconded. The financials were approved unanimously.
- C. Authorize the Executive Director to secure a line of credit from Pacific Western Bank with the following terms: 5.5%, \$500 fee, deposits up to \$250,000 required [recommended for approval by the Finance Committee] (Action Item)
- Gabi noted that the line of credit has a fair annual fee of \$500 and 5.5% interest.
 - Carl motioned to approve; Richard seconded. The line of credit at Pacific Western Bank was unanimously approved.
- D. Appoint Kara Nortman to the Finance Committee
- Gabi stated that the Finance Committee recommends Kara Nortman for approval, citing her strong background in finance as Senior Vice President of Publishing for City Grid Media and past experience as President of Mergers and Acquisitions for IAC.
 - Gabi motioned to approve Kara Nortman to the Finance Committee; Gene seconded. Kara was unanimously approved to the Finance Committee.
- 4. Review and approve the submission of the material revision to the LCS Charter to extend the grades served from K-8 to K-12 (Action Item)**
- A. Kriste noted that the diagram and wording about the LCS council should be reflective of the participation of teacher members .
 - B. Gene requested that the Board have 48 hours to review the material revision.
 - C. Richard motioned to approve the material revision to the LCS Charter on the condition that the Board be given 48 hours to review the revision; Carl seconded. The material revision to the LCS Charter was unanimously approved.
- 5. Community Update**
- A. Update on survey of LCS 5th & 6th Grade parents**
- Brian stated that overall, LCS 5th and 6th grade parents said that they were 83% likely to send their children to the school next year.

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- Brian noted that 5th and 6th grade parents cited the quality of LCS teachers as the top reason for remaining at the school.

- B. Update on Volunteerism at LCS and LCW
 - Brian noted that the volunteerism update is an evolving process.
 - LCS
 - Dolores stated that 6,339 hours were volunteered to date with an average of 18 hours per family.
 - Dolores noted that many parents have not yet recorded their hours.
 - Brian noted that there is a significant gap at LCS between volunteer hours recorded from the Latino and African American families versus other families.
 - Brian asked how much of the discrepancy at LCS is due to a gap between actual volunteer hours worked and volunteer hours recorded is a reporting gap.
 - Brian noted that it is our responsibility to achieve the volunteerism from our LCS community that we desire.
 - Gene requested that the volunteer hours be reported by grade level.
 - LCW
 - Kristin stated that 1,685 hours were volunteered to date with an average of 11 hours per family.
 - Kristin noted that each January, LCW conducts outreach to families who are less involved with the school.
 - Kristin stated that all families will receive a flyer this Friday as an opportunity to update their volunteering hours to accurately affect hours worked.
 - Kristin noted that total hours by family averages evenly across the community.

6. Diversity & Enrollment Update

- A. Approve LCS Lottery & Enrollment numbers (Action Item)
 - Myra noted that there are 1,154 children participating in the LCS Lottery.
 - Dolores noted that the LCS Elementary recruitment strategy has been focused on raising awareness among local Head Start programs and that this outreach has resulted in a lot of positive interest from parents, especially among Spanish speaking families.
 - Dolores noted that there is a lot of interest in the community for not just kindergarten openings but for other grade levels, particularly 5th grade.
 - Rick noted that 6th grade lottery is going well but that there is some parent concern about the lack of a high school path, which is influencing 8th grade lottery figures.
 - Gene stated that the mission of the school is to be diverse and that this mission must be upheld through the lottery system.
 - Brian noted that the lottery priority is only one tool in which to achieve the goal of diversity.

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- Brian stated that for Kindergarten, LCS will extend offers to 66 children, with 6 slots (10%) offered to children of founding parent, board, and staff members, and 25 slots (38%) offered to children in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch priority.
 - Brian suggested that for 1st - 5th grade, the Board authorizes the Executive Director to permit the extension of offers to siblings of currently enrolled students so long as no more than 3 offers are extended per grade level.
 - Brian noted that for 6th grade, LCS will extend offers to 28 children, without using the Free and Reduced Price Lunch priority (since a combination of our current 5th graders, our diverse lottery pool, and our projected attrition patterns will enable us to achieve our Board approved target of 40% of children qualifying for Free and Reduced Price Lunch without the priority).
 - Brian noted that for 7th grade, LCS will extend offers to 5 children, without using the Free and Reduced Price Lunch priority (since a combination of our current 6th graders, our diverse lottery pool, and our projected attrition patterns will enable us to achieve our Board approved target of 40% of children qualifying for Free and Reduced Price Lunch without the priority).
 - Brian stated that for 8th grade, LCS will extend 1 offer in accordance with its priorities.
 - Brian suggested that the Board authorize the Executive Director to shift any of these adopted recommendations between February 1 and the lottery should shifts in the lottery demographic require marginal adjustments to attain Board approved targets.
 - Kriste motioned to approve the LCS lottery and enrollment numbers as amended; Richard seconded. The amended LCS lottery and enrollment numbers were approved unanimously.
- Approve LCW Lottery & Enrollment numbers (Action Item)
 - Kristin noted that the enrollment numbers are very similar to last year
 - 5th grade- currently 24 applicants- over ½ way to goal
 - Kristin noted that LCW has been conducting outreach to local communities, including Oasis Church, which has an extremely diverse community and employees at Cedars Sinai Medical Hospital.
 - Danny asked if there is an emergency plan if the enrollment openings are not closer to filled near the Feb date.
 - Brian noted that unlike LCS, LCW staff and faculty do not have priority in the lottery; however, the lottery places first priority over children of founding parents and second priority to students who qualify for free or reduced priced lunches.
 - Brian noted that these priorities only apply to the lottery and not to enrollment.
 - Kriste stated that the lottery process is complicated and that it may not be suitable as the school grows and the broader community develops.
 - Kristin noted that the lottery system is explained to all families who tour LCW and that the broader community is provided with resources to understand the lottery and enrollment procedures.

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- Brian noted that the lottery process is designed to assist the schools in achieving their diversity goals over time and in an aggregate pattern, and won't be exactly on target in any single year.
- Brian stated that he would come back to the Board with a review of the lottery process and strategies for improving it at an upcoming meeting.
- Brian stated that for Kindergarten, LCW will extend offers to 44 children, with 4 slots (10%) offered to children of founding parents and 15 slots (34%) offered to children in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch priority.
- Brian noted that for 1st grade, LCW will enroll one child according to it's priorities.
- Brian stated that there are no current openings for 2nd – 3rd grade, so LCW will extend no offers.
- Brian noted that for 4th grade, LCW will enroll 4 students according to our priorities.
- Brian stated that for 5th grade, LCW will extend offers to 48 children, with 4 slots (10%) offered to children of founding parents and 19 slots (40%) offered to children in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch priority.
- Brian suggested that the Board authorizes the Executive Director to shift any of these adopted recommendations between February 1 and the lottery should shifts in the lottery demographic require marginal adjustments to attain Board approved targets.
- Kriste motioned to approve the LCW lottery; Marya seconded. The LCW lottery and enrollment numbers were approved unanimously.

7. Facilities Update including an update on the Prop 39 status of both LCS and LCW after Labor Day

- A. Brian stated that LAUSD offered LCW 9 classrooms and an administrative office for 4th and 5th grade classrooms at Selma Avenue ES and 3 additional classrooms at Gardner Street ES.
- B. Brian stated that LAUSD offered LCS classrooms at Micheltorena ES as two available sites and that the school intends to leverage this offer to gain more outdoor space at RFK.
- C. Kriste requested that Brian fully evaluate Micheltorena as a potential opportunity for LCS.

8. Approve recommendation to start the 2011-2012 school year at both LCS and LCW after Labor Day

- Brian noted that beginning the school year after Labor Day is beneficial to our families and to our school budgets.
- Brian stated that families who may be interested in summer school opportunities will be put in touch with Hollygrove, which runs a summer program.
- Kriste motioned to approve that LCS and LCW begin the 2011-2012 school year after Labor Day upon the conditioned that a new beginning date be determined and approved; Gene seconded. The recommendation that LCS and LCW begin the 2011-2012 school year after Labor Day was unanimously approved.

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9. School Updates

A. LCS Middle School

- Rick noted that LCS 5th graders visited the middle school today and that it was a wonderful opportunity to help inspire 5th graders about the coming school year, their new school community and the space that they will be learning in.
- Rick noted that their new 6th grade teacher is a very good fit with the school.

B. LCS Elementary School

- Myra noted that the LCS lottery will be held on February 11th at 10:30am and that the school leaders would like a Board member to witness the process.

10. Appointment of AdHoc Board Committee to research, analyze, and make a recommendation to the full Board of Directors on the organization's participation in Public School Choice 3.0 (Action Item)

- Brian stated that LAUSD is building a new school in Playa Vista next to the Ballona wetlands and that Larchmont Schools had been approached by community groups to consider bidding on the school through Public School Choice 3.0.
- Brian asked Alicia Lara, Kriste Dragon, Gene Straub, and Marya Francis to serve on an AdHoc Board Committee to research, analyze and make a recommendation about the partnership on a structural level to determine whether we can maintain our mission of community diversity while affording the partnership financially.
- Brian noted that if the Board chooses to pursue this opportunity, Larchmont Schools would become two school clusters, the Larchmont Schools cluster and the Playa Vista cluster.
- Brian noted that the Playa Vista community is mixed and diverse and offers a wetlands discovery center that students would have access to as well as a partnership with Loyola Marymount University.
- Brian noted that a one page letter of intent must be submitted to the District by March 1st but that the letter is not binding.
- Brian stated that this opportunity, with a new building, historic wetland, new building, etc. was an excellent and unique opportunity
- Dolores noted that the partnership with Loyola Marymount University is exciting because of the opportunity for staff members to seek out professional development opportunities and potentially find TAs from the university's education program.
- Brian noted that the Playa Vista school is a K-5 site and has the option of expanding to 6th -8th grades.
- Carl motioned to approve; Gene seconded. The Board unanimously approved an AdHoc Board Committee to review the opportunity to participate in Public School Choice 3.0 and to make a recommendation to the full Board.

11. Public Comment

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- A. LCW parent Kimberly Canter asked about extending the Prop 39 request to obtain 6 rooms.

12. Executive Director Comments

- Brian stated that he will be working with the LCW community to gain the right amount of space for a 4th and 5th grade at Selma ES through Proposition 39.
- Brian noted that Larchmont Schools had received a Public Records Act Request from attorneys representing United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA). Larchmont Schools is working with counsel at Middleton, Young, & Minney to review the requirements in order to insure that only the necessary information is provided.
- Brian stated that the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety was conducting investigations at all independent charter schools in Los Angeles and he would keep the Board abreast of any developments.

13. Board Chair Comments- there were none.

14. Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter. There were no actionable items to report.

15. New Business – there was no new business.

16. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M.