

**STEM Magnet Academy
Local School Council
Special Meeting Minutes**

May 27, 2015

I. Call to order

Mrs. Langston called to order the special meeting of the Local School Council for the STEM Magnet Academy at 5:30pm on May 27, 2015, in the STEM Magnet Academy gymnasium.

II. Roll call/Establish Quorum

Mrs. Langston conducted a roll call. The following persons were present:

Jeremiah Abiade
Maria Amoruso
Deborah Bonner (arrived at 6:35pm; left at 8:50pm)
Deana Caccavale
Deidra Harper
Sadika Langston
Jeff McCarter
William O'Neill (left at 7:15pm)
Gretchen Brinza
Lindsay McGrane
Zakiya Libby-Williams (arrived at 5:35pm)
Maria McManus (not present)

Quorum was established.

III. Review and Approval of Agenda

Mr. McCarter stated that approval of minutes from closed sessions needs to be moved to closed session. Mr. McCarter motioned that the agenda be approved with this amendment. Dr. O'Neil seconded the motion.

Vote: 9 in favor

IV. Public Participation

-- Mrs. Haviland shared a statement that she had written. Mrs. Haviland stated that she feels that, as an LSC, the STEM LSC is failing to do the job that they were elected to do. Mrs. Haviland stated that she felt that this was disrespectful to school as a whole. Mrs. Haviland shared that it is clear that the agenda of some LSC members is to keep

the current principal, disregarding current atmosphere and culture and climate issues. Mrs. Haviland expressed concern that the LSC is not following recommendations of the Office of LSC Relations and not engaging in process openly. Mrs. Haviland urged the LSC to do one round of actual interviews. Mrs. Haviland stated that if none of the candidates were acceptable, it is the duty of the LSC to let that fact show. Mrs. Haviland asked when the LSC would acknowledge that not everything is working at STEM.

-- Mrs. Marolda asked Dr. O'Neil to use his previous experience on an LSC to help this LSC figure out the way to get parental input. Mrs. Marolda urged the 6 parent representatives to consider feedback from parents before making a decision about who parents want as a principal or what parents want from a principal. Mrs. Marolda asked Dr. O'Neil to provide support to LSC members as someone who has experience with being an LSC representative in the past.

-- Mr. Christians asked for clarification on the Principal Selection process and how parent and teacher feedback was used to make the decision to not proceed with interviews. Mr. Christians expressed concern that a vote was taken without looking at parent and teacher feedback. Mr. Christians shared that he is frustrated with parent and community representation in this process. Mr. Christians stated that he felt that the vote taken by the LSC did a disservice to Ms. McManus and that the vote taken did not allow Ms. McManus to stand on her merit. Mr. Christians expressed concerns that the ability to address issues that STEM will face in the future (e.g., budget, space) cannot be assessed by reviewing resumes alone. Mr. Christians shared that going through the Principal Selection process as recommended would allow Ms. McManus to share her vision for the future. Dr. O'Neil stated that he defers to Dr. Bonner's experience in evaluating resumes. Mr. Christians shared his concern that a resume review is not exhaustive and does a disservice to the community if a resume review is the only tool used to select a principal. Mr. Christians stated that he believes this course of action brings the conversation around Principal Selection to the lowest level, with the conversation centering around what has not happened, rather than a discussion of the thorough and exhaustive process. Mr. McCarter stated that he doesn't feel that the information that is being shared regarding the resume review conducted in closed session is accurate or appropriate. Mr. McCarter stated that he also shares Mr. Christians' concerns and thanked members of the community who came out. Mr. Abiade thanked community members who were present and reiterated that the LSC was not allowed to evaluate Ms. McManus through a parent survey. Mr. Abiade stated that the LSC couldn't treat Ms. McManus any differently than other applicants. Mr. Abiade stated that the only way that the LSC could have a discussion of Ms. McManus' time as interim principal would be through the interview process. Mrs. Harper stated that, after reading all of the surveys and taking copious notes, she does not feel that her vote to not interview candidates would have changed, but that some glaring things came out in

the surveys that she feels as a school need to be addressed. Mrs. Harper stated that she felt these issues could and would be addressed. Mrs. Harper stated that she feels that STEM's current leadership has done a great job, but that there are areas for improvement. Mrs. Harper stated that, as an LSC, our goal is to figure out next steps. Mrs. Harper feels that it would be important to put in place specific objectives and directives that will build community. Mrs. Brinza stated that, after reading the parent and teacher surveys, her vote would not change and thanked community members who came to share their input.

-- Mrs. Langston stated that reading teacher surveys was helpful and informative. Mrs. Langston stated that she read parent surveys and categorized them based on trends including: culture and climate, communication, vision, community/parent engagement, and academics. Mrs. Langston stated that given the information the LSC now has, there are opportunities to improve. Mrs. Langston stated that she believes that we can make those improvements with what STEM already has. Mrs. Langston stated that she feels improvements will require the efforts of the community, parents, teachers, and our current principal. Mr. Christians agreed that it takes a community to make changes and stated that he felt that the decision to not interview candidates pushed some members of the community to the fringe. Mr. Christians shared that he felt that the Principal Selection process had a chance to score more points in community building at the school. Mr. Christians asked about the LSC's plans for the future. Mr. Christians stated that the school needs a vision, solutions, numbers on the table, and leadership on committees to help keep this model special.

-- Mrs. Taylor asked if the information shared in teacher and parent surveys could be shared so that the school can begin to problem solve. Ms. Taylor expressed concern that neither the staff nor the parent community has access to the data shared through the teacher and parent responses to the questionnaire and survey. Ms. Taylor also asked about access to minutes. Mrs. Brinza stated that the website is currently up to date and Mrs. McGrane shared that an LSC binder in the office contains minutes that have been approved by the LSC. Mrs. Taylor asked if the teacher reps would consider voting in the way that the majority of teachers wanted them to vote. Mrs. Brinza stated that she was invested in going through the principal selection process fairly. Mrs. McGrane stated that she had read and considered the 16 teacher questionnaires received and that those questionnaires informed her decision making during the Principal Selection process.

Mrs. Langston moved that the LSC move to closed session. Dr. O'Neil seconded the motion.

Vote: 11 in favor.

V. Announcements

VI. Closed Session - Principal Selection Process

- Review parent surveys
- Review teacher surveys

VII. Adjournment

Mr. McCarter moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm. Mrs. Amoruso seconded the motion.

Vote: 7 in favor.

Minutes submitted by: Lindsay McGrane