

COASTAL EMPIRE MONTESSORI COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION (CEMCO)

Executive Session

20 May 2010

Members Present:

Dr. David Lerch – Board President

Mr. George Bowen – Secretary

Mr. Carlos Hernandez

Ms. Mary Shank

Mr. Ben Price

Mrs. Stephanie Wright

Mrs. Tanya Melville

Mr. Michael Graham – Board Attorney

Executive Session: Called to order at 4:30 PM

Discussion of legal issues as relates to the CEMCO Charter renewal and potential teacher contract issues and new appointments.

Executive Session adjourned at 5:00 PM.

COASTAL EMPIRE MONTESSORI COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION (CEMCO)

General Session

20 May 2010

Members Present:

Dr. David Lerch – Board President

Mr. George Bowen – Secretary

Mr. Carlos Hernandez

Ms. Mary Shank

Mr. Ben Price

Mrs. Stephanie Wright

Mrs. Tanya Melville

Mr. Michael Graham – Board Attorney

1. Call to Order at 5:00 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion by Mr. Ben Price and seconded by Mr. Carlos Hernandez, the agenda was approved unanimously.

3. REPORT BY HEAD OF SCHOOL

3.01. Furniture and Material Needs – September – Furniture and equipment for an additional 4 classrooms is estimated to cost \$20,000.00, or \$5,000.00 per classroom. This figure does not include curriculum materials.

3.02. Teacher Contracts – Board authorized the Head of School (HOS) to proceed with issuing contracts to currently on-board teachers with the understanding that salaries could be impacted by the budget adoption process currently on-going at SCCPS. New Hire contracts will be considered and a decision offered to the HOS sometime within the next week. The Board President and Treasurer are scheduled to have discussions on this issue with the HOS on the 25 of May.

4. BOARD OF EDUCATION MATTERS

4.01 – Comments by Public – Board heard comments from parents on the proposed All-Day Montessori Program. Mrs. Keisha Baldwin and Dr. Laura Frost raised issues regarding the cost of the program to parents and the hours of operation. Generally, both said that the \$40.00 weekly cost, the lack of a sliding scale for students eligible for free and reduced lunch, and the cost for siblings were major impediments for working parents impacted by the current economic downturn. Dr. Frost also requested more feedback from the Board regarding the direction the school was headed.

4.02 – Update on Facilities Grant – Late submittal of data required by the state on CEMCO’s facilities grant request delayed its approval. The approval has been received and CEMCO has been allotted \$60K. These funds will be used to lease additional temporary classrooms to accommodate additional students this upcoming school year. The HOS would like these classrooms in place by the end of June.

4.03 – Set Enrollment and Number of New Classes for 2010 – The Board discussed current enrollment projections and the process to be employed to determine the mix of students to reach our projected enrollment of 250. Various scenarios were discussed but the Board ultimately left the decision open until there is a reasonable projection on funds to be allocated to CEMCO for the next school year. HOS needs to have a decision quickly as this will drive staffing as well as classroom space.

4.04 – CEMCO Inc and Coastal Empire Academy – Based on objections raised by some SCCPS Board members, CEMCO is looking at creating a separate Academy to accommodate the Bright from the Start Program and the tuition-based 3-year-old program. This will allow for a clear demarcation and allocation of funds to support each entity. Dr. Lerch and the Board Attorney, Mr. Michael Graham, will meet Friday to begin discussions and work on this issue.

4.05 – Before and After School Program Services - Feedback from some parents has highlighted the need to make adjustment to the proposed All Day Montessori Program. This program is slated to replace the Pryme Tyme program. Unlike Pryme Tyme, the All Day Montessori Program currently does not offer discounts for free and reduced lunch students, nor does it offer a discount for siblings. This, along with the shorter hours, creates problems for some parents. The Board has asked Dr. Lerch and Mr. Hernandez to meet with the HOS and see what kind of adjustments can be made to make the program more responsive to the needs of parents. Mrs. Wright is preparing a letter to parents to secure feedback from them on this program. Ms. Mary Shank offered to assist Mrs. Melville with phones and administrative work during this very work-intensive period. This is a time-sensitive issue which requires a recommendation and decision quickly.

4.06 – Proposed Timeline for Permanent Facility - Dr. Lerch provided the Board with details of his proposal to pursue financing for a permanent facility. He indicated that several organizations are willing to work with CEMCO because of CEMCO’s ownership of its campus. In addition, he feels that we might be able to work with Mr. Jerry Ford to pursue a City of Savannah bond issue for construction. He asked Mr. Graham, Mr. Price, Mr. Hernandez, Mr. Bowen and Mrs. Melville to join him as a committee to work towards putting a plan together to establish a concept for a permanent facility within the next year.

4.07 – Timeline for Renewal of Charter - A committee has been established to begin work on preparing the detailed charter renewal document for submittal to the SCCPS Board for charter renewal. Ms. Mary Shank, Dr. Lerch and Mrs. Melville are the designated members of the renewal committee.

4.08 – Timeline for Head of School Evaluation – The Board agreed that the HOS evaluation should be completed and discussed with Mrs. Melville by the end of August. The Board also assured Mrs. Melville of its desire to renew her contract for another year.

5. CONCERN - Nothing to Report

6. FINANCE

6.01 – Expenditures to Date – Mr. Hernandez briefed the Board on expenses and advised that all bills are paid current.

6.02 – 2010 – 2011 Budget – CEMCO budget request has been submitted to the SCCPS Board and is awaiting their adoption of a budget. CEMCO's request mirrored last year's request.

7. ADJOURNMENT - On a motion by Mr. George Bowen and seconded by Ms. Mary Shank, the Board adjourned at 6:44 PM. Next scheduled Board meeting will be 17 June 2010.