

# Charter School Taskforce Meeting

Friday, September 12, 2008

## **1. Preliminary List of Members**

A.J. Duffy has assigned BOD to the Charter School Taskforce, the members are: Coleen Henry-Schwab, Robin Potash, Cathy Proctor, Mat Taylor, Ingrid Gunnell, Cheryl Ortega, David Rapkin, Alex Caputo-Pearl and Tim Henderson. Resource members added are Brandon Zaslou, Granada Hills Charter, Joi Tanita, Palisades Charter, Kevin Cronin, CFT. UTLA staff members are Tom Alfano, Valley West, Roger Scott, West Area, Sharon Harrison, North Area. Julie Washington, Elementary Vice-President is the Chair.

## **2. Distribution of Books**

Two books were distributed as book reads in order to develop our understanding of the concept of charter schools. The publications are: Keeping the Promise? The Debate Over Charter Schools and The Charter School Dust-Up-Examining the Evidence on Enrollment and Achievement. We will read Keeping the Promise? First, and be ready to discuss at our next meeting.

## **3. Sarah Knopps Paper**

Sarah Knopps wrote a research paper on the subject of charter schools. It was an excellent source of information regarding charter schools and its implication to education at this time. This is a good resource to have available to all members. Portions of the paper could possibly be published in the UT. It was written for the ISR(International Socialist Review). David will make it available to the members of the Taskforce.

## **4. Create Structure for Future Meetings**

Need to make a recommended policy to take back to the House. We need to deepen our understanding of the issue and history of charters. Then take our time to chart a course based on this understanding. Some topics under charter schools will have to take precedence over others and be on the fast track. It may be necessary to chunk parts of the policy and take it to the House in components. We will need to educate our members on the subject so that when it is time to make policy it will be possible to make a decision based on a level of knowledge and understanding and not speculation and opinion. In addition, the policy should also be formed around educational research. Frame the issue in the greater good of the students and put it in terms of the future of our students and how public schools will be impacted by the financing of

public education. Site visits may necessary in order to frame the argument around charter schools based on the educational needs of the students.

Put the pro con statements out there for the different concepts about charters. For the union the two questions are: What do we want to do and what are we able to do? What resources will we get from our affiliates? Decide on our capacity to deal with charters and membership. We need to hear what is motivating our members to go charter. Dealing with the iDivision, a motivating force is lack of trust with the District. Hear from the schools that are doing it at this moment.

As we read the publications take notes on the types of charters that are available-independent, dependent, start-up, and conversion. Keep in mind the characteristics of all and the impact they have on public education. All charters are not created equal, so to frame our policy it would be in terms of how the funding of charters and how they operate-inclusion and exclusion-impacts public education and the rights for all students regardless of their background to have equal access to a quality educational.

The other issue is the break-up of the collective bargaining agreement. Frame the debate. Here are some of the issues of the argument. Our members have desires and needs that need to be met. UTLA is not organized enough to give the members what they need. What some have done is to take it upon themselves to get the job done that they need done. They are frustrated by it.

Consider assigning tasks with the book reads so that we are focused on specific topics under the concepts of the different types of charter schools.

Give consideration to moving towards the understanding that UTLA is United Teachers Los Angeles where all teachers that work within the city of Los Angeles are members of UTLA.

(Taking control of our industry)

Submit articles to the UT for members become

## **5. Communication with the House of Reps**

WE don't want to come up with policy and spring it on the House of Reps. October 29, at the House meeting have something to report to the House. Julie will tell Betty that we want a spot on the agenda. On September 24, Duffy will announce the work and formation of this taskforce and disclose the names of the members, possibly provide a date for the Charter School Forum. We need to talk about the type of forum we will have.

There is consensus that we want a Charter School Forum

Julie- We are more than giving information, Some of what we can present is too big of a chunk, so if we have a forum that is the first in a series and let everyone know that this is the first of what you wanted to know about charters. In the future take one topic and speak on it. 3 or 4 of us get together and flush it out and bring that proposal to the field trip and then calendar it so that we can move with it.

Robin- Panel discussion. Take the ideas of what Brandon said and put it on the website and a link. It would be more manageable to disclose at each meeting the topic and date of the next meeting. That way people will be able to look forward to what is coming up.

David-Some summary of the information we have gathered so far. The experiences of Joi and Brandon could be shared. Speakers would speak for no more than about 8 minutes. Gain knowledge. Discuss and debate. Let them speak and also sum up.

Panel and open discussion with as moderator,

Kevin- Someone from Locke both presently and past faculty member.

Cathy- Co-located schools

Brandon-As we remember how complex this is, how much time we are dedicating to the amount of time. Have people explain why they chose to go charter and why some chose to stay. Have the forum large enough so that the members of the formed charters can have their say and also see the concerns of others. Break the topics into pieces because you don't want people to leave just as confused as when they came. Have a paper result of the meeting. Get a synthesize paper of what happened in the forum to summarize and publish it in the UT so that it reaches a wider audience. That way it may attract more people that may want to come.

## **6. Election of Co-Chair**

Julie wants to move to the structure of "Distributive Leadership". Coordinate with her to plan the meetings and can hold the meetings in the event that she cannot be there. We have to get better at training future leaders. Cathy Proctor and Robin Potash volunteered to work together with Julie to co-chair. Ingrid Gunnell volunteered to be the Parliamentarian and note-taker. David is the Communication Facilitator. Forum Subcommittee Members:

Robin Potash, Director (Year Round)

Ingrid Gunnell, Director (East)

David Rapkin, Director (Central)

Cathy Proctor, Director (Central)

## **7. Future Meeting Dates**

The more meetings on calendar the better it is for Julie and Colleen Schwab.

**Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2008**

**Time: 10:30AM – 4PM**

Location: Granada Hills Charter School

Expectations and Needs: Meet with Leadership Team, Co-teacher classes, Special Ed classes, tour of the school, Science class will be visited. We want to see the budget.

**Charter School Forum: Wednesday, October 22, 2008**

**Time: 5:00PM - 7PM**

Location UTLA Auditorium

The first UTLA Charter School Forum will be held on Wednesday, October 22, 2008 from 5PM-7PM, at UTLA 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. This information will be published in the UT and send flyers to post on the UTLA bulletin board at each school site. David has volunteered to get the flyer designed. Once Julie gets the flyers mailed to Chapter Chairs to post, we will make an announcement and flyers available at each UTLA committee meeting until the day of the forum. The subcommittee will meet to develop the agenda and format of the forum.

**Other proposed dates:** October 24, from 3:30-6PM

November 14, from 3:30-6PM

December 12, from 3:30-6PM

January 8, from 9AM-3PM

January 30, from 3:30-6PM

David will send these out on the ListServe.

Roger will find out when the District visits school and determine site capacity and projected student enrollment.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:15PM

Minutes submitted by *Sharon Harrison*