



Rilke Schule Academic Policy Committee Meeting Minutes December 10, 2009

APC members attending the meeting were:

Jo Sanders, President	Joe Weinberger
Petra Nickerson, Vice President	Claudia Bittlingmaier, Teacher
Jeff Ullom, Treasurer	Debra Schwicht, Teacher, Absent
Liz Crafford, Secretary	
Frank Mächt	Crystal Wrabetz, Principal
Mary Mead, ASD Charter School Supervisor	

Other attendees at the meeting were:

Brett Wilbanks	Cassie Jeremias
Beth Schlabaugh	Denise Cotton
Terri Wood	

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded to approve the amended minutes from the August meeting. The vote was unanimous.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes from the October 16 special meeting. The vote was unanimous.

It was moved and seconded to approve amended November meeting minutes. The vote was unanimous.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

A parent expressed a concern about content in the classroom and wondered about adding a parental input committee about the curriculum.

The board responded that in general, the teachers have the academic freedom to teach how they feel is appropriate and they are not scrutinized at that level. It was noted that we have overall curriculum committees for the school for English and German.

A board member suggested that it might be appropriate to put more curriculum details (esp. kindergarten) on the school website that included cautionary advice about some of the cultural differences which may include material that Americans are not accustomed to and perhaps more hands on material can be discussed in the weekly letters.

A parent asked about a hot lunch program. There is a company called Root Down Catering that provides hot lunch for \$5/ day at other charter and private schools in town. The parent will look into more details about this and bring it back to the board.

A parent noted that the Enter and Exit signs to the parking lot are only visible when coming eastbound on 53rd, and there is some traffic that comes the other way and turns into the wrong entrance. She asked if there is a way to deter people who are coming westbound from going in the wrong exit. A board member said they would try to address it.

IV REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES OR PERSONS

A. Supervisor of Charter Schools

The Charter School Application is online on the ASD school board website. It looks great. Mary added the letter. She asked that the more board members who could be there Monday night at the school board meeting, the better. Mary asked if we wrote anything into our charter about employee preferences. If we did, we might need to put in an exemption for that. An ASB member contacted Mary about provisions in the charter for deselection and will want more details about it at the board meeting. Mary wrote him a lengthy comment about this. She noted that we are not allowed to make agreements with parents about whether or not their children stay at the school.

The board Chair thanked everyone who worked hard on the Charter document.

Budget – Mary asked if we got the last budget adjustment to the district budget office. She asked that we put more information in there detailing part time and full time teachers so they understand the details more clearly. Winterbury charter school put in an RFP to hire an architecture firm to help them find a new suitable building. They chose to go with RIM Architects and a 23,000K contract to have them locate a facility for a new school. She suggested it would be good to have an opportunity for the building committees to share information between the schools.

Mary reported that several Charter school people are working on a presentation to the State Legislature about changing the way charter schools are funded. This will not result in more money for the school, but will hopefully change the way charters are forced to go about getting a facility.

B. Principal's Report

The charter has been our big push. It will be posted on the school web site. The conference in San Diego was fabulous with quality presentations. While in San Diego, they visited the Albert Einstein German School there. It has a very different feel. There are 700 students. They switch weekly between English and German. The upper grades don't have as much German anymore. They follow the International Baccalaureate program which is quite a different curriculum than ours, but has some very good ideas that we could use.

The Student Council has been started. They will do a mitten and hat tree and a food drive. They will probably meet twice a month.

In San Diego, the Rilke staff spent an hour in a 5th grade German class and they spoke fluently. They liked our Sprachmeister idea.

C. Rilke Verein

The Verein reported that the next big event will be the fundraising auction. They are planning for a dinner out event for adults with a cash bar. They will be asking donors for support. It will be March 27th at the Zoo. Details are not set.

The QSP fundraiser earned around \$7-8000.

The Verein noted that we need to order more Rilke Schule Pencils. They cost 11c /pencil if we order 2500. The RSV would pay 2/3 and the school 1/3. This would be less than \$100 for the school's contribution. The board agreed to take care of it.

Jan 23rd is the alternative fair.

We need to update the Handbook and the Trifold brochure.

D. Building Committee

The building committee will present more in executive session this evening. RSI is still working on financing issues for the Sentry Drive property.

The building committee mentioned that the McKay building owned by Mr. Marlow on 3rd and Denali was being considered as a possible site for a school. The board noted several issues associated with this property including 1) it is downtown 2) it has no playground. 3) it is down the hill from the soup kitchen, and 4) Mr. Marlow just defaulted on a large Government Hill loan recently. CSS Mary Meade will put us in touch with the Winterberry parent who is exploring this option as a possible school site.

E. Curriculum

The English curriculum committee will meet in January.

F. Finance Committee

The treasurer and Petra need to finalize the budget. They will try to have something ready for the next meeting. Petra noted that we will get the extra money in January and then we can balance the budget. Everything we had carried over from last year has been spent. The per student funding is not as high as we estimated it. We always have trouble with our teaching supplies budget. We have less than \$7000 for teaching supplies. The PASCH grant pays \$22,000 for the German books. Our budget for office supplies is only \$4000.

G. Goals Committee

The Goals Committee chair has a report prepared to pass out. He outlined the process on the first page, and summarized what we came up with on the second page. There are references to our vision and mission statement. The board read over the document.

We are preparing our children for a future that we don't know what it will look like. The Board President thanked Frank and the committee for all this work. It was noted that this will be shared with the staff at the next staff meeting. We should still solicit comments and feedback about this. The curriculum committee will also utilize this report.

It will be posted on the school website.

H. Public Relations Committee

The Chair asked who was organizing the Alternative Fair on January 23rd. Several people commented that they would be there.

The first Kinderfest was on Dec. 5th. 12 or 13 children attended. A parent asked what the chances looked like for next year. It was explained that we would have a waiting list this year. We will have about 22 siblings. This leaves about 22 open slots for new families. The teachers who worked will be paid for their time teaching at Kinderfest.

This led to a discussion about incoming kindergarten classes and ways we could consider making room for a larger incoming kindergarten class. The benefits and risks of maintaining the middle school grades were discussed. It was commented that having a small middle school is a real asset in the eyes of many parents who want an option for their child other than a large public middle school. It was also noted that there is no other middle school that teaches advanced German.

I. Optional Intensives

The program is going well, but we need more volunteers to run it.

V. Old Business

It was motioned to hold two executive sessions after the meeting. One to discuss building issues, and one to discuss personnel. Liz moved, Petra seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VI. New Business

It was moved and seconded to form an Elections Committee to attend to the upcoming APC elections in February. Jeff Ullom and Joe Weinberger were nominated to run the committee with a third person who is not on the board. **The vote was unanimous.**

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 PM. The vote was unanimous.

Executive Session on Building Issues

An executive session was held with our landlords Mr. Levi and Mr. Zelner to discuss our plans for the future and the possibility of renewing our lease with them. Various proposals and opportunities were discussed to address issues that have been brought up by both the school and the landlords.

Executive Session on Personnel Issue

The board was briefed on a personnel legal issue by Mary Mead.

A public meeting was called to order.

A motion was made to spend up to \$1000 of our legal fund to settle a legal matter. It was moved and seconded.

Vote:

In Favor: Liz, Jeff, Joe, Jo, Claudia

Opposed: Petra

Abstained: Frank

The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Crafford, APC Secretary