

Directors' Report

April 11, 2013

ADMINISTRATION

Long Term Site Update:

Focus on our long-term site plan needs to continue to be a board priority. We need to continue to pursue multiple options. Discussion in closed session.

Prop 39 Update:

We signed the alternate agreement for 15 classrooms at Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets on March 25, 2013. Once the details are finalized and costs calculated accordingly, we will sign the single year shared-use agreement. The board took the required action during the previous board meeting to authorize Kristy to sign the single year shared-use agreement.

State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Program:

We submitted an application for an Incentive Grant with the California School Finance Authority on April 10, 2013.

California Charter Schools Association (CCSA) Conference:

The Directors attended the 20th annual CCSA conference held in San Diego, March 11-14th. Some of the highlights were Keynote speaker, Michelle Rhee, Founder and CEO of StudentsFirst as well as former head of Washington D.C. public schools, and the following Breakout sessions:

- Lessons Learned: Serving Students With Disabilities in an Inclusive Model, presented by Sydney Quon, LAUSD SELPA
- Avoiding Special Education and Section 504 Pitfalls, presented by Lisa Corr and Megan Moore, Young, Minney & Corr, LLP
- Responding to Disruptive Parents, presented by Megan Moore, Young, Minney & Corr, LLP
- Changes in Accreditation Affecting Charter Schools, presented by Dr. Lee Duncan, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
- Vacant Warehouse to Affordable Charter School Home: Facility Case Study, presented by Malka Borrego, Equitas Academy Charter School, Louise Manual, ExED, and Pacific Charter School Development

Lunch Program Update:

Food service began on Monday, April 8th on both campuses. Participation is currently lower than expected but we attribute this to the two-week spring vacation. We anticipate more sign-ups in the next few weeks as families return to school life and students see and smell the appealing food being served. We will continue to monitor our plan and revise as needed once we assess its effectiveness.

Preparing for Move:

Staff is preparing for our big move this summer. Lessons from last year's move will inform this year's process. Parent volunteer support will be necessary to help pack up the Mar Vista campus, as well as to prepare and beautify the Westchester campus once we get access in August. Moving costs will be visible in the budget, as will some costs associated with preparing the new rooms at Westchester.

Enrollment:

Initial offers have been made. The goal is to finalize classes as much as possible by end of May.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**Common Core Standards:**

During the student free Professional Development days on March 25-29, the faculty completed work on the Common Core standards integration for math and language arts. The faculty will continue to focus on strategies for increasing performance of all our subgroups.

The faculty has also worked creatively on how to integrate technology as indicated by the common core standards in ways that are developmentally appropriate and in alignment with our practice of Waldorf Education.

STAR Testing:

STAR testing is around the corner in May. Teachers are planning accordingly and preparing their students in developmentally appropriate, imaginative ways so they can perform their best on the STAR tests. Faculty and staff training on how to administer and proctor the STAR tests has been conducted. Follow-up trainings will continue until the end of April.

Math:

The faculty has consistently focused on math as an area of improvement for our school. This year's efforts included purchasing and using a workbook series that is visually engaging and challenging. In addition to periodic math blocks taught during main lesson, teachers use these workbooks on a daily basis during math practice periods. The faculty reports that students are highly engaged and motivated by these workbooks that allow students to progress at their individual pace while allowing teachers to work with individual students and small groups on specific concepts. We hope to see growth in our math test scores this year, in part as a result of the systematic use of these workbooks.

Special Education:

We continue to have about 12% (52 students) of our students participating in our special education program. We are evaluating the effectiveness of all of our programs (resource, speech, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, special education assistants/paraprofessionals) and working with our various support providers and staff to adjust the programs for greater results. In addition, we are reviewing our intervention programs (both during and after school) for their effectiveness. This annual review will inform staffing and programmatic decisions for next year.