

WESTMOUNT CHARTER BOARD MINUTES

Regular Meeting – October 20, 2009

Room 137, Westmount Charter School

Present:

Laurie Westwood
Barbara Mendaglio
David Holland
Constantine Pefanis
Margaret Maclsaac
Erika Watters
Wade Humeniuk

Not Present:

Linda Finlay
Linus Hakimattar
Janneke Frank

Administration:

Merv Kurtz, Superintendent
Megan O'Hara, Secretary-Treasurer
Martha Faulkner, Principal

Guest:

Sandy Aguilera

1. Call to Order

L. Westwood called the meeting to order at 1835h.

2. Agenda Approval

MOTION: 2009/10/20/1:

That the Charter Board approves the agenda for the October 20, 2009 meeting.

Moved by M. Maclsaac; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

3. Minutes of the June 15, 2009 meeting

MOTION: 2009/10/20/2:

That the Charter Board approves the minutes of the September 16, 2009 meeting.

Moved by W. Humeniuk; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

L. Westwood welcomed a parent observer.

4. 2010 Spain International Field Trip

The Spain 2010 trip had been approved in principle at the June 15, 2009 meeting.

M. Faulkner introduced teacher Sandy Aguilera who provided further information on the trip including:

- connection to curriculum
- the Spanish program at Westmount
- proposed itinerary
- 22 students from grades 9 - 12 , plus one more student to be funded primarily through a bursary donation
- five staff members will accompany students
- total cost of the trip is approximately \$4000 per student

Ms. Aguilera responded to a number of questions as follows:

- it was confirmed that there will be a compulsory parent meeting and that students will meet weekly beginning in January
 - the bursary opportunity is only available for one student
 - 40% of trip participants are not enrolled in Spanish language classes and a majority of Spanish students are not doing the trip
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- risks have identified through foreign affairs website and students will be educated around risk reduction
- trip cost includes cancellation and medical insurance
- M. Kurtz confirmed that he and M. Faulkner have reviewed trip plans
- plans are in place for student health issues (eg. food allergies)
- none of the students attended prior France/Spain trip

L. Westwood expressed her appreciation to S. Aguilera for attending the meeting.

5. School Council Annual Report

A written report from George Darling was reviewed. M. Kurtz commented on the breadth of activities and the support provided by School Council.

6. 1:1 Laptop Initiative

M. Kurtz provided an overview of the laptop initiative. It will provide 1:1 mobile computing for Grades 6 to 12 students. The program will commence the second semester with 100 students in Grade 10, then roll out to remainder of mid-high students over a four-year period.

There was considerable discussion about the program including:

- pedagogy and improved learning
- technical issues arising from dual platform
- level of teacher support
- financial plan and cost implications to families and school budget
- concern with every increasing budget for technology

MOTION: 2009/10/20/3:

That the Charter Board approves, in principle, the 1:1 laptop initiative, subject to the provision of further information and discussion.

Moved by C. Pefanis; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

MOTION: 2009/10/20/4:

That the Charter Board approves the establishment of an operating reserve of \$200,000 from existing accumulated surplus to be used in support of the laptop initiative.

Moved by D. Holland; Seconded by M. Maclsaac.

Approved

7. 2009/10 Budget (Revised)

M. O'Hara outlined the changes to the previously approved budget including:

- enrolment and staff counts
- funding reductions
- one-time improvements
- lap-top initiative

MOTION: 2009/10/20/5:

That the Charter Board gives its approval to the revised 2009/10 budget, as presented.

Moved by M. Maclsaac; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

8. Audit Committee

M. Maclsaac reported on the meeting with the auditor which included:

- reviewed changes in reporting
- specific testing of new financial system
- internal controls, workload

The Audit Committee recommends approval of the audit engagement letter as presented.

MOTION: 2009/10/20/6:

That the Charter Board authorizes M. O'Hara to sign the engagement letter and approves the audit fee.

Moved by C. Pefanis; Seconded by E. Watters.

Approved

9. Diploma & PAT Results 2008/09

M. Faulkner reviewed PAT and diploma results. Some of her observations were:

- PAT Acceptables are higher than province
- excellence still high and were particularly strong at the Grade 6 level
- staff and admin will follow up if there have been significant changes (up or down) from prior years
- diploma exam results are continuing to improve
- Math 30 results are much improved
- Physics 30 results are below provincial averages and follow-up will be done

M. Kurtz noted that the portion of Westmount students writing diploma exams is much higher than the provincial average and Westmount results should be considered in that context.

10. Principal's Report

M. Faulkner provided some additional information on topics in her report.

- Student Count
- Westmount Health and Wellness Updates
- Crisis Management
- Spirit Days
- Admin PD Leadership Sessions
- Technology Update
- Mingle with Martha
- New Parent Mentorship Program
- School Council Update
- SAGE Conference 2009
- TAAPCS Conference 2009
- NAGC
- WCS Parent Fundraising Society AGM
- Upcoming Events

11. Education Plan 2009/12

Revisions to the Education Plan were circulated. The proposed changes are minor.

MOTION: 2009/10/20/7:

That the Charter Board gives its final approval to the 2009/12 Education Plan, as revised.

Moved by E. Watters; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

12. Board PD Opportunities

Upcoming events include: SAGE Conference, November 13 & 14 in Calgary and the NAGC 2009 Conference, November 5 to 8 in St. Louis, MO. Board members were reminded that there are professional development funds available should they wish to attend.

13. Society AGM – Tuesday, November 24, 2009

MOTION: 2009/10/20/8:

That the Charter Board gives approval to the agenda for the November 24/09 AGM for Westmount Charter School Society.

Moved by C. Pefanis; Seconded by E. Watters.

Approved

14. School Act Review

M. Kurtz provided information relating to the recommended changes to the School Act and the association's recommendations to those changes. There was general agreement about most of the issues but there were some questions around governance. Westmount's position is that the Minister should approve members of Charter Board, not appoint them. A letter will be sent to the Minister.

15. Charter Board Member Absence

MOTION: 2009/10/20/9:

That the Charter Board approves the absence of L. Finlay from the October 20, 2009 meeting.

Moved by D. Holland; Seconded by E. Watters.

Approved

16. Superintendent's Report

M. Kurtz reviewed the very positive results from the Accountability Pillar. Parent comments will be distributed separately. M. Kurtz's report also included:

- Administration Professional Development
- Partnership request
- Salary dispute – ATA and Minister of Education
- Parent Survey results
- Charter School Concept Paper

M. Kurtz will draft a response to the Charter School Concept Paper for consideration at the October 27/09 Special Meeting.

MOTION: 2009/10/20/10:

That the Charter Board moves its meeting *in camera* at 2150h.

Moved by M. MacIsaac; Seconded by B. Mendaglio.

Approved

Regular meeting re-convened at 2220h.

17. Arising from In-Camera

MOTION: 2009/10/20/11:

That the Charter Board approves the staff changes, as presented.

Moved by E. Watters; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

MOTION: 2009/10/20/12:

That the Charter Board appoints L. Westwood to fill the vacant position on the Charter Board arising from the resignation of L. Hakimattar.

Moved by C. Pefanis; Seconded by B. Mendaglio.

Approved

MOTION: 2009/10/20/13:

That the Charter Board gives its final approval 2010 International Spain trip, subject to satisfactory review of the consent form and on condition that the bursary be awarded to a student enrolled in a Spanish course in the current school year.

Moved by M. Maclsaac; Seconded by D. Holland.

Approved

It was agreed that a Special Meeting will be called for October 27, 2009 to deal with Nominating Committee items and Westmount's responses to the Concept Paper and School Act changes.

18. Adjournment

The Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 2225h.