

The Compass School

January 12, 2016 Meeting of the School Council Minutes

Meeting Location: The Compass School, 537 Old North Road, Kingston,
RI 02881

Date and Time of Meeting: Tuesday, January 12, 2016 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Susannah Strong (SS), Marisa Gallagher (MG), Fritz
Lanz (FL), Rachel Axelson (RA), Nicole Gardner (NG)
Heidi Vazquez (HV) Linsey Trombino (LT) Michelle
Salisbury (MS) (enters at 6:10)

Others Present: Brandee Lapisky (BL), Sean Hevenor (SH), Amy
Henderson-Crane, Steve Heath (SH)

Absent: Polly Cuddy (PC)

Presiding Officer: SS

1. Call to Order: Susannah Strong, Council President, calls the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Consent Agenda
 - a. Discussion/vote to approve Consent Agenda (including agenda of this meeting)

HV motions to adopt the consent agenda.

RA seconds

Discussion: none

Vote to adopt the consent agenda.

In Favor: 7

Opposed: 0

Abstain: 0

Approved February 9, 2016

Motion passes.

4. Approval of Minutes (3 minutes)

a. Discussion/ vote to approve open session minutes from 12/8/15

RA motions to approve the open session minutes for 12/8/15

FL seconds

Discussion: none

Vote to approve the open session minutes for 12/8/15

In favor: 7 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

b. Discussion/vote to approve executive session minutes from 12/8/15

FL motions to approve executive session minutes from 12/8/15.

MR seconds.

Discussion: none.

Vote to approve the executive session minutes from 12/8/15.

In favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 1

5. Strategic Plan Update (10 min)

Review [strategic plan](#): Charter Renewal p.16-19

Milestone Review

Council has a list of questions for charter renewal. Council will have a working session to prepare the questions. January 27th will be the second visit from the Charter Renewal Representative. Council will meet with the Charter Renewal team first to kick off the Charter Renewal Site visit on Wednesday April 6 at 8:00-8:40am.

Milestone Updates- First electrician hired for the modular was not able to continue with the commitment so we sent it out to bid. The development Annual Fund has raised \$15,842 in its first month with 48% of the community contributing. Triumph made a donation of \$5,000.

6. Special Program: Fab Newport Presentation (20 min)

a. Discussion (10 min)

Steve Heath described the Fab Newport Programs and opportunities. He described the Fab Newport program as using technology to inspire children. Fab Newport offers camps, family nights such as coding night, fabrication/ making stuff, and physical computing. Fab Lab can help schools develop programs, mindsets, connect with other community organizations, and support teachers They can come into schools and run particular classes and courses within the school day. First possible step, would be to have a professional development with teachers. Then, examine budget, time, and program.

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7. Director's Report (20 min)

a. Discussion/vote to accept Director's Report

RA motions to accept the director's report.

LT seconds

Discussion: none.

Vote to accept the director's report.

In favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

8. Audit (5 min)

a. Discussion/vote to accept the annual [audit prepared by Jason Smith](#)

RA motions to accept the annual audit.

MS seconds

Discussion: none.

Vote to accept the annual audit.

In favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

9. Discuss/Vote on furniture requests for new modular (8 min)

RA motions to accept director's recommendation to use \$4,000 of capital funds (\$1,000 per classroom) for furniture for the new modular space.

MP seconds.

Discussion: Explorer teachers put a PO wish list of around \$6,000. Discoverers put in less of request wanting time in the space before making purchases. MG will send Brandee emails for schools donating and selling early childhood furniture.

Vote to accept director's recommendation to use \$4,000 of capital funds (\$1,000 per classroom) for furniture for the new modular space.

In favor: 7 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 1

Motion passes.

10. Charter Renewal Preparation (10 min)

Discussion of schedule- Charter Renewal Team will meeting with Council- Wednesday April 6 at 8:00-8:40 am.

April 6- 7th- Classroom Observations

Friday April 8- meeting with parents and student led conference

11. Endorse Job Description (5 min) [Special Education Director](#)

NG motions to endorse Special Education Director job description with additional line to review assessments, programs and instructional strategies.

RA seconds.

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Discussion: AC asks about a Special Education department review. Brandee reports that this is planned for next school year when both resource teachers are back from long-term leaves.

Vote to endorse Special Education Director job description with additional line to review assessments, programs and instructional strategies.

In favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

12. Policy Changes (12 min)

a. Discussion/vote to endorse [Attendance Protocol](#)

RA motions to endorse Attendance Protocol

MG seconds

Discussion: The protocol initiates a teacher, parent, administrator dialogue that is flexible based on the situation.

Vote to endorse Attendance Protocol

In favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

b. Discussion/vote to endorse revised [Long Term Substitute Rate Protocol](#)

MR motions to endorse Long Term Substitute Rate Protocol.

RA seconds.

Discussion: This will keep the process transparent and equitable. It also increases rates slightly to align closer to other districts. This may adjust this line in the budget for next year.

Vote to endorse Long Term Substitute Rate Protocol.

In favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

Clarification of Advisor's Role (10 min)

a. Discussion/vote to accept president's recommendation for special designations per bylaws.

RA motions to accept president's recommendation for special designations for advisors per bylaws to be sent to the policy committee

NG Seconds.

Discussion: Policy will review bylaws, charter, and the draft of advisor to council's role.

Vote to accept president's recommendation for special designations for advisors per bylaws to be sent to the policy committee

In favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

Motion passes.

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Discuss establishing a formal procedure of assessment of Director's job performance and needs (5 min)

Discuss annual in-house "director check in" and assessment using a rubric collectively crafted by council.

Outside evaluator will follow RIDE's administrator evaluation system. SS will be creating an evaluation tool to complete the 360 evaluation of the Director to make this process more complete and include all stakeholders.

New Business

Director reports that the long term art position was accepted today by Donna Perry.

Public Comment

none

Adjourn 8:25

The public is welcome to any meeting of the School Council or its subcommittees. If communication assistance (readers/interpreters/captions) or any other accommodations are needed to ensure equal participation, please contact Julie Wynsen, the student service coordinator, at (401) 788-8322 at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting.

Any changes in the agenda will be posted on The Compass School's website and place of business, and will be electronically filed with the secretary of state at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Site Committee Report:

no report

Learning Committee Report:

no report

Health and Safety Committee Report

no report

Development Committee Report

no report

Policy Committee Report

The Policy Committee met on December 15, 2015. The committee reviewed and discussed an Attendance Protocol suggested by the Director. The committee voted to send this protocol to Council. The committee also reviewed the Long term Substitute Protocols suggested by the Director. This was also approved to be sent to council for endorsement. The committee will not meet in January. The committee plans to begin reviewing the revised Council Handbook in February. Our next meeting is Monday February 8, 2016 at 3:30.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Finance Meeting, December 15, 2015

-All accounts reconciled through November.

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- Exeter-West Greenwich is past due with their tuition payment to Compass.
- Discussed the potential for an amended budget.
- RIDE received financial audits on time.
- Talked about the remaining funds from the REAP grant
- Confirmed the increase of the Nurse Substitute daily rate to \$175



Compass School Director's Report

Provided By: Brandee Lapisky, M.Ed.

Submitted on: 1/5/2016

Council meeting date: 1/12/2016

Enrollment

The enrollment tallies below are updated as of 1/5/2016.

Step Levels	Grade	Enrollment (Actual by grade)	Enrollment (Actual by step)
Explorers	K	17	34
	1	17	
Adventurers	2	19	19
Discoverers	3	19	38
	4	19	
Investigators	5	18	38
	6	20	
Navigators	7	18	35
	8	18	
Total Enrollment	K-8	165	165

*Note that Compass is fully enrolled.

Strategic Plan Updates

Director Transition: January marks the time of mid-year evaluations for all certified staff. I always seek to participate in a 360 degree feedback process that includes: self-reflection, community input and formal evaluation

In order to achieve these goals, below are proposed action steps that could take place in January.

- Self-Reflection: I will prepare a self-reflection that will be accessible for the Council and Compass Professionals to read.
- Community Input:
 - The Council and my outside evaluator already have access to the parent feedback about my performance that came through in the loyalty survey.
 - Additionally I've prepared this [mid-year Director performance survey draft](#) for Council to review. This survey directly correlates to the RIDE building administrator evaluation standards. My intent was to open the survey to Council and staff. The results will be available to you once the window closes.
 - Council has discussed a Director feedback system that is personalized to Compass mission/experience. One option could be to add addendum questions to the survey draft above and to distribute it as one evaluation survey package. Joe Battaglia, the outside evaluator, has offered [this draft](#).
 - Joe Battaglia will visit staff meeting on 1/27 to meet with staff and gather feedback in person from them.
- Formal Evaluation: I have assembled a portfolio of materials to provide as evidence of meeting the RIDE standards. In addition, I will offer the loyalty survey and Director performance survey results to Joe Battaglia (our outside Director evaluator). Joe will prepare a formal midyear evaluation that will be submitted to Council for the February meeting.

Website: One of the previous critiques of the Compass website was that the majority of the photos were of our younger students.

- Rachel Axelson, Compass parent and photographer, recently visited our campus and took professional-quality photos of student learning in action.
- Her photos can be found at <http://RachelAxelsonPhotography.pixieset.com/thecompassschool/>.
- We look forward to uploading these outstanding pictures to our website this month.

Charter Renewal:

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- I attended a meeting at RIDE with Paula Barney, the charter school site visit coordinator, on 12/17/15. Both schools who will undergo charter renewal this year (Compass and Blackstone Academy) were present along with Tim Groves, RILCS director. This discussion was more general and focused on the charter renewal framework.
- On 12/18/15, I shared the [parent interview questions](#) with the broader community in “A Note from Ms. Brandee”.
- On 12/20/15, I shared the [teacher interview questions](#) with the staff in the Sunday Special.
- I have arranged for Paula Barney to meet with Hilary Downes-Fortune and I on 1/27/16 from 11:00 - 12:00 at Compass. Any members of Council who are interested in attending the meeting are welcome. The purpose of this meeting is to provide feedback regarding the steps that we have taken so far to prepare.
- I reviewed the most recent charter renewal report and recommendation available (published on 12/9/15), took notes and will plan to discuss findings with Hilary Downes-Fortune at our next weekly Charter Renewal meeting. For those who are interested, the 108-page document is available here: [RI Nurses Institute and Middle College](#).

Loyalty Survey: One of the biggest takeaways from the Loyalty survey results was the interest in learning more about the experience and achievements of Compass alumni.

- Not only will this information be interesting for the current families to be aware of as they consider the K-8 experience, but it could also be useful for charter renewal and development efforts.
- Following Council input, we will contact alumni through the Navigator Facebook page and by emailing parents of our alumni.

Development: Our development efforts are moving along smoothly. We are 42% of the way through the fiscal year and have met 32% of the \$50,000 annual goal. Note that the development director was hired after 2 months of the fiscal year had already passed.

- Spark Grant award: Development Director, Abby Colby Cooper, applied for the RI Foundation Spark Grant Award on behalf of our Discoverer step. This grant totalled \$722 and helped support innovative instruction. With funding from this grant, Discoverers were able to visit the State House and RISD museum.
- Annual Fund: The following percentages reflect updates as of today:
 - Goal #1: Raise \$20,000 - We have met 75% of this goal. As of 1/5/16, we have raised \$15,000.
 - Goal #2: Secure 100% family, staff and Council participation.
 - The amount of the contribution is insignificant - even \$1 will count toward this goal.
 - As of 1/5/16, we have met 38% of this goal.

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- It is likely that if everyone who has not yet contributed did, we would meet our financial goal. An average of \$58 per non-participant could bring us to the \$20,000 total goal.

Blended Learning

- REAP Grant: There is \$17,000 remaining in our REAP grant.
 - I encourage the Council to explore innovative ways of utilizing these funds.
 - Organizations like Fab Newport are matching innovative technology educators with young people in a variety of formats from after school programs to in-school curriculum. In partnership with this type of organization, we could be very intentional about our technology purchases (3D printers, laser cutters, new apps, etc) and align them with curricula goals.
 - Let's consider how we can support our students in being makers with technology as opposed to users of it.

Facilities Lifecycle

- [Modular Cost Updates](#): In each of the previous Council sessions, I've reported that there will be unforeseen costs, but we had only estimates at the time. Now that we are further along with the project, this spreadsheet details the specific costs.
- It's important to note that in addition to the modular work, Mr. Arthur Smith, our facilities manager, has been actively involved in important painting projects including: the girls' bathroom in the main building, Ms. Nikki's classroom, the white picket fence in front of the school, and most recently, the hallway of the main building.

Other Topics

The Funding Formula Update: As I've mentioned before, this year the general assembly is working to make changes to the funding formula, which determines how much we receive per student in tuition. The working group is still drafting their recommendations to the general assembly, but the final draft will not come out in favor of the charters. This is the information that is known at this point:

- The reason for the change is that the districts have messaged that they bear costs that charters don't and thus the formula should be shifted in their favor.
- Charters self-advocating saying that the cost for our capital (buildings) is not shared with a town, so charters also have unique costs.
- The unique cost to districts that resonated the most with the working group was the special education costs.
 - Districts more often have to pay for 1:1 aides, out of district placements, etc.
 - Charters asserted that they also occasionally encounter these costs.
 - Current estimates is that the cut to charters will range between 1% and 4% of total revenue depending on special education ratios.
 - I am hopeful that Compass will be closer to the 1% side of this range given that we have a higher ratio of special education students in comparison with our

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sending districts, but this remains to be seen. I expect to learn more in the next two months.

- However small or large the cut comes out, this will be a challenge for the Compass budget. Every year our costs go up because staff move up the step ladder and health care costs increase.

PARCC:

- Yesterday, 1/5/16, the Commissioner issued a statement indicating that meeting the standard on the PARCC test will no longer be considered a graduation requirement for the class of 2020 (our 8th graders). This is relevant to Compass because there are a number of our students who will take the Algebra I test this year. Had the original expectation been upheld, their performance on this year's test would have been a graduation consideration.
- By our next Council meeting, I will have prepared more data for you regarding further 2015 score analysis, this year's instruction adjustments, and target setting for the 2016 tests.

Ethics Commission Compliance:

- At this time, Compass Council members and its Director are 100% compliant with ethics filings.
- [Recusal Explanation & Form](#): Please utilize this form when recusing oneself from a vote. The paper must be sent to the Ethics Commission. The address and instructions are noted on the form.