

**Charter School of Morgan Hill**  
**Special Board Meeting minutes - approved**  
**Monday, December 15, 2003**

6:36 PM Meeting called to order in open session  
Board going into **closed session** to discuss Review of progress on goals for Principal and Director

7:53 PM **Open Session**  
Report out that there was no action taken by Board in closed session, discussion only.

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

**Also present:** Sharon Sousa (Principal), teacher Linda Phillips, and parents Carolyn Crespo, Paige Cisewski, Rick Page.

**Approval of minutes:**

Mitoma moved and McDonald second to approve the minutes from the November 11, 2003 Board meeting with the handwritten changes. Motion passes 7-0-0

**Members of the public have the opportunity to speak on any topic not on the agenda:** none

**ACTION ITEM**

**Background given by Principal Sharon Sousa re: FOSS Science Kits for grades 3-8**

- Money is allotted by the state for purchase of state adopted materials only. This money, approximately \$16,700 so far, cannot be used for other curriculum or materials purchases.
- CSMH's curriculum adoption process is specific and requires due process. To date, the school has adopted math curriculum, but we do not have a science curriculum.
- Although they are not part of the state approved curriculum and, therefore, the allocated money mentioned previously cannot be used for this purchase, she is recommending FOSS Science Kits for grades 3-8. They are aligned with the CA state standards, compatible with Project-based Learning, a hands-on science kit, not a curriculum. Intended to be supplemental to whatever science curriculum is ultimately adopted.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade has received a \$1500. materials donation that will be applied to those kits earmarked for FOSS for 4<sup>th</sup> grade
- Question – have other science materials been considered? Answer: no The staff really wants FOSS
- Question: what is comfort level regarding budget? Answer: this will deplete \$5800. of the \$6300. annual budget for instructional materials.

- Question: what was the process used to determine spending priorities?  
Answer: the priorities are middle school math, K-8 science, then literature.

**Background given by Principal Sharon Sousa re: Algebra I textbooks:**

- The adopted Mathscapes curriculum integrates algebra, but does not give a strong enough foundation for all students.
- There are two algebra I state adopted texts available, both by McDougall Littell – Structure & Methods, and Concepts & Skills.
- Concepts & Skills is being recommended because it includes student help sections and gives real life examples.
- To be used primarily for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and for some 7<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- Will supplement the Mathscapes math curriculum well.
- Middle school teachers strongly support this purchase

**Background given by Principal Sharon Sousa re: Passports Pre-Algebra textbooks:**

- a state adopted curriculum
- intended for 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and possibly 6<sup>th</sup> grade if needed
- to supplement Mathscapes
- Middle school teachers strongly support this purchase

**Background given by Principal Sharon Sousa re: The Language of Literature:**

- She is less enthusiastic about this recommendation – it is very traditional – we would normally need to adopt this type of curriculum, but we are looking to spend the state allotted money. There were 4 texts to choose from.
- Recommending anthology texts for 6-7-8
- Question: have the teachers looked at all 4 choices? Answer: No
- Is there a date by which the state money must be spent? Answer: unknown

**Public Comment:**

- Several of those present spoke in favor of the science kits and math texts to support PBL

**Board Discussion:**

- FOSS Kits are well respected, allows us to fill the gap prior to science curriculum adoption, teachers are supportive.
- Re: the literature/anthology recommendation – prefer to let the middle school language arts teachers look at all 4 options and decide what they want.
- **ACTION ITEM for Sousa** – In January, bring a recommendation based on teacher preference for literature/anthology texts
- Question whether or not the entire staff is aware that they are spending almost their entire instructional materials budget for the year on FOSS Kits. Not sure that they know this.

- Questions about how the FOSS kits fit with the list prepared by the staff of their materials needs and priorities and the process used to make the decision.
- Question – is the staff currently looking at curriculum for adoption? Answer: No
- Question – What is the process the principal and staff use for selecting instructional materials?
- **ACTION ITEM for Sousa** – work with the staff to decide what core subject curriculum should be adopted next (science or language arts), and begin the adoption process as outlined in the charter.
- Important to have a blended program of PBL with supplementary instruction to ensure that the foundation of knowledge and understanding is present.
- Important to have a plan to ensure that the FOSS Kits are utilized
- Discussion re: ordering one FOSS Kit per grade (3-8) instead of all recommended to allow money left over for other things the staff might want. Question about K-2 – maybe they can get something they want also. Kinder wants leveled readers.
- **ACTION ITEM for Sousa** – Bring a restricted funds recommendation to Jan. Board meeting. It must include staff input.

**Action taken:**

- Mitoma moves to purchase FOSS Science Kits as recommended. Meister seconds. Motion passes 7-0-0.
- Mitoma motions to purchase Algebra I Concepts & Skills, Passports for 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 6<sup>th</sup> grade if needed. Moody seconds. Motion passes 7-0-0.

**DISCUSSION ITEM - Middle School support**

**Public Comment and Board Discussion –**

- Important to have peer support provider(s) on staff. Funding from BTSA?
- Charter school funding is different than the district, and funding has been cut for these programs.
- Santa Cruz New Teacher Project half-time BTSA program for half the cost – offered to charter schools? **ACTION ITEM for Linda Ullah** to follow up with this
- Parents advocating for a permanent solution. Need for a middle school leadership position with authority over curriculum development, PBL, activities... Whatever the solution is, it needs to be defined this year – cannot wait until next year. We cannot have another year like this.
- Plan for middle school needs to be articulated
- Concerns about re-enrollment of middle schoolers
- Parents want to have answers about what is going to happen next year, what is the plan and what is being done this year to implement that.
- Need to set a goal to get back some of the students that have left.

- Discussion needs to extend beyond the middle school. The entire school needs to be driven by the mission and vision - need high expectations K-8 re: the mission and vision
- Budget decisions need to be made re: next year also.
- 5 year forecast not relevant – too many issues, also looking at Leadership Task Force restructuring ideas
- Immediate middle school plans need to fit with long-term plans
- Although the school is losing middle school students, we're gaining some students at different grade levels, so school-wide our numbers haven't changed

9:55 PM

**Adjourn**

Respectfully submitted by  
D. Miller