



GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - Special Meeting

Meeting of Friday, February 7th, 2020, 5:30PM
Iftin Charter School Library
5465 El Cajon Blvd. San Diego CA 92115

“Provide all students with personalized, challenging, academic programs, which develop 21st Century skills necessary to become active and effective global citizens via a caring, interactive, project-based learning environment that emphasizes culture, character, compassion, and personal values.”

Mission: Iftin Charter School provides students in grades TK-8 an academically rigorous, common core aligned curricula, supplemented with a technology intensive program in a student centered, safe and caring learning environment. ICS addresses the needs of a diverse group of students, their families and communities by building on the strengths of the students’ cultural heritage and life experiences. ICS students are educated and enlightened to become successful, lifelong learners and valuable members of the global community.

WELCOME GUESTS / CALL TO ORDER 5:43PM

Roll Call

Abdulkarim Warsame _____	President present
Joe Udall _____	Secretary present
Mulki Hersi _____	Treasurer present 6 pm
Rahmo Abdi _____	Member present
Faisal Ali _____	Member present
Ibrahim Hassan _____	Member present

Udall motions to switch Discussion Item A with Public Hearing.
Seconded Ali.

Approve Warsame Udall Ali Hassan Abdi Denied N/A Absent Hersi

Ali motions to add public comment after Closed Session

Seconded by Warsame

Approve Warsame Udall Ali Hassan Abdi Denied N/A Absent

PUBLIC HEARING

This is the appropriate point in the meeting for any members of the audience to speak on matters only on this special agenda. If they wish to address the Board, they are requested, prior to the meeting, to submit to the Secretary of the Board their names and the subject on which they wish to speak. Time is limited to three minutes for each individual. Individuals wishing to comment on items on the present agenda may do so during this portion of the meeting. Complaints about specific personnel are not appropriate for public session. Please submit any complaints to the Board Secretary in writing.

Abdirahman – I want to change my tone today. When an issue like this happen, it’s not time to blame. It’s better to say how we can get together. A previous speech I said were harsh against the board. I said you guys can’t be the ones who slaughter the camel. This school is for the community, and keep this school. What happened we know. How we leave from this point is what Mr. Martin explained. His deep knowledge. When corporate goes bankrupt, the leadership has to go. Someone will take the school to a new level. But the leadership of the school is the issue, and in order to go forward, we need it to start with the board. Don’t sit and wait until someone takes the lock and key and forces you out.

Maslah Yusuf – I sent this letter in 2018 to the board president about taking action. I am going to pass my speech to the board. I created the school in the first place. I was the first board president. I saw 2 petitions granted. Many of you were present during that time. You knew the work we had done. I used to work more than 16 hours a day. I



GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - Special Meeting

believe the responsibility on our shoulders are so huge. They are ELLs, immigrants, black, and the most vulnerable. We don't work for them, no one will work for them. It wasn't for making money, and hiring your wife and sister and daughter. It was for the kids. I suggest not going for the county. The reason is the board said they will work for us. They said the governing board failed what they are supposed to do. So please let's take this opportunity and work with Superintendent Martin.

Holly Franco: Being the leader of the union, and working here for 13 years, us teachers are here to work with the parents, and we want to keep the community together.

Amina Mohamed: As a parent who had a child from kindergarten, I would like the community to work together, forgive each other, and keep the school open.

Mohamed Ares: To say something about this meeting, I believe we are too early because when we heard from the SD Unified, some of what they said was they instructed the superintendent to work with the teachers, parents, children, stakeholders, elders, and they are not here. We have so many opportunities, and we need to invite and sit together around the table and discuss where we go from here. We need to do what's best for the children, and I recommend to invite those who care most with the elders and experts to come together and hear from the community. Let's call our people to come together. We don't need to go another legal way, they will say what we heard already. Unity together.

Ahmed Abdi: I am sorry for what happened. Now is not a time to criticize each other. We come united on how to save our school. We need to be honest and people who don't have an agenda to come together. I would like to emphasize the importance on not going through with legal efforts. Once you submit the appeal, how can we work with the people who made this mess in the first place. I don't believe it's going to help us, and the best option is to form a committee with teachers and parents. I am not telling you what to do, you need to do what you think is best, but you have to be honest with yourself. So please, I am not pointing fingers, or groups, but it's up to you to decide.

Mahmoud Liban: As others mentioned, we need to come together as one community. Maybe there are too many agendas. Only way we can survive is when we come together. Get help from experts like Mr. Martin or other people. Let's move forward with one united mission.

Abdulmalik Adan: We are saying the same thing, and I think the board has a stake on this, I am requesting on behalf the community that we need a report, and don't do what you've done in the past. Can we come together? Can we setup for the community? What I am suggesting is: let the community unify and get past those grievances. That is my opinion, and it needs to be done as quickly as possible. Some people are absent, not here, but the board and school union need to come back to you guys.

Bahru Bayisa: We should really focus on the kids, the students. This is my 5th year, I decided to come back because this school is amazing. So much potential. In my 5 years, I saw 20% average increase. We are one of the best performing in this area. We need to focus on the kids. We should not point fingers at each other. We are not interested in power. That doesn't help the kids. We need to get together, and those are our options, and it's for the kids. We can go anywhere and teach, and we can go different places. We should speak for them. Sometimes we express our opinions, and we need to listen to the people with experience, and problem-solving skills, and those who can help us achieve something. This looks like a power struggle. That is not for the kids. I am really encouraging parents talk to the teachers, and talk without someone getting in the way. We should look at ourselves. When we point, we should point at ourselves. Our kids are amazing.

Ismahan: This institution needs to stay strong. I have 2 stories to share about how Ifin is great: 1.) I had a student tell me they learned a way new ways to speak. 2.) A 2nd story is about a student who felt comfortable here because in public schools they were bullied. She doesn't face what we had to face growing up. I assume good intentions



GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - Special Meeting

from everyone in the room. And what I want to make clear: we are always teaching our students how to ask for help. As adults, we need help, and it's okay to admit that to one and another. I've been a board member, and I needed qualifications, and more training, and that took a lot of strength to say. Really think what does sacrifice look like at this moment. What does it take for this institution to move forward? I don't have the answer myself, but we need Iftin, enlightenment and light. We see darkness, and we need to think about all the implications, and I propose thinking through Mr. Martin's ideas.

Warsame: We have been in close contact with CCSA and counsel and we are looking for a way forward. We want to share what we have been discussing as well. So, tonight is the beginning of the discussion. I can tell you that there is going to be an action. What that action is going to be and look like, all these ideas, and all the ideas to come, and nothing is off the table, and our school is to keep the school open and move forward. One thing I want to conclude is that I know that we had the past, and we need to the answer their district points. What we need to think about is: this is why our school wasn't renewed. So everyone can bring solutions to the table. Of course it is heavily operation. CCSA sent a letter on our school's behalf before the renewal, and said we met the criteria to be renewed. But things the district said, we need to respond legally, and let's focus on why our school was not renewed. We have to accommodate a way forward that they're happy with, and if these venues don't work, what are our options? Hopefully we have a solution that we don't have to go all the other options, and as a board, and administration, we come together, and unite our efforts, and will say to the community what we want to do. Once we lay the path, then we will continue discussing, and we get to a point, and address all our shortcomings, and make progress.

Ali: I request everyone who can say should say, and we will have public comment. We will have a statement to read, and please stay.

Hersi: I am so grateful to see my community together. We are going to work together and thank you so much.

Udall: I am really glad to see that unlike other crisis, it seems like everyone is united and ready to focus on saving this school for our students and our community.

REGULAR SESSION

I. Discussion Items

A. Appeal of Charter Petition Non-Renewal to the San Diego County Board of Education

Warsame: Welcome everyone. I am sure you aware of SD Unified action Tuesday. This is a meeting to determine how we move forward from here. This is new for us, and we want to make sure we have a discussion where we go, and what steps we need to take. We have our counsel from Procopio, our consultant on the petition Kathleen Daughtery, and we also are expecting CCSA representative, too. We need to come together and hear what everyone has to say, and how we can best fight for this school to stay open. We are not giving up on this school. We hope the community has suggestions. Let's start the board for comment.

Udall: I suggest we hear all the options from either administrative or Procopio. It's hard to take leadership when we don't know all the options.

Ali: I want to hear from the stakeholders, and this is a time that calls for unity, and we need to engage everyone, and the floor is open for suggestions. The district left open a window for us, and we need to evaluate everything seriously.



GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - Special Meeting

Abdi: We need to hear from our parents and teachers, and what options that aren't necessarily on the agenda.

Hassan: We need to see what legal options we have with the charter office, and the stakeholders are important part of this conversation.

Hori: I am the ICS principal, and I appreciate our staff, our board, our community leaders, our teachers, our parents, and we will contribute ideas on how to keep our school. We have many options, and Mr. Kamaal came from CCSA, and had a conversation with how to proceed. Mr. Kamaal has a lot of suggestions, and he will share with us. The parents are waiting for us, asking how we save our school? We have a parent meeting on Monday, and they need the information from you guys. I am very glad our ICS founders are here. We are not expecting today a denial of petition, for the last two years, I've been here from 6 to 6 with my team to finish our jobs.

Kamaal Martin: First off, thank you for having me in this meeting. For many reasons, Iftin is really special to me due to my background in the community. This school's petition was denied not on academic grounds, but operational grounds. At a basic level, academically, ICS was doing well and was successful. The challenge is how the adults have been running the school. The district took more time on this petition than others. I work with charter schools throughout Inland Empire, Orange County, and San Diego. With all due respect to the board members, the board is responsible. There needs to be a sufficient oversight here, and most of the complaints proceeded the current administration. No more pointing fingers, but by looking at the past, how can we not make the same mistakes again. The options that you have now are not a huge range: 1.) appeal to the county. Look at Iftin, the scores are good, and should be renewed. However, there are 40 complaints, how would you address that? That was the people not here anymore, however, with the current makeup of the board as it is, that the people that allowed this to happen can make this not happen again. Time sensitive: we have 27 days to submit the appeal to the county. Many of the grievances weren't that substantial, but when you have a high volume of them, there is a trend, and you need to make the case that the governance is equipped to make corrections. This is my opinion: for Iftin to survive, some of the people in this room might need to prepare to remove themselves from the organization. At the same time, we need to finish out the year. How could SD Unified influence the county? This is to be considered as well. The appeal to the county could be a great option because it's the natural first step, but let's take a step back. 2.) There was a window open by Barrera that we care about Iftin and the community, and there are a lot of great things that happened here. It was too much ignore at the moment. As we understand it after speaking with him this morning: SD Cooperative Charter had 2 campuses. Their executive director made problems, and parents got excited and teachers mobilized against the current administration. The director resigned, and the 2 schools were put on one CDE code a few years ago, and their board let the other campus go.

Udall: What's the process for the pilot?

Martin: The process is very vague, and how they will proceed is unsure. Could be a good thing, could be bad? How will they let stakeholders be a part of that process? Student focus should be the primary concern. The point is, until we talk with them, we won't know if the appeal to the county is the right path or not. We recommend them to appeal to the county, proceed with two parallel tracks, and with alternative scenarios. If SD Unified were to agree a resubmitted petition with significant changes.

Abdi: Why are we going to through the appeal to the county if it uses our resources?



GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - Special Meeting

Martin: There may be advantages with the county, and moving away from the district, but you're being squeezed from all sides, and you're going to have to pick something, and go through. We will support your decisions, and be a part of the negotiations.

Ali: During the appeal to have hope, we need to make drastic changes? To the governing board? If we just file the appeal to the county, we need the changes too?

Martin: I believe you need to make a significant change to making your appeal as strong as possible. Those changes don't need to be made immediately, but address the five points to make some reasonable accommodation. Whatever path you pursue, you have union teachers. There are a number of interests at the same time.

II. CLOSED SESSION 7:15 pm

Anticipated Litigation – *Conference with Counsel- significant exposure to litigation pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 54956.9 (1 case).*

III. Reportable Action

Return from closed session at 9:05 pm.

Warsame: We looked at our options, and as promised, we were not going to make a decision hastily, and more community healing needs to be done. As a board, we reflected on what happened on Tuesday, and we listened to what you have to say, and we reflected on all the feedback, and I will make some personal statements for later. As a community, as a school leader, now is the time to come together, and engage the community unlike before. Being a board president for five years, it comes with good days and bad days, and I'm also myself reflecting on my leadership got us to this point. I am kindly asking the board to consider selecting a new president, hopefully who can give a fresh view to the challenges we are facing, and use different strategies to move forward. We need to diversify the board, and set us for success in the authorizer's eyes. I am going to weigh the future for my tenure ended in January, and hopefully that decision comes soon, and helps the community. Hopefully this journey also continues with my children at this school. If I resign myself, I'll continue in another capacity as a parent. I thank all board members, and I think governance and order is important. We don't our organization to collapse.

Ali: I want to thank you for your leadership, and thank you for your resignation from the board president, and are committed to saving Iftin. In the next few days, admin will reach out to the community and see what our next steps are. We should have a new board president, and we need your help to save this school.

Hersi: I want to personally thank you Abdulkarim. The hours you put into this organization. I really thank you so much and I hope to see you as a parent here, and I'm appealing to the community. I really hope we get a renewal, and we get our community together.

Udall: Abdulkarim and I worked very closely for the last five years as president and secretary, and I appreciate his leadership even more in these trying times for that's the sign of true character. His reflections and feedback will always be valued in this organization.



GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES - Special Meeting

Warsame: It's not easy to be a board member, it's not easy to be a parent, or administration, and it's not an easy

IV. Advanced Planning

The next regularly scheduled Governing Board Meeting is to be held on **Friday, March 6th, 2020** at 5:30 pm in the Iftin K-8 Library at 5465 El Cajon Blvd, San Diego.

V. Adjournment 9:19 pm

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Office of Iftin Charter School at (619)265-2411. Notification of 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the School to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to that meeting (28 CFR 35.102.35.104) Additional questions can be sent to Board Secretary, Joe Udall, at mrudalliftin@gmail.com