

Marco Island Charter Middle School
Board Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2009

All board members were present.

Bill Morris moved to approve the December 3, 2008 board meeting minutes. Tarik Ayasun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Tarik moved to approve the May 27, 2009 board meeting minutes. Bill seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

In the President's report, President Jim Reinders brought up a Wall Street Journal article that spoke of charter schools outperforming public schools nationwide-even controlling for selection. This was attributed to longer days, stronger disciplinary programs and merit based systems for teachers.

A memorandum was presented demonstrating that MICMS is not only the best school in Collier County, not only the best school in all the surrounding counties, but is the best scoring school in 56 counties in Florida. Only 1 or 2 schools in 11 counties had scores higher than MICMS. The board congratulated George, the staff, the teachers, the students, and the parents of the students for all their hard work and the amazing results!

George presented on his informal meeting for parents, which was created in response to complaints of openness to parents. Parents are always welcome to meet with George, or attend board meetings, however, he wanted to provide a specific time in the evening to be open to questions and concerns. In the first meeting, 6-7 parents attended. There were no negative comments, just very positive discussion.

Jim Reinders, alluded to the past meeting where there was a concern over whether the president could vote for the purposes of passing the bylaws. Jim referred to Roberts Rules of Order 2004 edition, Chapter 8, paragraph d.

Back to school night was discussed and Vee Young was thanked for manning the volunteer desk. Jim mentioned that he was very impressed with the leadership kids and the way they helped out that night.

Jim Young presented the treasurer's report. We are running 13% under budget so far this year. Currently there are 357 students enrolled-we had budgeted for 360, so we are not too far off and it fluctuates each day.

Each board member was assigned a fundraising event to lead a committee on:
Tarik Ayasun will continue to work on parent contributions
Jim Reinders will work with the YMCA on the festival/carnival
Elizabeth Summers will work on the silent auction
Joe Hausauer will work on the Battle of the Bays

Jennifer Tenney will work on the cash raffle

Cathy Cleary will work on the holiday dance

Bill Morris presented his idea for a fundraiser for “Queen for a Day”, which he will work on

It was emphasized that this year, especially, we really need to fulfill the fundraising we committed to- the school is depending on it. As a long term goal-we wish to work on the endowment fund, which would preserve the school’s financial stability for the future.

Elizabeth presented the idea for a fundraiser of a junk sale, perhaps at the Farmer’s market. Bill McMullen, in the audience suggested the Farmer’s market as a place to see 50/50 tickets and Jennifer Tenney expressed that it was a great venue for selling the cash raffle tickets.

Cathy Cleary presented a nutritional policy. George reported on the current state of food at the school and the strides they have made to make it healthier. They got rid of all the vending machines, save one for water and juice. The venders now include subway and Publix with a very healthy a well-balanced meal. They even upgraded the hot dogs being served by the travel club. There is no on-site cafeteria. It was discussed whether a staff member was needed for the nutritional policy to be implemented. Jennifer expressed her concern that it would not be financially feasible for the school. She suggested passing the policy as a goal and appointing Cathy Cleary as head of a committee, where she could get the help of other passionate parents to suggest alternate vendors and negotiate contracts with them to ensure that the food being offered is healthy. Bill and Jim R supported the nutrition policy as a goal, not a mandate. Jim Y suggested getting a volunteer based nutrition team. Tarik motioned to pass the nutrition policy as a goal with Cathy as the chair of the nutrition committee, Joe seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

A series of Public Records requests was presented by George. George has always fulfilled every public records request in a timely manner, however, he was concerned when Jen Lofy, police officer of Marco Island, requested all the student’s names and addresses. George called the district to see what they do, and they responded that they were still looking into it and were concerned about the privacy and safety of the students. FERPA states that the student’s directory information is public record, however, parents must also be given the option, under FERPA, to opt out of having their information distributed. There are many sensitive situations with households, including children who have an abusive ex-spouse, and other situations. George talked to the chief of police and told him that he was waiting on the decision of the district, but would provide the names to the police as soon as/if he can.

Shortly after, Cathy Cleary brought in Dr. Sanchez, who made essentially the same formal request-for all parent’s information. They were told the exact same thing-that we are waiting to see what the district decides-and if they are concerned about giving the information to the police-they are certainly concerned about distributing it to other parents/community members. The PTO wishes to make a directory with parents information.

Jim R expressed his concerns: 1. there is an expectation of privacy amongst the parents
2. the public records disclosure act has exceptions and requires giving parents a chance to opt out-which they have not been given yet
3. once we start down this path-the precedent is created and the private addresses and contact information of the students will be distributed to anyone who requests it of the school for any purpose or no purpose.

So it was decided that under FERPA, parents must be given a real chance to opt out and protect their child's information. A flyer would be sent out (with a warning stating that once the information is out there, the school cannot protect it and cannot guarantee it will not be widely distributed) to parents. The parents would check yes or no on whether they wanted to have their information in the directory. The parents who checked yes would then be sent an information sheet, which would be used to make the directory. In light of this decision, Dr. Sanchez withdrew his public records request. The reworded PTO flyer should be presented at the next meeting.

George stated that in the meantime, the school would be willing to print the labels and distribute anything to the parents which was approved, as long as the group provided the postage costs.

In addition, it was pointed out that we have to approve all flyers that go to the students (except flyers from the city, YMCA, or optimist club-which are automatically approve); it would make no sense to have to approve flyers, if any vendor or person could get the information and send anything they wanted to the students and parents. Jim Y suggested getting an anti-endorsement stamp, which the board thought was a good idea.

Jennifer announced that the elections would be upcoming in December. There are three slots up for re-election: Jim R, Tarik, and Joe's. One parent and two non-parent slots. At the next meeting we will set the schedule and a notice will be posted in the paper regarding the upcoming election.

Vee Yong gave a volunteer report and reported that there are volunteer positions open for media center work, tutors, homework club, substitutes, eagle ambassador's picnic, parents who could work on the brochure about the school, adopt a room, concessions, and the other fundraising events up and coming.

Dr. Sanchez brought up pursuing federal grants as a source of funding for the school. Cathy was appointed head of the grant committee and she was to bring all grant ideas to George so that he could help on whether we could qualify or not. Joe also expressed that he had grant writing experience and offered to help fill out and gather info.

The next meeting will be October 22nd, followed by a meeting on November 12th, and then the election/annual meeting on December 10th.

The meeting was adjourned.