

PATHWAYS CHARTER SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 17, 2010 – Call to Order: 5:30 PM

Coffee Learning Center  
620 Hoen Ave.  
Santa Rosa, Ca. 95405

In attendance

Name	Position
Eva Pintor	Board President
Joel Lutes	Board Member
Charlotte Asher	“
Allison Greene	“
Michele Blaisdale	Program Coordinator & IST
Sara Wilson	Area Coordinator & IST
Laurie Gartley	IST & Parent
Robert Gartley	Parent
Elizabeth Edson	Special Services Coordinator
Bob Gordon	Business Manager
Dannielle Smith	IST
Dave Miller	Superintendent Harmony School District
Robert Tavonatti	Pathways Charter School Director

1.0 Call to Order

**2.0 Roll Call: Eva Pintor, Joel Lutes, Charlotte Asher, Allison Greene**

**3.0 Approval of the Agenda**

**4.0 Comments from the Audience**

L. Gartley, “Thanks for looking at the Board Policies.”

**5.0 Closed Executive Session 5:50 pm**

5.1 Personnel

**6.0. Reconvene Open Session 6:30 pm**

No report from closed session.

**7.0 Comments from the Audience**

Attached letter about the garden.

**8.0 Board Policies Review (Discussion/Action)**

The Board will review and update Board policies until 7:00 P.M.

The Board reviewed “Fiscal”

Numbering will follow the current written numbering. ~~Cross-outs~~ and **bold** will designate changes.

The policies will be re-numbered by R. Tavanotti's office with a 1.2, 1.2 system.

Subject: Awarding Contracts Procedure

1. Change ~~2002~~ to **2010** and change threshold ~~\$58,900~~ to **\$50,000**.

Page 1 of 7

- Remove the italicized paragraphs at the top of the page; beginning with, "~~There sample policies...the calendar to reflect this.~~"
- Remove **shading** throughout policies.

Page 2 of 7

- 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet from the top – "~~Develop five-year...~~" change to Develop four-year..."

Page 7 of 7 H.

- Delete first sentence; "~~All fundraising or grant...advance by the Board.~~"
- Last sentence of that paragraph add the word **of** between, "...with the exception" and "funds which are..." to read "...with the exception **of** funds which are..."
- Remove "~~Adopted:~~" and "~~Amended:~~"

Subject: Petty Cash Fund Policy:

- First sentence remove "...~~adopt~~ a resolution to create..." insert "**maintain**" to read "...The School Board shall maintain a school revolving..."
- Procedure Number 8; remove entire paragraph number 8, beginning with "~~The documents and summary...below anticipated needs.~~" to be numbered 1-9

Subject: Student Expense Claim Reimbursements

- ~~Delete entire section of Student Expense Claim Reimbursements~~

Subject: Reimbursement Policy – Travel Procedure, second paragraph

- Add **or Board members** after employee's travel to read "If the employee's or Board member's travel is for less..."

Paragraph after Incidentals

- Remove 3<sup>rd</sup> word, ~~an~~ insert "**no employee**" then add "**or Board Director**" is not..." to read; "Note that no employee or Board Director is not required to provide receipts..."

## 9.0 Reports and Correspondence

- As attached, given/summarized by those present

Director's Report

Administrative Team Reports

Budget Manager's Report

Board Member Reports

## 10.0 Discussion/Action items

Some items may require Action from the Board and are noted as such.

### 10.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Action)

Discussion

President called for a motion

Motion *for approval* by: JL

Seconded by

*Motion carried: AG*

## **10.2 SECOND INTERIM REPORT (Action)**

Discussion

President called for a motion

Motion to receive and approve by: JL

Seconded by

Motion carried: AG

## **10.3 RELOCATION OF PATHWAYS MAIN OFFICE AND LEARNING CENTER**

Discussion

President called for a motion

Motion to consider relocating its main office and Sonoma County Learning Center to 150

Professional Drive, Rohnert Park by

Seconded by

Motion carried

## **10.4 POSSIBLE CHARTER SPLIT (Discussion)**

The Board will receive an update regarding discussions with the Howell Mountain Elementary School District Superintendent to sponsor the Napa/Lake program under a new charter.

## **10.5 DIRECTOR EVALUATION**

The Board reviewed the Director evaluation forms from Staff and Board with discussion.

## **10.6 SPRING ADVERTISING**

The Board received an update regarding the various venues for Spring advertising. The Board was pleased with the numerous advertisement venues.

## **11.0 Consent items**

President called for a motion

Motion to approve Consent Items as follows by

Seconded by

Motion carried

- 10.1 BUDGET TRANSFERS
- 10.2 NEW VENDOR COURSE INSTRUCTORS (VCIs)

## **12.0 Adjournment**

### **Comments from audience:**

ideas from Ruth Hickman, parent of students at Coffee Center, regarding the Coffee Center garden & concerns about moving

Preference would be to stay at the Coffee Center.

Safety Issue understood so perhaps:

1. Find a way to start neighborhood or community involvement in maintaining the garden: perhaps a group at the church, as a way to continue the garden

2. In order to transition, build hope & anticipation of the new garden:

Can we get any grants? specifically allocated to the new garden, figuring it as a priority in the budget, so that the students can have increased hope towards looking forward, (previous grant- \$2K-3000? for the garden)

Perhaps have students design or consider future plans?

My notes (LaurieG)

Perhaps have students design or consider future plans?

current ages 2 classes k-8, mostly younger, high school too?

current have: sandbox, composting, paths, oven, ponds with fish, faucet access, creek, flowers, tulips, (not a complete list)

future location: maybe pond? water fountain? arbor?

coordinate field trips to old one?

**Pathways Charter School Director's Report  
Robert Tavonatti**

**3/17/10**

**SPOT ENROLLMENT 3/4/10**

	<b>Nov. 2</b>	<b>Dec. 7</b>	<b>Jan. 4</b>	<b>Feb. 1</b>	<b>Mar. 4</b>
<b>Sonoma</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>Lake</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Solano</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>Marin</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Napa</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>558</b>

The reduction in enrollment of seventeen students from February to March reflects the mid-year graduates, which was anticipated. We continue to conduct interviews for new students, however as of March 12 we began moving all new requests to a waiting list for next school year. If we maintain a population of 555-560 students through the end of March we will be on target with our budget projections. Our year-to-date average enrollment through January 29 is 547.7.

**STAFF IN-SERVICE**

March 18 will be our Spring In-Service. We will spend time with an exercise to review our assumptions and priorities as a program, given the increasing pressures on charter schools to increase accountability and conform more to Education Code. We will then work in teams to refine grade-appropriate benchmarks in grades K-8 and course objectives for grades 9-12. This process is consistent with our WASC recommendations.

**SPRING NEWSLETTER**

We will be publishing our Spring Newsletter at the end of March to coincide with STAR testing in April.

**WASC**

I was a member of a WASC team that reviewed Alameda Community Learning Center on March 7-10. I will update you about this review at the Board meeting.

**SB 740 FUNDING DETERMINATION**

Our funding determination review is scheduled for April 6 at the Advisory Council for Charter Schools (ACCS) monthly meeting. We are anticipating receiving 100% funding for the next three years.

**Lake/Upper Napa Report to the Board**  
**March, 2010**

- **Enrollment:** We currently have 115 students, which is an increase of 14 students from our Feb. totals. Eight of the new enrollees are high school students living in Angwin, St Helena and Pope Valley and 7 of the 8 are entering on a probationary basis. Robert and I had the opportunity last week to talk with the principal and high school counselors from St Helena High. Our goal was to help them understand our IS model and to clarify our enrollment process. Of our 115 total students, 47 are high school and 68 are elementary.
- **Office and Curriculum Library:** Our library continues to be well used. We are attempting to bar code the most expensive materials so we can track them.
- **STAR Testing:** Many of our students are working through released STAR math problems in preparation for the April test. As an incentive, those who complete 50-100 problems successfully will be eligible for a prize.
- **CAHSEE:** This week, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders will take the CAHSEE for the second time. We have one 12<sup>th</sup> grader retesting and 7, 11<sup>th</sup> graders taking one or both sections of the test.
- **Staff:** Tamsen Nash was increased from 20% to 30% for her increased case load in special ed. All of the teachers are working at the top of their FTEs. They are completing their self evaluations and I will be scheduling professional development meetings to be held in May.

## **Program Coordinator Report to the PCS Board – March, 2010**

### Core Subject Departments and College Prep

The spring semester is moving forward, with most of our college prep students continuing to participate in the weekly online advisory hours. I was able to attend all of the hours during the week of February 22, which gave me an even better sense of what's working well and what still poses a challenge for both the students and the department chairs. As an observer/participant, I was able to ask this question directly to some of the students during the English advisory hour – most of whom responded positively – and we will be adding this question to the long-postponed survey to teachers, as well as posting it to the other three advisory sites – Mathematics, History-Social Studies, Science – to gather more student feedback. The chairs are to be commended for multi-tasking their way through these hours.

As the spring semester progresses, more information will be going out to teachers re the streamlined portfolio elements, student-IST-chair collaboration, high school resources on the PCS website, etc.

### Clear Writing

As discussed in previous reports, we have many details to consider re the implementation of the Clear Writing program for 2010-2011, and the admin team will be making decisions re this as we move through the 2009-2010 school year and look ahead to the fall.

The above-referenced, long-awaited survey – re both Clear Writing and College Prep – will be going out to teachers this week, which will give us even more information to use as we decide how to proceed.

We are also planning to track the Clear Writing scores using our Aeries program, where they can be attached to individual student records along with STAR results, CAHSEE scores, and, hopefully, math end-of-course exam scores, among other data.

### WASC Action Plan

Our spring staff in-service will be held this Thursday, March 18, and the bulk of the time will be spent on developing, clarifying and/or revising our draft K-8 benchmarks in English-Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as our core academic high school objectives. The teachers have been grouped into subject and grade-level teams – K-3, 4-6, 7-8, and 9-12 for ELA and Math, and 9-12 for ELA, Math, History, Science – and they will be working together to review the state standards, our draft benchmarks and current objectives, and to develop some assessment tools and tracking procedures that can be effectively and consistently implemented school-wide. The continuing development of our benchmarks and objectives and their assessment constitute a significant portion of our WASC action plan. I am looking forward to Thursday's in-service and the opportunities for collaboration and professional development it will afford us.

## **Solano/lower Napa Board Report March 17, 2010**

### **Enrollment:**

Our current number of students in Solano is 148 and our current number of students in lower Napa is 36 for a total of 184 in our area. There are a few students who are approved and plan to begin enrollment this week.

### **Other:**

The Solano/Lower Napa Project and Performance Fair is scheduled for Wednesday, May 19 at the JFK Library in Vallejo. In addition to projects and performances by our Solano and Lower Napa students, the Fair will also highlight the graduation of our 8<sup>th</sup> graders which total 22. Due to limited resources we will not have a yearbook this year. We have begun to shift our focus to star test preparations.

### **CAHSEE:**

There are five 12<sup>th</sup> graders planning to take the CAHSEE test this week as well as a one 11th grader retaking the test. Most of these students have passed the LA test and are planning to take the Math test.

### **Staffing:**

I am preparing to conduct staff evaluations with half of the IST's and all of the Solano area classified staff during the next month.

## **Sonoma/Marin Board Report March 17th, 2010**

### **Enrollment:**

We continue to receive new applications for enrollment and are now deferring these to interviews for Fall 2010 enrollment. I will be conducting interviews throughout May and June. We have two outreach events planned for this spring; The Family Expo and Camp Fair at the Wells Fargo Center on Friday April 9th and The Kid Fest at Petaluma's Community Center on Saturday May 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sonoma**

Enrolled: 212 (93 high school 119 elementary)  
Pending enrollments: 3  
Pending interviews: none

### **Marin**

Enrolled: 59 (7 high school and 52 elementary)  
Pending enrollments: none  
Pending interviews: none

### **Teachers:**

I will be conducting professional evaluations, including observing on-site classes, for approximately half of the staff during April and May.

### **Center**

Our classes are running smoothly and provide a rich support environment to students. We have had a good response to our re-envisioned History and Project Fair to be held on May 11<sup>th</sup>. We are excited to see the burst of enthusiasm and are looking forward to seeing the breadth of projects that our students design.

### **Other:**

We are conducting the CAHSEE this week for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. We are focusing on planning for our STAR testing in late April which is quite a logistical challenge to coordinate. We are working hard to make sure that we achieve our 95% participation.

Board Report  
Special Services Department  
February 1, 2010

We currently have approximately 40 students with IEPs.

We have had a busy month with many IEP meetings and interviews. We are also busy attending SST meetings and have been fortunate to have special ed. representation at all of the recent SST meetings along with the parent, IST and Claudia.

The SESR (special ed. self review) is moving along slowly. The state has still not given the districts the information that we need to begin our review so the training from SCOE has been put on hold until we receive it. It is tentatively set to be distributed by April 1. In the interim we scheduled a parent meeting for the parents of special ed. students on March 9<sup>th</sup>. No parents showed up but that is because the case managers had personally spoken to their parents about the parent survey and encouraged them to complete the forms and mail them back to us. I expect to receive most of the surveys back.

Our reading pilot program continues to grow. I am now serving three students and Tracy Ruhs has taken on a few students as well. We have collaborated to evaluate students with similar assessments and documentation of progress as well as our instructional methods. I am very pleased with how the students are progressing and that we are able to offer this support to students as an intervention before they fall too far behind. Davida Elsbree is also offering an intervention class to four students for 90 minutes weekly. Her focus is literacy and writing. Colleen is teaching a weekly writing class to high school students with IEP goals in written language.

I have scheduled Liz Simmons, school nurse, to do our spring hearing and vision health screening. Sonoma County is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup> from 9-12 at the Coffee Center and Solano County is scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup> from 11:00-1:30 at Jill Escareno's home. We are still in the process of scheduling Lake County. The area coordinators will be sending out ebulletins to the families to announce this. We are offering the screening to kindergarten through 10<sup>th</sup> grade but the families must RSVP and schedule an appointment.

We have lost the use of our special ed. classroom due to a rain leak which has led to mold. This has made it difficult to find working space for Davida and a place to hold IEP meetings and schedule testing for evaluations.

SCOE's Steering Committee, which I attend bimonthly, has initiated a charter school forum. The purpose of the forum is for both school districts and charter schools to have clear communication and understanding of everyone's role and that the information

conveyed to parents is accurate. I look forward to attending this first meeting on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

Staff is preparing for STAR testing since many of our students have accommodations and take the test in a small group setting.

We are increasing Tamsen's special ed. percent from 20% to 30% due to an increase in referrals, evaluations and new students coming in with IEPs.

Board Meeting March 17, 2010  
Pathways Charter School  
Budget Manager's Report  
**Second Interim Report Narrative**

The California State Department of Education, Sonoma County Office of Education and Harmony Union School District requires Pathways Charter School to review and report on its budget four times during the fiscal year. This review includes budget adoption, two interim reports and the unaudited actuals that provide an overview of the budget throughout the fiscal year.

The Second Interim report encompasses the period of July 1, 2009 through January 31, 2010. All budget updates and journal entries made during this time frame are reflected in this document.

The Second Interim report includes the following:

- Narrative to the Board of Directors
- Form AIDC, Average Daily Attendance
- Form 621, Revenue, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets
- Cash Flow report
- Multi-year projection
- Form CI, Certification of Interim Report

The original budget was based on a projected enrollment of 530 students with a figure of 519.40 ADA used to determine state funding. The actual enrollment is 556 and calculating 2% absence rate the ADA is 544.99. The ADA is projected to increase from the original budget to P-2; the total revenue has been increased from \$3,460,744 to \$3,474,323.

Projected expenditures for the year have been decreased slightly from \$3,410,989 to \$3,368,414 from the original budget. This is a reduction of \$42,575.

As stated in our MOU, the 1% allowable by law to our sponsoring district, Harmony Union School District, is estimated to be \$30,605. The 1% is contingent upon billed services from Harmony related to the cost of sponsoring Pathways Charter School.

We have a revolving cash account in the amount of \$1,000. Our reserve for Economic Uncertainties is a 3% which is \$102,000. Although this does not show in our SACS reporting because we have a negative net assets due to the \$500,000 liability to the State.

Our Special Education encroachment is estimated to \$122,275. This amount has increased from our original budgeted encroachment of \$109,275.

## Multi-Year Projections

I have included a multi-year projection spreadsheet that spans four years. Pathways Charter School is experiencing declining enrollment as is almost every school in Sonoma County. This multi-year shows significant reductions over the four years. It does include payments that are due to the State for the audit exception settlement in the sum of \$500,000 over the next eight years with payments in equal amounts of \$62,500 starting in this fiscal year and ending in 2016-2017. This audit exception is a long term liability and will cause a negative amount even though we are paying it back over eight years.

In addition to the circumstances stated above we also have to contend with another average decline in revenue per student of over 5% according to School Innovations and Advocacy. The Governor's proposed budget once again takes away funding from schools. Over the past few years education has lost \$12.5 billion in funding.

In 2010/11, we have reduced 1.5 FTE certificated positions, 2011/12 certificated position reduced an additional 1.0 FTE and 2012/13 reduced another .5 FTE. In order to minimize any other decreases in ADA we have to freeze all salaries at current levels with no COLA. A .75 classified position is also slated for reduction in the 2012/13 school year. The reductions in FTE were minimized by the fact that no step increases were included.

The biggest challenge and unknown at this time is our medical insurance costs. We have recently met with our current broker and with RESIG; the minimum increase expected with our current rate of contribution is 35% to 40%. I am still getting a quote from one other broker that specializes in not for profit corporations. I have kept the increases to 12% each year in our multiyear knowing that in order to stabilize the costs we will have to shop around out there and modify the plans as necessary.

These proposals are severe; however, as the new Business Manager I feel that this news needs to be communicated. Many school districts in Sonoma County are in similar financial difficulties.

In addition to the actions previously described, student budgets have been adjusted lower based on declining enrollment. All other miscellaneous expenditures that go along with a loss in ADA revenue have been reduced accordingly. Our revenues are declining at a faster rate than our expenses are declining so I made bigger reductions over the four year span.

There are some positive items in the projection however. With the hiring of our E-rate consultant, not only are our telephone costs expected to decline significantly, but our internet expenses will also be declining for the first time. Costs associated with our

anticipated relocation have also been revised downward in the services and other operating expenses area of the multi-year. We will be eliminating garbage, water, and some janitorial expenses as well as eliminating a Xerox lease and will have more energy efficient buildings. Also, our projected legal costs have continued to decrease and have been adjusted downward accordingly.

This 2010/2011 fiscal year is projected to be the worst financial year for education. I am cautiously optimistic that with a combination of the state slowing getting back on its fiscal feet, cautionary spending, and, hopefully, increasing enrollment that the financial picture will soon start to look better.

Based on this report, I recommend a certification for this Second Interim period.