

**Interdistrict School for Arts And Communication (ISAAC)
Board of Directors Meeting
September 13, 2011
190 Governor Winthrop Blvd., New London, Connecticut**

(Draft) **Minutes**

Attending: Larry Roberts (acting Chair); Guy Hermann (Treasurer); Ashley Hanson (Sec'y; left 6:30); Riley Barnes (student representative); Ellen Calkins, Stephen Castagnaro, Carol Hervey, Stephanie Brown, Melvin Alston, Rich Muckle, Corrina Ferguson and Lee Cole-Chu. See attendance sheet attached.

Staff: Gina Fafard, Executive Director; Janna Salmon, Head Teacher; Diana McMasters, Acting Teacher Representative; Diane Foster, teacher; Migdalia Salas-McKee, Development Director.

Guests: Jennifer Barnes; Michael Bradford

Acting Chairman Larry Roberts called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda (attached) approved.

Guests: Riley Barnes's mother, Jennifer Barnes, was introduced. (Prof. Bradford arrived later.)

Public comment: none.

Successes & Appreciation:

The ISAAC leadership team recruited highly qualified staff valuable team members recently lost.

Thanks Rich Pendleton and his group for installing new computer infrastructure and donation of firewall, installation and training.

Thanks to staff who were helpful to getting PowerSchool software quickly operational.

Minutes of the July 13, 2011, Board meeting were approved (moved/seconded ["M/S"] Cole-Chu/Hermann).

ISAAC 2011-2012 school year calendar (attached): approved without objection. (The Board of Directors roster was circulated for confirmation or correction.)

Student Handbook: Janna Salmon briefed the Board on changes to ISAAC's policy on bullying, to conform the policy to state mandates. The updated policy has been approved by the administration. It will be added to website. Janna will circulate the new policy to Board members for review and approval at a future meeting.

ISAAC Faculty Handbook: Executive Dir. Gina Fafard presented the newly revised ISAAC Faculty Handbook and summarized its reasons, contents and sources. SRBI [scientifically-based research in Instruction] triangle was discussed. Comments welcome, but Board approval not planned.

Student representative Riley Barnes was introduced and spoke briefly about the start of the student government year. Mr. Kuczenzki will be student government advisor.

Executive Director's Report (attached):

Highlights include 7 new staff members; analysis of health insurance options; setting up electronic check signing; external affairs initiatives including grant application tracking and other fundraising procedures; beginning to draft school public relations policy; changing ISAAC Facebook site to "read only" (not interactive); beginning of use of Constant Contact communications system; new Development & Community Relations Office; relocation of Student Intervention Lab space.

Regarding public relations, Corrina Ferguson raised the subject of a "vanity website", suggested using the word "official" at the ISAAC website, and suggested consideration of an interactive (not read-only) Facebook page. She recommended that the website could and should be social and integrated and encourage and keep "friends" if possible. Ellen Calkins pointed out the alumni relations function of the ISAAC Facebook page. Diane Foster said a lot of alumni use the ISAAC Facebook page. Migdalia Salas reported 150 students came to ISAAC table at intern recruitment event at Conn. College (including prospective interns/volunteers from UConn, Eastern CT State Univ., Mitchell College and U.S. Coast Guard Academy). Community partnerships were discussed, incl. with Garde Arts Center, Tsetse Gallery, New London Main Street (ice rink on the Parade) and [newly renamed] Plaza Hotel (swimming pool). Ms. Salas-McKee said such partnerships will save ISAAC money. Plaza Hotel has been a good neighbor, allowing parking for staff at \$30/month (paid by ISAAC). Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region ("seCTer") has also been a good neighbor, incl. introducing Ms. Salas-McKee to business leaders. Grants: With grant funds, a pre-school fitness program is offered 3 times/week.

Ms. Fafard proposes creation of a student guidance office.

Professional Development: Roger Tremblay is joining the ISAAC guest artist program.

State Dept. of Education (SDE) news: ISAAC CMT test results are improving. ISAAC scores went up about 10% in previous areas of deficiency.

Strategic planning: G. Fafard has consulted with Michael Sharpe of Jumoke Academy. ISAAC should consider growth, incl. horizontal growth (# students), vertical growth (# grades) or both.

Committee reports:

Buildings and grounds Committee. New state policy requires construction loans: direct state funding of construction funding has ended for the present. Ms. Ferguson commented that parents want to know plans for the gymnasium.

Finance Committee. See attached Finance Committee Report, Profit & Loss Budget and Balance Sheet (9 pages total). Net worth \$3,963,695.25. Debt service reserve on hand: approximately \$160,000.

Discussion of budget: adding students, thanks to increased state funding, since the budget was approved improves ISAAC's finances.

The ISAAC teachers' union appears interested in starting negotiations. The current contract expires June, 2012.

ISAAC after-school program: Board needs to authorize up to \$10,000 for 8 weeks. M/S [not carried](Hermann/Castagnaro) to authorize up to \$10,000 for 8 weeks. This program is for any ISAAC student, but there is special outreach to students with academic challenges. Program will include seasonal activities like ice skating. J. Salmon says \$10,000 might cover more than 8 weeks.

Supplemental financing that might be sought for after-school program was discussed. Corrina Ferguson

says some parents (IPAT) have expressed interest in seeing ISAAC financial information. Motion withdrawn.

Motion carried to authorize \$12,000 for fall after-school program (M/S Hermann/Castagnaro): carried.

Policy Committee. G. Fafard says policies need to be re-examined. She will staff Policy Committee. L. Roberts invites volunteers. L. Cole-Chu suggests Policy Committee work closely with Strategic Planning Committee or be one committee. G. Fafard will discuss committee structure in detail soon with the ISAAC Executive Committee.

Technology Committee. Steve Castagnaro reports. The Committee usually meets at 4:00 p.m.: attendance is a problem. G. Fafard questions the need to continue the Technology Committee. There have been some major changes in ISAAC technology. Steve thinks ISAAC should consider replacing Mac computers with iPads to save money. G. Fafard says some textbooks are electronic (which allows automatic updates). D. McMasters report: new router has sped up operations; PowerSchool filtering software slows down operations. 150 laptops had to be revamped. G. Fafard got the hardware donated. ISAAC's network will be fiberoptic in 18 months.

External Relations. Stephanie Brown reports. She has been working regularly with Ms. Salas-McKee. Prof. Bradford, Chairman of the gala committee, said that Committee, which works closely with the External Relations Committee, is working well.

Correspondence: Gina Fafard said there is a Board mailbox in the ISAAC office.

Reported correspondence:

1. Thank you letter from STEPS (a volunteer program which borrowed space at ISAAC).
2. Board nominee form for H. DeLaurentis. Board member agreements for Ferguson, Hervey, Castagnaro, Cole-Chu. (It was agreed that basic Board and committee information should be kept at ISAAC offices.)
3. Anonymous letter re: legality to have sibling of staff member as a Board member. G. Fafard consulted an attorney: it is not illegal to have a Board member who is related to a staff member PROVIDED all business (including selection of Board members) is done in the open and all Board members recuse themselves in case of conflict. E. Calkins and G. Hermann expressed concerns about the appearance of conflict of interest. G. Hermann said a Board member who is a staff member's sibling has not recused him/herself. J. Salmon suggested changes in Board policy regarding conflicts. D. Foster said there was a board member who was wife of a staff member. G. Fafard said there are many resources, including <http://www.boardsource.org/> to help the Board navigate conflicts and other issues. L. Roberts describes issues as growing pains. The Policy Committee will consider these issues.

D. McMasters: Chris Blackshaw has resigned as teacher representative to the Board. Teachers are interested in negotiations regarding new contract.

G. Fafard: Staff – to – Board communications: staff should not contact Board members regarding ISAAC/ISAAC Board matters.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by Leeland Cole-Chu, Acting Secretary