



Governance Council Minutes

Discovery Charter School, in cooperation with parents and the community, will empower students to become healthy, high achieving, life-long learners through the exploration of science and technology.

February 19, 2013

In Attendance:

Sue Sewell-Principal

Tonya Roberts- Parent/President

Peggy First-Teacher

Suzy Zietlow – Teacher

Katie Kastenson Schmidt – Teacher

Bryan Davis – Columbus Schools Superintendent

Barry Golden - DPI – Wisconsin Innovative Schools Network

Katie Meister – Parent/District Member

Laura Reetz-Parent

Melody Tadych – Parent/Community Member

Meeting called to order at 6:17 PM

No public comment

1. DCS Future Planning – All

Sue provided the DCS Annual Report and Strategic Plan (that runs through 2014) to Mr. Golden. Sue mentioned the possible plan to start a new charter school (instead of expanding the current charter.) Mr. Golden emphasized the importance of innovation in the development and maintenance of charter schools. He encouraged us to remain devoted to innovation (not bells and whistles – but active learning, purposeful engagement and experiential learning.) He described a system where all learners can be successful versus a modified system to accommodate various learners. Connecting charter schools with each other across the state can strengthen all schools (this is where cost saving can occur.)

Mr. Golden suggested considering developing a 4-8 charter in addition to a 9-12 charter that are all inquiry based that logically follow the base created by the K-3 current charter. Mr. Golden also suggested writing a planning grant for a 4-8 charter with the caveat that some of the funds that would be acquired would be used to send current charter teachers to other similar charter schools to improve the current K-3 charter program. Tonya and Sue are going to a grant planning session next week Monday at DPI in Madison and will update the council on their progress. Sue also mentioned the continued possibility of writing a dissemination grant. A dissemination grant would allow DCS teachers and staff to share instruction, charter development ideas, etc. with schools wishing to create their own charter program.



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Sue mentioned that the DCS 3rd graders completed the HOPE survey and the council discussed the importance and benefit in determination students' perceptions and attitudes toward their schooling and education.

Tonya asked about a self-assessment/indicator resource for innovative schools. Mr. Golden suggested visiting Hartland Charter school (contact Becky ?) to get a sense of what another charter can look and feel like. This Hartland School has a visitation day coming soon. Sue and teachers will look into visiting this school. Mr. Golden will compile a list of charter schools to visit to get ideas.

Tonya asked about how to tackle the culture shift and possible dissention regarding a charter expansion. Mr. Golden suggested the concept of sharing responsibility and expertise - taking advantage of teachers as leaders, not just administration - empower teachers. Innovation and leadership spirit needs to be widespread to avoid a collapse when a leader changes (or governance council turnover.)

Dr. Davis discussed the perception of a 4-5 expansion. Mr. Goldman mentioned that DPI would prefer to see 4-8 separate charter with the assumption the district is committed to addressing the needs of the middle grade learners. Regarding the language: create a 4-8 project-based/inquiry based school versus *another* science and technology charter school.

Mr. Goldman suggested, that in light of the deadline for the planning grant, identifying key players already working here, that have the most potential in a new innovative charter school and invite them to be leaders in the new 4-8 charter. Once identified, those people should travel to nearby charter schools and work on brainstorming with council members/board members to help with the application process.

Motion to adjourn by at 7:50 PM.

Motion passed

Next Regular Meeting-

- *Council recruitment – review applications*
- *Planning Grant/Dissemination Grant – continued discussion*
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