

**Lanikai Elementary Public Charter School
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 17, 2009**

Board Members Present:

Louis Saint-Cyr	Phil Whitesell	Paul Vierling
Roni Willkie	Ilan Noy	David Saucedo
Darraghlynn Lee		

Community Members Present:

Ken & EmeLei Gibson	Jessica Perry	CJ Baehr
Nainoa & Janny Gibson	Don & Wainani Tomich	Shirly Marks
Erick & Laurie Ahlgren	Mark & Kristi Sigel	Jake Hinz
Rep. Chris Lee	Kim Stankovits	Vicky Villegas
Deirdre Leyne	Ann Pederson	

Presentations:

Mercury Solar – Scott Schwartz & Scott Sparkeman

Approval of May Minutes

- **Motion:** Louis Saint-Cyr moved to approve the minutes, Ilan Noy 2nd for discussion.
- Darraghlynn Lee noted that a statement announcing the Board unanimously reappointed the community members should be added to the minutes.
- **Amended Motion:** Phil Whitesell moved to approve the minutes as amended, Louise Saint-Cyr 2nd. The motion was unanimously passed.

Community Input

Mercury Solar:

- Scott Schwartz and Scott Sparkman presented a power purchase agreement contract for Lanikai Elementary. The 12 year contract includes the installation of solar equipment that will provide the school with approximately 13,600 kilowatts of power each month. A hard copy of the presentation is available for review upon request. Mercury Solar was also provided with a list of questions and will provide written responses to be published on the Lanikai Elementary School website. (www.lanikaielementary.com)
- Note: We are the first DOE and Charter School that Mercury Solar is proposing to work with. Paul Vierling requested that the company contact Randy Moore, the person who oversees facilities at the DOE, to make sure that there are no hurdles or roadblocks that we need to be aware of before moving forward.

Representative Chris Lee:

- Provided an overview of the legislative process that impacts funding for the State. Answered questions regarding budgeting concerns and was open to attending quarterly meetings to keep open communication with the school community.

- Lee explained that the next legislative session starts in January. Charter school funding is a major issue. He expressed that the issue is complicated and is a long term issue that will take time to resolve. He will provide the school with a list of people that community members should start contacting and making their support of charter schools known.
- Lee expressed that we are most likely near the bottom of the economic downturn and things may stabilize soon but they are not necessarily going to get better. Next year will be equally bad if not worse. If things get worse then it will be the critical places such as schools and healthcare that are further cut. The State projects its revenues based on the Council of Revenues. They provide economic projections 6 times a year.
- There is stimulus funding that the State will be able to use. It was expressed that government leaders (Duncan/Obama) have spoken in favor of school choice, nationally standardized curriculum, and support of charter schools.
- Lee has submitted a letter regarding the difference in funding between Charter and DOE schools. The funding should be equal.
- There was discussion about Lanikai's Charter. In this discussion Lee pointed out that Lanikai was an "experiment school." There is still a need to fill a gap between the regulations and legislative issues and the school. (Later in the evening)

Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA) Association Policy Committee (APC):

- Teacher Representative Shirly Marks reminded the board that the current HSTA contract expires on June 30, 2009. The APC would like to sign a memorandum of understanding to continue operating under the current contract Appendices 1 to 8 while a new contract is negotiated.
 - The following letter dated June 9, 2009 was submitted to the Lanikai School Board from the Lanikai Elementary School Contract Negotiations' Committee (teacher's representative committee):

We would like to extend the Memorandum of Agreements' (Appendix I – VIII) in the HSTA Contract for Lanikai Teachers with the Lanikai PCS School Board until the DOE and HSTA have settled the negotiations for the new contract, 2009-10, 2010-11. The Negotiation's team will meet with the PCS Board in the near future when all negotiations have been finalized.

Sincerely,

Shirley Marks-Chair of CNC (signed)

- This led to a discussion of negotiations with the teacher union and how the board should proceed. This year is different from past years. The HSTA is trying to negotiate an umbrella agreement with the State for all charter schools instead of each charter school negotiating individually. Therefore, it is unclear how to proceed until the negotiations process with the state is complete. At that time it will be decided if further negotiations are necessary for amendments that meet Lanikai specific needs.

Other Community Input:

- Diana Caldwell submitted a letter that complimented Shirly Marks and her program. Mrs. Caldwell stressed that the school needs an SSC to meet student needs. See letter as attachment A.
- There was discussion about the Board's transition from 14 members to 7 members. There was a mixed views shared for and against the reduction of board size. Some of the historical discussions took place on record in the past minutes and some took place in closed sessions. The process was started in 2004.
- Further discussion included questions regarding board communication and transparency. It was pointed out that following through on the development of a liaison committee could have a significant positive impact on issues such as communication, community involvement and transparency.

Executive Committee

- Louis Saint-Cyr requested that Ilan Noy and Louis Saint-Cyr provided a recap of the meeting on June 2, 2009.
- Ilan Noy stated that the week before calling the meeting he felt that the school administration had made decisions without discussing them with the board. He felt as a board member he was not informed as to what was happening in the school. Therefore he called an emergency board meeting for Tuesday, June 2. Three members from the board attended the meeting (Ilan Noy, Louis Saint-Cry and Darraghlynn Lee) therefore there was not a quorum. However, there was a lengthy dialogue. There were no official minutes of the meeting. Noy estimated that about 45 people came. Charter School Administrative Office Director Maunalei Love also attended the meeting.
- There were many heated moments and different points mentioned. The two main issues were the lack of transparency by the administration and the lack of communication between the school and the community. These issues are not new and Ms. Love pointed out that they are the same issues from her time in the Lanikai Community. Noy feels there is a significant level of frustration. There was discussion on but not limited to the following issues: budget cuts (3 positions cut or reduced), board responsibility, role/responsibility of the executive committee, and overall school communication/transparency.
- Discussion followed regarding the main issue of communication/transparency.
- **Motion:** Darraghlynn Lee moved that the board task the Policy Committee with the responsibility of defining a Liasion Committee that will work with the administration. The process must allow ample opportunity for community input as to how the group will be developed. The motion was seconded by Ilan Noy. The motion was passed with six affirmative votes. Paul Vierling abstained from voting.
 - Phil stated that he will hold a meeting to decide how the group will be formed and make a recommendation to the board. Target for getting the liaison committee started is August.

- Discussion followed regarding the issue of board committee communications. There is limited information posted about committee activities.
- **Motion:** Ilan Noy moved that the Board Committees (e.g. Facilities, Finance, Health & Safety Committees) should post agendas to the website. Darraghlynn Lee seconded. Unanimously approved.
 - During discussion it was noted that we have to remember that the Board and all Committees are volunteer committees. We have to keep striving for improving the communication while appreciating the efforts of volunteers.
- Further questions back to June 2 were asked related to the process of decision making. It was decided that there would be a meeting to discuss the school's contingency plan.
- **Motion:** Ilan Noy moved that the board adopt the policy that any decision to cut student programs be discussed in an open board meeting. Louis Saint-Cyr 2nd.
 - Discussion followed noting that there could be legal issues in public discussion of program cuts because of employee positions that are impacted. It was suggested that the motion be amended.
 - **Amended Motion:** Louis Saint-Cyr moved that the motion is amended to be subject to attorney general approval. Paul Vierling seconded. Unanimously passed as amended.

Principal Report

- Enrollment target for the 09-10 school year is 330 students.
 - Current enrollment is 344. (more in Enrollment Committee report)
- Staffing
 - The decision to cut positions was made with input of the GLC (grade level chairs) and input on a survey from the staff. We need to be grounded on what we are trying to do with the limited resources that we have. At the last three board meetings I have repeatedly stated that the measures that Louis Saint-Cyr took us through in structuring the budget has allowed us to have a slight surplus and be in a better place than many other schools.
 - Shirly Marks did state that in the GLC meetings there was some disagreement with regard to program cuts and a final decision was never reached in the GLC meetings.
 - All positions are filled for the next school year.
 - 99.9% of our teachers are Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) compliant.
- Facilities
 - A new air conditioner is being installed in the library.
- Synergy Update
 - Synergy surveys have been completed for teachers and other departments.
 - The Synergy team presented a preliminary overview of the strengths and challenges identified.
 - A report of findings will be provided on August 20th.

- Extended Day Proposal
 - Would like to add 45 minutes a day of enrichment instruction after school on Monday through Friday.
- Finances
 - As of the June 15 Charter School Administrative Office projections that current per pupil funding is at \$5600. This is subject to change.
 - This is a \$2,408 reduction, or a 30% loss over the past 2 years. (PP funding was \$7,589 in 08-09 and \$8,008 in 07-08)
 - The 10-11 revenue shortfalls are still undetermined.
 - Governor Lingle has submitted a request for stimulus funding. \$35 million to benefit charter school for the 09-10 and 10-11 school years.

Enrollment Committee

- The following letter dated June 2, 2009 was submitted.

Enrollment Committee Recommendation to the Board

We the undersigned, **never** recommended increasing class size and student enrollment at Lanikai PCS. We were told by David that we had to increase the numbers to get more money for our school. This is poor financial and leadership error on his part. Charter School Principals were told at a Principal's meeting that they should maintain their enrollment and **not to increase it.**

According to the Legislative committee report on the bill providing funding for charter school:

"Charter school enrollment is reported to be increasing, and when this is combined with static or shrinking budget, per-pupil finding and schools with more students can only shrink. Those responsible for enrollment at charter schools need to weight their desire for more students against available resources."

The legislative analysts also reported that they caught a calculation error in the formula being used by the governor to determine the charter school funding allocation. This resulted in a **decrease** in funding for charter schools. The error was caught too late in the session to be changed.

However, federal funds and transfers of collective bargaining funds will offset some budget cuts. HSTA consulted with the House Finance Committee and Senate Ways and Means and were told that while **\$5.3 million was cut from the charter schools budget, \$5.1 million was reinstated – \$2.8 million from federal stimulus money and \$2.8 based on the collective bargaining agreement.** Moreover, Hawaii's charter schools will have opportunities for millions of dollars in additional funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, when the state applied for these funds.

The enrollment committee was not given this information at any time when looking at enrollment decisions.

Sincerely,

Enrollment Committee

Shirley Marks, Chairperson (signature)

- Discussion followed on the decision making process. There was also discussion about managed growth and what Lanikai strives for as class size and the contractual class size that administration must adhere to.

Facilities

Weather Station Presentation:

- Jake Hinz, Director of Operation of the Navel Maritime Operations Center, presented a report on the school's options if it were to accept the weather station. The facilities committee representative (Don Tomich) and Hinz explained that the primary concern was the mounting of the station. It was pointed out that the station could be accepted and stored until a suitable compromise was found. It would be a shame to lose the educational benefits of the weather station should the opportunity to receive it be lost.
 - **Motion:** Louis Saint-Cyr moved to accept the weather station as recommended by Hinz. Seconded by Roni Willkie. Unanimously passed.

Shade Covering

- Don Tomich reported that Ana Murray is going to get the permits for the shade covering by the end of the week. The coring for the foundations and footing will begin allowing the bulk of the work to be completed before the beginning of the school year.
- If anyone knows of any contractors their help is needed.
- There is a lot of heavy labor intensive work that needs to be done, but little financial outlay. There is a significant amount of funds remaining. This means that the grant may allow for the covering of the A Building slabs as well.
- Informational packets from the Facilities Committee has been placed in teachers' boxes so they know how to address classroom repair needs.

Health & Safety – no report

Policy – no report

Strategic Planning- no report

Finance Committee

- Our financial status has already been covered throughout the meeting and in the Principal's report. However, some additional information is that the governer has submitted the stimulus request to the Federal Government. IF (emphasis on the if) fully

approved and implemented it could result in an additional \$12 million in funding for charter schools. This equates to 1100 to 1500 per student in additional funding. Our current budget is estimated at \$5600. With those numbers we need to keep our enrollment up.

- If we have the reduction to \$5600 per student additional cuts at the school will have to be made.
- Louis Saint-Cyr commented that we can meet and discuss different scenarios, however there are potential legal issues with that type of public discussion.
- Saint-Cyr believes that the school community needs to come up with an additional \$100,000 in funding next year – and the community needs to figure out how to make our additional funding sustainable.
- The committee officially announces that Erick Ahlgren is going to join the Finance Committee.
- It is anticipated that the Finance Committee will present a recommended budget to the Board for approval in August.

Aloha Ilan Noy.

Thank you for your service to the board your contributions, including leading the development of the new Lanikai Website. Ilan was also presented with a framed piece of student artwork.

Adjourned at 10:15 – motion to adjourn by Paul Vierling, seconded by Louis Saint-Cyr.
Unanimous.

Reconvened to Closed Session