

**Charter School of Morgan Hill**  
**Special Board Meeting minutes - approved**  
**Tuesday, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

**5:50 PM** Meeting called to order in open session with announcement that board will be going into closed session for performance review of progress on goals for Director.

**6:37 PM** Open session resumed with report-out that board took no action in closed session.

**Roll call of members present:** Linda Ullah, Cinda Meister, Joy Moody, Lynn Mitoma, Mary Smathers, Dana Miller. **Absent:** Scott McDonald

**Also present:** Sharon Sousa (principal), staff members David Cross, Lisa Esposito, Linda Phillips, and Donna Page (also a parent), and parents Janelle Cox, Mindy Bostick, Carolyn Crespo, Chip Czeropski.

- 1. Members of the public have the opportunity to address the Board on any item not on the agenda – none**
- 2. Members of the public address the Board regarding the agenda item middle school support:**
  - A. Janelle Cox** – Parent of a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. Chose the Charter School because of the family involvement, and she wanted a safe and creative environment. Not much attention has been spent on middle school, recommends putting money into it to demonstrate an equal level of commitment to the students and families that they have shown to the school.
  - B. Mindy Bostick** - Thanks the board for the strong, committed reaction to solving this crisis - open discussions will lead to solutions. Has had discussions personally with several board members so will not reiterate those. Agrees that a middle school coordinator is needed, and concerned that a consultant is too short, needs to be long-term. Also expresses the need for behavioral assessments for some students, particularly in 6<sup>th</sup> grade – the classes are small, therefore it's less noticeable, but the need is very much present.
  - C. Chip Czeropski** – Wants action, a middle school coordinator for the long-term.
  - D. Donna Page** – Supports a coordinator, and also wants a plan for the long-term. Emphasizes the need to be sensitive to the staff needs and goals.
  - E. Dave Cross** – Feels support is valuable and needed, but is concerned about the need for textbooks, class materials. They need the basics or a middle school coordinator will have a difficult time.
  - F. Linda Phillips** – Agrees with the need for materials, especially science.
  - G. Lisa Esposito**- Especially needs lab materials for science.

### 3. Board Discussion – Middle School Support

- Sharon Sousa's report was requested – she reports she was not able to meet with the entire 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade team all together because of the conference schedules, and was not able to speak to Selena (Spanish) or Craig (PE). Basically, the teachers are interested in support and in additional materials. Individual questions or thoughts raised included: is their ability to respond to the kids/program being questioned?, questions regarding the proposed consultant's relationship to the current administration, interest in the need for a coach, that this is a good team that works well together, concern about more meetings, the need for work/collaboration time.
- Clarification that the money for the consultant is separate from money for curriculum and other materials. In the budget, there is money from the state for state approved materials, and then some that is unrestricted (question raised whether the remainder can be earmarked for middle school use).
- Clarification that the board has requested that Sharon Sousa compile a list of the curriculum and other instructional materials currently at the school, by class and grade level, and that she bring a list of priorities, and a recommendation for spending this money to the Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting so that the staff may take advantage of these funds ASAP.
- There is a task force subcommittee on middle school planning – the committee can be contacted with input through Mindy Bostick or Cinda Meister.
- Question raised about RAFT (resource area for teachers) membership. Answer – that each teacher had a membership in the first year, but that it was dropped after that. Some teachers still have memberships. Suggestion that one or two people do the shopping together.
- Clarification regarding the purpose of the consultant - would be to work in collaboration with the middle school staff to clarify their needs and to provide hands-on help with curriculum planning and development...
- 2 components – if a middle school coordinator is to be hired, then it will take time (must consider proposal, make decision, post position, interview, and then hire someone). Won't be in place until January. The Board is looking to give help now, these are good teachers and they should have immediate support.
- In larger districts, support personnel are in place from the beginning.
- Emphasis on need to look at the budget and to strive for ways to support the middle school with our existing resources.
- Suggestion that consultant's hours be spent on direct, hands-on support time. Teachers needs colleague, a mentor-teacher.

- Sharon Sousa reports that MHUSD teacher Anna Friebel is willing to mentor, there was no discussion of money, has a specific area of expertise in math.
- Need for all mentors, including outside mentors, to have an overall plan and goals.
- Discussion of the relationship between the consultant, administration and board focused on that this was a board appointed consultant who would communicate regularly with the principal and assigned mentors. Initial December report could be given via the Principal's report, with the final one in January being oral or written from either the consultant alone, or in conjunction with the staff.
- At the last meeting, the board requested that Paige Cisewski be contacted re: her availability. Her response was that she was available for the short term, and would be willing to consider a long-term position.
- Curriculum needs discussed as several parents have offered to purchase needed materials for middle school. Clarification that support and supplemental materials are used regularly by staff and that their use is encouraged. This is different from school adopted curriculum, which serves as the primary curriculum (e.g. math).
- Question to Principal – are we currently looking at curriculum, science or language arts, for our next adoption? Answer – no.
- Several expressed support for Paige Cisewski being the consultant because of her role as founder of the school and familiarity with the mission/vision, she has taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and has served in a similar capacity for the school in the past.
- Expression of the need for consistency in structures – the middle school task force, the “leadership” task force that will be reporting to the board soon, all decisions need to mesh.
- Discussion of changes and clarifications to be made to the consultant job description and hours/time frame.
  
- **Mitoma motioned and Moody seconds to approve the hiring of Paige Cisewski as a short-term middle school consultant utilizing the amended version of the job description (see attached) and other details as specified. Motion passes 6-0 with no abstentions.**
  
- **Smathers motions and Meister seconds that the Board put on the December and January agendas, discussion and action for a longer term support model for middle school staff and program development. Motion passes 6-0 with no abstentions.**

7:46 PM      meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted by D. Miller

## **Short-Term Middle School Consultant**

**as approved 11-25-03**

**Background**: The Middle School Task Force is working on many aspects of the middle school program. According to the Task Force meeting minutes, although there is significant concern about curriculum and academic rigor, the Task Force is not addressing this, as it sees these issues as staff responsibilities. Therefore, this proposed consultant position addresses a need identified by the Task Force but does not overlap with its stated areas of focus. Providing direct support to the middle school teachers will lead to immediate and meaningful long-term benefits for the staff, students, and the middle school program as a whole.

**Purpose**: This short-term position is intended to have an immediate beneficial impact. Bringing in an outside consultant allows for choosing a person with the desired expertise who can focus exclusively on this goal. Information provided in the consultant's report will promote more informed long-term middle school decision-making.

**Job description**: 1) work with all middle school staff (6-8 core plus P.E. and Spanish) to assist with curriculum development and academic planning, as well as providing in-class guidance; 2) collaborate with middle school teachers; 3) be involved in ongoing communication and coordination with principal and mentors; 4) prepare a preliminary report of the consultant's activities to administration and board in December and a follow-up report at the January board meeting.

**Additional details**: Paige Cisewski appointed from December 1, 2003 – January 13, 2004, for up to 40 hours, \$50./hour not to exceed \$2000. Hours will be spent in direct support of middle school staff.