

The Chicago High School for the Arts
Board of Directors Meeting
The Chicago High School for the Arts

Minutes for May 14, 2012

Present: Duffie Adelson, James Alexander, Carlos Azcoita, Joo Boe, Marge Collens, Sondra Berman Epstein, Sandra Guthman, Mirja Haffner, Francia Harrington, Laura Head, Julie Hurvis, James Mabie, Kay Mabie, Terry Mazany, Susan McKeever, Janice Posner, Ralph Rydholm, Charles Slamar, Pam Strobel, Neal Zucker and Betsy Holden via phone

Absent: Armando Almendez, Carole Brown, Elissa Efroymsen, James Gandre, David Herro, Ramsey Lewis, Sylvia Neil and Steve Solomon

Others present: Yanira Cirino, Ashlee Hardgrave, Camille Kuthrell, Heather McCowen, Jose Ochoa, Terri Milsap and Dorothea Roque

Quorum: Yes

This meeting of the Board of Directors of The Chicago High School for the Arts ("ChiArts") was held pursuant to Call & Notice served on all Directors, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes. The meeting opened with a guitar performance by ChiArts junior music student, Cuixi Aguilar. Board Chair, Jim Mabie ("Jim M."), called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. and then conducted the meeting in accordance with the Agenda, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

Approval of March 12, 2012 Minutes

Pam Strobel ("Pam") moved to approve the minutes, Julie Hurvis ("Julie") seconded and the board unanimously approved. Charles Slamar ("Charlie") asked for a motion to approve the January 9th minutes as there was not a quorum at the May 12 meeting. Ralph Rydholm moved to approve January 9th minutes, Sandy Guthman ("Sandy") seconded and the board unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report

Jose Ochoa ("Jose") introduced new staff members; Ashlee Hardgrave, the new student recruitment coordinator, and her assistant, Laura Marsh.

Teresa Milsap ("Terri") gave the principal's report. The attendance rate dropped since the March meeting/report but Terri hopes to keep it above 95%. There has been a rise in Friday and Saturday detentions, which is mostly attributed to tardies students have accumulated for being late to school and individual classes.

The part time security position was filled with the help of Pastor Harris. Diana Stezalski, the visual arts department head resigned from her position and parents and students were recently notified. She will

stay on until the close of the school year. Terri and Jose plan to appoint an interim department head to assist with hiring and support department operations until a permanent replacement is identified.

The hiring process for new and replacement teachers is underway; Terri hopes to have all academic positions filled by June 15th and conservatory positions filled by July 15.

The junior students took the ACT as part of the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) mandatory in-school testing. Students who need to make up the exam and students with accommodations will be afforded the opportunity to complete the ACT. Once all tests are complete and submitted to the College Board, ChiArts will receive a composite score. The highest possible score for the ACT is a 36. The national average is 21, CPS average is 16-17 and selective enrollment schools average is 24-25. Terri estimates a 20 or 21 composite score for ChiArts. ChiArts students were provided test prep opportunities. Kaplan hosted a comprehensive ACT preparatory class and ChiArts also offered a math specific prep course taught by ChiArts math instructors. Additionally, regular class curriculum was purposefully aligned with ACT content to prepare students for the test. June 9th is the next available date for students who wish to re-take the ACT or need to complete the writing section (not offered as part of the PSAE) which is required by many colleges. Students can take the ACT a maximum of 12 times.

Heather McCowen ("Heather"), post secondary counselor, explained that several college visits were organized for spring break and students were provided an opportunity to visit schools in the Midwest. College visits were planned at different price points as to allow as many students as possible the opportunity to visit a college/university. Eastern Illinois, for example, financed the entire trip for 25 students. Colleges were also selected because they expressed interests in recruiting ChiArts students and are schools that our students are viable candidates for acceptance. Students also visited IU South Bend, Valparaiso, Ohio State, University of Michigan and Michigan State University. Attention will be focused toward local schools in the fall and Heather will continue to dialogue with admissions representative of Northwestern University, Roosevelt University, Loyola, DePaul University and the University of Chicago. James Alexander ("Jim A.") offered assistance from the board to better engage these schools, if necessary.

The Posse Foundation visited ChiArts and 70+ students attended the informational session. 15 students expressed serious interests and the Posse Foundation is specifically looking to recruit arts students. More schools are scheduled to visit ChiArts before the close of the school year to give students the opportunity to learn and interact with more colleges and universities. Webster College recently visited and Oberlin College and Columbia College are scheduled for a campus visit. ChiArts will host a college fair on May 30th where more schools will be in attendance. Then in October, ChiArts will host the National Performing and Visual Arts College Fair; more than 140 schools will be in attendance (a preliminary list of attending colleges is attached). Student from all over Chicagoland are invited to attend.

Heather will continue to meet with juniors through the close of the school year and over the summer to help with post secondary planning. She will host a college boot camp for students during summer institute and then host a parent college night in the fall to prepare parents for the application process and help with FAFSA completion. Heather is utilizing the online system, Naviance, to help student review and apply to colleges; all students and parents have accounts.

Sandy Guthman reminded the board that the chair of Columbia College promised 2 full scholarships to the first graduating class of ChiArts. Heather will follow-up with Columbia and investigate how students are identified and selected for scholarship.

Jose Ochoa reported that construction is slated to begin soon at Doolittle East to accommodate ChiArts next year and he is scheduled to tour Malcolm X College with Pat Taylor from CPS to discuss renovation plans. Betsy Holden secured the services of former HR Director at Kraft Foods, Stephanie Smith ("Stephanie"), to review ChiArts human resources and operations structure and provide guidance. Stephanie will meet with Jose, Terri, Dorothea Roque and Camille Kuthrell next week to gather information on current processes.

All wards are represented, except ward 16, in the class of 2016. The racial/ethnic breakdown is as follows: 40% African American or Black, 23% Hispanic or Latino, 18% White, 2% Asian. Currently there are still openings in the music department for brass and piano students.

There was a decline in attendance at auditions due to the security issues that took place at the beginning of the year, but admission numbers are still high. As of today, 148 incoming freshman are confirmed to attend in the fall; only 27 student declined acceptance offers. Whereas Lane Tech and Lincoln Park were ChiArts main competition in previous years, this year, more students who declined admission at ChiArts attended Walter Young College Prep instead.

Parent Support Organization

Janice Posner ("Janice") reported on behalf of the Parent Support Organization (PSO). April 17 was the last PSO meeting and 30 parents attended. They discussed ways to improve participation next school year, both physically and financially. Plans are underway to create a family handbook and an online database to track capabilities and resources to be utilized during the year. Finally, the nomination committee brought forth a slate of people to be considered for officer elections; the president, vice president, and treasurer will go unopposed. Elections will take place at the next meeting on May, 22, 2012.

Finance Report

Joo Boe ("Joo") reviewed the FY 2012 budget report. The report shows actual figures to be fairly aligned with projected numbers. The budget projects an ending cash balance of \$84K whereas the actual is \$798K, which includes the working capital fund (\$300K) and the carryover from 2011(\$386,627). The budget actual is based 436 students, which is below the projected amount based on funds anticipated for 450 students.

ChiArts did received supplemental funding (SGSA Supplement line item) because of the addition of 2 special education teachers. However, CPS start-up support and expansion funds are still outstanding in the amount of \$178K. CPS has changed the rules for when and how much will be disbursed, but the finance committee anticipates that actual funding to come in slightly under the \$178 projected, once fund are finally received. ChiArts, for the first time, will not receive Renaissance School funds this year.

Annual fundraising has been in excess of projections, which has helped fill in the gaps left by public funding. Fortunately, office and administrative expenses were less than projected and the cost, per pupil, is trending down.

Development Report

Sandy opened her report by highlighting the \$470,134 net cash surplus (deficit) that needs to be raised to balance the budget. So far this year, the cash contributions received total \$1.824M + \$300K + Kerfuffle profits once they are finalized. Special fundraising included \$31K for additional security personnel and \$22K raised at the Sondra Berman Epstein and Neal Zucker reception. \$2.2M in pledge payments is outstanding for FY13 and beyond and as well as several foundation proposals. Not all will be paid out before the close of FY12.

Board Affairs

Pam introduced Mirja Spooner Haffner ("Mirja") and moved to elect Mirja to board of directors, Kay Mabie ("Kay") seconded and the board unanimously approved. The board is divided in to three classes, each class serves a staggering 3 year term. Mirja will be added to class 2 and complete the term, which will expires on June 30, 2013. Pam then presented class 1 of directors for a term renewal. All of the directors currently in class 1 will be up for term renewal, with the exception of Armando Almenderez, who tendered his resignation from the board. Marge Collens ("Marge") moved to elect class 1 of directors to a new term that expires June 30, 2015, Sandy seconded and the board unanimously approved.

Pam proposed an amendment to the bylaws that would allow Jim M. to continue to serve as the board chair for an additional year. Duffie Adelson ("Duffie") moved to accept the amendment, Sandy seconded and the board unanimously approved. The slate of officers to be elected includes: Jim M. as the chair for an additional year; Marge will serve as the vice chair and succeed Jim M. as the chair once his term concludes, Charlie will serve a second term as secretary and Joo will serve a second term as treasurer. Pam moved to elect the proposed slate of officers, Sandy seconded and the board unanimously approved.

Jim M. moved to approve the set up of the Program Excellence Committee and its members. James Gandre will serve as chair and members include: Jim A., Duffie, Julie Hurvis and Charlie. Sandy Guthman seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved.

Program Excellence Committee

Jim A. spoke briefly about the Performance Excellence committee. The purpose of this new committee is to measure the success of the school at achieving excellence as it relates to: curriculum; applicants and process; student retention, graduation and college readiness; faculty; facility; and arts partnerships. Quantitative measurements will help with fundraising efforts.

Marketing/PR/Special Events

Sondra Berman Epstein ("Sondra") thanked the committee and ChiArts staff their contributions to Kerfuffle's success. The show, produced by Jose and the conservatory department heads, was well

received by attendees. Steve Solomon secured many of the corporate partnerships and Sondra expects individual contributions will continue to be received over the next few weeks. The board's financial participation for this event was 100%. Total profits for Kerfuffle are not yet finalized due to a few outstanding expenses, but are estimated to be \$178K. The marketing/pr/special events committee will host a post-Kerfuffle meeting on June 1 (all are invited to attend) to evaluate the execution of the event and discuss opportunities for improvement in the future.

Francina Harrington offered the use of the Chase Auditorium Theatre for next year's Kerfuffle.

Chairman's Report

Jim M. gave the Chairman's report. Discussions continue with CPS regarding building renovations at the Doolittle East campus to accommodate ChiArts until 2015. There are no new developments with regard to the Malcolm X College facility. Jim M. remarked on the quality of the Curtain Call performances and urged the board to see at least one of these student performances/exhibits. Jim M. will follow -up with each director in the coming weeks to discuss committee assignments. Kay will no longer serve as co-chair but will remain an active member of the board or directors.

Public Comments

Josephine Norwood praised the board and ChiArts staff on their efforts to make ChiArts a wonderful place for her son to learn and grow.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Jim M. adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m. and then held an executive session.