

# ISLA – Board of Directors Meeting

## Minutes

August 11, 2009, 6:30 p.m.

ISLA School Building - 12007 Excelsior Blvd, Minnetonka, MN – **Room# 114 (Upstairs)**

**Board Members Present:** Sonia Miller-Van Oort, Mark Mathison, Steve Semler, Eric Peterson, Karen Terhaar, Kerry Krawczyk-LeMieux, Michael Valley, Kate Shablott, Melody Brombacher

**Visitors present:** Theresa Aleckson

**Board Members not present:** Briana Boeser, Vanessa Bera

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

Steve read the Mission.

Steve moved to approve the agenda. Michael seconded. Passed unanimously.

The Board then reviewed the minutes of the July Board meeting. Several changes were made, and the Board adopted the minutes as modified.

There was no input offered by the public when called for.

Teresa Aleckson gave the PTO Report. The PTO board met a couple of weeks ago. The PTO will sponsor a picnic following the Meet the Teacher event on Wednesday, August 26. The next PTO meeting is August 24. The Board's Strategic Plan that will be discussed tonight mentions having Committee Chairs present at the first PTO meeting of the year – Teresa thinks the September meeting will be better for this, as it will have a larger audience (and more available time on the agenda). Committee Chairs should plan to be at the beginning of the September meeting, and each will have 3-4 minutes to give an update and ask for parental involvement/support for their committees. The PTO has arranged for three TAs (two from Colombia and one from Spain). The PTO has added PayPal to their payment options. Again this year, PTO is offering parents the option to have the PTO purchase their supplies as a package. There is an option for donations, as well, to help support the PTO scholarship fund. In addition, the PTO has developed a scholarship form so there will be a consistent way for people to approach the scholarship fund.

Under New Business, the Board began discussing updates to the Strategic Plan. The draft document provided to the Board reflect the work and discussions of the 2008-2009

Strategic Planning Committee and is intended to supplement the 5-year plan adopted last year. The supplementation addresses those areas that were intended to be included last year, but were not yet developed. These areas included School Expansion, Finance, Relationship with Sponsor, and Relationship between ISLA and PTO. There was substantial discussion by the Board concerning each of these areas and the goals proposed.

**Facility:**

In discussing school expansion issues, the Board discussed the proposed goal related to exploring partnerships. The Board agreed that this goal was a good idea, but acknowledged that partner relationships could significantly impact space considerations for ISLA. The Board also discussed the possibility that ISLA could find the “perfect space” that might preclude a space-sharing partnership. The Board agreed with the proposed to make one permanent move by Fall 2010. And in the context of this discussion, the Board agreed that all deadlines in the Strategic Plan are being made to keep ISLA accountable and focused. Although the dates are guidelines and what is driving the school priorities, things may certainly come up to make us change the dates.

**Finance:**

The Board discussed whether staff or Personnel Committee should be responsible for gathering competitive salary data and decided to keep it “either/or.” The plan will link the first objective to the Learning Environment piece of the plan. Goal #2 was changed to state that the Finance Committee will report to the Board by the January Board Meeting (2010). On the issue of transparency, the Board agreed that efforts to provide parents with better access to financial information was desirable. The Board agreed that access could be accomplished without publishing such information to the general public on the schools website. A new idea of facilitating some kind of public meeting on finances would not only provide greater access but also allow for input from families on finance and budgeting issues. These could be included in other public hearing(s) that ISLA will hold to keep parents informed. ***[Action Item: Governance will look into public hearings]***. There was considerable discussion regarding proposed Goal #4 related to developing additional revenue streams for ISLA. There was concern that these efforts could take away from ISLA’s mission. Ultimately, the Board agreed to revise the language to emphasize the importance of any efforts “supporting ISLA’s mission” and to change the stated goal from developing three innovative programs for consideration to “at least one innovative program ...”. Finally, the Board wanted to add a goal related to grant writing and to implement a Grant Writing Committee, led by the Assistant Executive Director, by September 1, 2009.

### **Relationship with Sponsor:**

The Board discussed this goal in light of its three year contract renewal with the Hopkins School District, changing the dates to 2009-2012 to reflect this contract. The initial goal was modified to include maintaining our current sponsor, and broadened to change "sponsor's Education Foundation" to "any foundation". An additional goal (3) was added to include communication with sponsor regarding facility, grants, and operations. In addition, wording will be changed to authorizer instead of sponsor throughout, and will be general enough to cover any authorizer (not just Hopkins School District) so that our Strategic Plan would not have to change to accommodate a new authorizer. With regard to considering satisfaction with the existing Sponsor, the Board discussed being more proactive. The Board agreed to analyze and review ISLA's current authorizer a full year prior to any notice-of-renewal date.

### **Relationship between ISLA and PTO**

The Board discussed the important relationship between ISLA and its PTO. and very valued. Board modified the date in goal #1 to August to reflect what actually happened. There was discussion regarding the function of the Board's liaison to the PTO and who bears the responsibility to make sure any issues raised are addressed. The Board decided to keep goals #2 and #6 separate. Goals 5., 7., and 8 should be moved to the Marketing and Promotions section of the Strategic Plan, because they bear upon that part of the plan (which will be renamed Marketing and Communications with the ISLA Community (or something like that). It was deemed necessary to modify goal #3 to reflect that the minutes will only be posted after the meeting where they are adopted, not the meeting where they are taken (to avoid errors from being posted). The Board agreed that the proposed summit in Goal # 5 was a good idea and should be a big exciting meeting for the whole school community. With regard to goal #7. the Board agreed to remind families regularly that any issues with the school (complaints, concerns, etc.) should go to the Executive Director, and not to the PTO. Goal # 9 was revised to include Chairs of all Board Committees, and Goal # 11 relating to collaboration and development of ISLA Board and PTO Board roles was revised to a November, 2009 deadline to allow sufficient time for completion..

Mark moved the Board to adopt the strategic plan with the modifications discussed. Michael seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board next discussed the hiring of an Assistant Director at a slightly higher amount than discussed at the last previous Board meeting. The Executive Director explained that the stellar candidate was, in her view, worth the additional dollars, especially for the longer-term investment of this position growing. The Executive Director shared a list of

responsibilities that she envisioned for this 0.5 FTE position. The candidate has a principal's license, had nine years at Adams, three years at Park Center High School, and a high level of education. She has experience in immersion and is a native Spanish speaker. The Board discussed and clarified that the Assistant Executive Director would replace the Executive Director as the liaison with Rick at Faith. It is further anticipated that the candidate would immediately take over technology. The Executive Director reported her intention that the candidate do a little bit of everything for the first few months, and then take on the identified specific roles in the job description. The Board was satisfied and pleased with the proposal that helped lessen the Executive Director's load and eventually moved certain items off the Executive Director's plate altogether. It is anticipated that the Assistant Executive Director will also participate in some of the evening responsibilities that will help in this regard. The compensation, as proposed, includes the candidate receiving part of the Xcel grant money ISLA obtained for this school year. Mark moved that we approve the hiring of the Ximena Rayo as Assistant Director for the 0.5 position from August 13, 2009 through June 30, 2010 at \$33,000. Steve seconded the motion. There was discussion regarding annualizing the salary, but there was concern regarding how an offer had been presented to the candidate. The Board discussed addressing this compensation-related issue in other terms of employment such as vacation, etc. The motion passed unanimously. [Action item: preparation of employment contract.]

Consent agenda: The Executive Director discussed teacher Pam Shrestha. Ms. Shrestha has a degree in Elementary Education, is enrolled in a program at Hamline, and needed to get a limited license. She is a native speaker from Chile and has been in the United States for over 15 years. She is presented for hire to teach half-day Kindergarten. Kate moved that we approve the consent agenda. Mark seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MACS school membership will cost ISLA \$2800-\$3600 this year. ISLA still has grant money that could be spent on this. In addition, there is \$1415 in the budget for board training. If the grant money is not spent on MACS membership, it can be utilized on other things. The grant expires September 30, 2009. The Board discussed that it is required to do more training this year under new Charter Law, and it expects that a discount will be offered through MACS training. Membership in MACS may also yield insurance benefits, as well as help with credit options (for our needed line of credit). Additional benefits to an association with MACS includes limited PR and links on their website. Individual membership to MACS is only \$25.

Steve moved that we become a MACS corporate member for 2009-2010. Michael seconded. Discussion ensued: Are the benefits worth the cost? How much of a discount will ISLA receive on training through MACS? Will there even be other "certified" training providers under the Charter Law? Should ISLA be a member school

or should board members be individual MACS members? Is MACS really supporting ISLA or is it supporting other schools? There was some discussion and concern regarding the new Charter Law recently passed and who it ultimately benefitted and why. We need to find out the differences in benefits between individual and corporate memberships, find out what the training costs and discounts will be, and explore the insurance piece. The Board continued this discussion and this motion until the next meeting. ***ACTION ITEM: Michael will get the insurance information, Sonia will explore other benefits.***

Next, Treasurer Michael Valley reviewed the current financial statements with the Board. Michael moved to approve the financial statements as presented. Steve seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Michael and Josh will meet with our bank soon regarding a line of credit.

Director's Report: Enrollment is the same – K and 1 are full, with waiting lists. We have a couple of new students in the other grades. Interest continues to be strong (and consistent). The Executive Director's 2009-2010 goals will be emailed to Board before next meeting at which time goals will be discussed and action will be taken about them. MCA update postponed to next meeting.

Sonia reported that Mis Amigos will keep Compañeros onsite for next year. She also requested that Committee Chairs attend the September PTO meeting.

Melody moved to adjourn the meeting. Michael seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:01pm.