



Yuba River Charter School

CHARTER COUNCIL Minutes

**Meeting of March 28, 2011
3:15pm YRCS Bldg. 2**

Yuba River Charter School is a community focused on the development of our children. The primary responsibility for the governance of the affairs of the school falls upon the Charter Council, composed of teachers, staff, parents and community member(s). Regular meetings of the Charter Council are held the second Wednesday of each month. The Charter Council invites input from all constituencies of the school. For more information regarding the functioning of the Charter Council, see the Charter Council By Laws and applicable policies.

1. Call to Order - 3:20 PM

CC Present: Doris Rainville (DR), Leila Barber (LB), Dan Martinez (DM), Torrie Mudd (TM), Robert Wallis (RW), Mariana Nielsen (MN), Newman Peery (NP)

Guests: Caleb Buckley (CB), Susan Egan (SE)

2. Public Comment - EXTENDED until 4:05 PM

Public Comment shall be extended to include sentiments from the community regarding a possible move to the Nevada City Elementary (NCE) campus this summer. Written comments may also be submitted. Time for each speaker shall be limited by the Chair.

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the council on non-agendized items. Note the council cannot discuss or take action on non-agendized items at this meeting, but such items may be agendized for a later council meeting for discussion and/or action. Agendized items may either be addressed at this time or when the items come up for discussion and/or action. All comments are to be pertinent to the business of the board as determined by the chair. Furthermore, comments which reflect adversely upon personal character or motives are out of order as are those which reflect racial, religious, economic or political views. Such statements are grounds for summary termination of the privilege of address.

Public Comment was extended to include sentiments from the community regarding a possible move to the Nevada City Elementary (NCE) campus this summer. Written comments were also submitted. See attached for a details.

3. Closed Session: 4:05 PM

The Council shall meet in closed session to discuss:

- a. the lease negotiations with Nevada City School District (NCSD) to rent NCE for a term of three years to begin July 1, 2011.
- b. the negotiations with Bitney Springs LLC to renew our current lease.

4. Open Session - Action: 5:02 PM

- a. Shall the council authorize Caleb Buckley to sign the counter offer from NCSD in response to YRCS "letter of intent"? TM 1st, MN 2nd - Passed unanimously
- b. Shall the council approve contract for geotechnical consultant on Rough & Ready building project? TM 1st, DR 2nd - Passed unanimously

5. Call to Adjourn: 5:10 PM

Respectfully Yours,

Mariana Nielsen
Charter Council Secretary

Comments Received During the Meeting

Maki

Since it is an inner city school, can we ask for bus routes?

Mr. Charles, 8th grade teacher, presented excerpts from several letters from students

The fact that our money would go to Nevada City is great.

It will be nice to walk to school.

Nevada City is beautiful, too.

I wish I could have gone there.

Yes!

Keep money circulating locally.

It would be a fun place to learn.

It would be a very good move.

Very local.

Teachers can go downtown for lunch.

Mr. Charles, 8th grade teacher

Strongly in favor of this move.

It would be unifying there. Out here we are outliers in the community. This is a unique opportunity to bring Waldorf methods to a neighborhood school, to the community.

The money stays local vs. some faraway guy.

Kimberley

Daughter used to go to NCE.

They were devastated when it closed.

There are trees and dogwoods and planter boxes at NCE.

When first came here to Bitney Springs, was surprised by the actual grounds, but then walked into the classrooms and found "home"! Saw teachers with 30 rapt students.

To return to NCE would be great.

There is one entrance door. Families are greeted as they enter.

There is a huge assembly hall.

Can sit on the front steps with the kids and work.

Can head right down hill for an ice cream.

We have "hang out" space here, but there it is easy to run and get an errand done during different pick up times.

Move to town creates larger community.

Signs all over town "Keep NCE schoolhouse". There is lots of neighborhood support.

Rachel, 8th grader

Was for new school, even though she won't be able to go there.

Bitney Springs is great and all, but it is a patchwork turned into a school.

The Nevada City neighborhood is in desperate need.

The location is better than up here, and lots bigger.

This place is nice, but other bigger/nicer/with an actual entrance.

Ed

Supportive of going and being part of community.

If moving costs are an issue, supportive community can help and also volunteer to beautify the playground.

Would be great to be a part of Nevada City.

Georgia, 7th grade teacher

It would be cool if we moved.
 I could probably walk to school.
 We have to move eventually anyway.

Anna

Would like to be a tiny voice for the other side.
 Feel sadness to leave the rural setting.
 Hear desire to be closer to home, but all knew when we moved to this area where the site was.
 Like kids to be in a natural setting most of the day.
 Don't like the through traffic and lots of strangers nearby.
 The site is right near the courthouse.
 Kids are safe here: from freeways, from pollution, from population.
 Now there are not a lot of drop off parents at our school, but new site would encourage this because of lack of parking.
 If you go to local parks on a Saturday morning, you can see the city is an active "hang out" spot. Don't want that for our kids.
 The negatives I feel are moving from rural to urban, but would support any decision made.

Jilan

Took a general poll of a few classes.
 Of 40-50 responses, all said we're all in with this school, regardless of site.
 5-7 strongly against the move.
 30-35 strong advocates, feel teachers opinions are strong/to hear joy from teachers is a strong motivator. Includes people from all over county, even if their commutes are not improving.
 Summary of points:
 Location
 Keep money in our community.
 NCE was built as a school with Steineresque walls and features.
 Current landlord is irresponsible. Even if he comes down in rent, what will happen when the next issue comes up?
 Is it realistic to think we can move in 3 years? Will our new site be completed?
 If it will be longer, better to be without an irrational landlord.
 Asphalt yard vs. mud/dust yard seems to be a wash.
 Hearing teachers happy is a really strong motivator.
 Instead of being the "hippie" school out in the woods, we could be in town and be part of the community.
 Overall, our carbon footprint would be lesser.
 Knows people that can contribute time and money to the move.

Shannon

1 of the 7 who does not agree with the move.
 Moved to this area specifically for the rural setting.
 Don't want the "drop off feel" of an urban school or a city playground.
 Downtown area is near the courthouse and hustle and bustle of the city.
 However, will support any decision made.

Dayna

Has been at YRCS for 12 years.
 Is only for the move if it is the only way to save money in the budget; otherwise, stay and negotiate with current landlord.

Took her daughters to see NCE and they hated it.
 Asphalt yard. What are the younger kids going to do?
 As they were at NCE, two shady characters passed by going back to a car.
 Daughter said, "This seems like a place kids could get kidnapped from."
 We built everything that is here: yards, etc. It would be a shame to let it all go.
 To be put in the center of town is not the same feeling.
 What if we need to move in 3 years but our new school is not ready?

Name?

The walks kids take at our current site are great.
 Chose this school because of its location and thought natural setting fit in with Waldorf methods.
 Worked at the jail for years and feels the crime in Nevada City is an issue.
 Why was this decision made without the parents?
 Now it includes the teachers, but still without the parents.
 If more parents knew what was going on from the beginning, the "polls" may be showing more like a 50/50 split.

Marguerite, Pre-school teacher

Can hear the voice of those who wish to stay in a natural setting.
 As a teacher here, can speak to being alone at night or during the summer, and it is not as safe as you would think. There are safety issues with either site.
 Biggest reason for the move is that we could actually have a dynamic pre-school program that could grow.
 At current site, the pre-school room was the one most affected by the maintenance issues and the class has no where to go.
 With the exception of one parent, everyone in pre-school is for whatever the right choice is for the school, even those with longer commutes.
 Huge support for NCE among her parents and so is she.
 Knows what it is to close a rural school.
 Families will grieve either way.
 It is good to remember that our school is not going away.

Carlisle

Excited to be going to YRCS, either site.
 Talked with five other families who show support for NCE.
 Many NC families are enthusiastic.
 Central location will attract attention for the pre-school program.
 Although it lacks the outside areas we are used to, there are natural settings around.
 Environmental benefits and message to our kids is a great benefit.
 Less time in the car supports kids physically.
 Excited to support the move.

Keri

If we move, can we try to install a program to create good walking trails and routes?
 Still wants an outside feel.

Milaika

Has been talking to YRCS re instituting a farm program.
 Wants the farm program at either site, or at new site.
 That would bring kids outside.

Supportive of move because lives near NC.

James

In favor of move.

Is Gold Run a possibility?

What info can CC share?

Is the school really only available for 3 years? What if new school is delayed? Could we extend?

Caleb Buckley, Director

Unfortunately, can't say details because it diminishes our negotiating stance.

Will make public once we have a deal.

It is wonderful to be part of a community working together on this and having space to give a voice.

**Comments Received via Phone
from Oregon House families**

Note: All said that this decision would not affect their family's commitment to YRCS.

Joep

Feel current site is too magical to lose.
Big loss, especially if we have to move again in a few years.
Use that energy for the new facility.
Otherwise, we'll have two camps of families for the next few years, since there is a lot of resistance.
City environment is restrictive for children.
Moved from city to countryside on purpose.
Likes Nevada City, but not for everyday.
Will be more difficult to manage the shared carpool with NCSA.
It will be a bit of a longer drive.
We should address the issues with the landlord or handle this in a different way, such as raise more money.

Corrine

Feels same way as Jilan's recent email.
Went to look at this morning: It will be sad to leave the forest for asphalt, but otherwise looks nice.
Parking is bad.
Drive tested out about the same.

Rachel

Agrees with Nancy's email.
Parking is a big issue.
Walking kids through downtown streets.
Main thing: Atmosphere at the current school, beauty of the trees resonates.
How much is the move itself going to cost? Is it worth it? Add 15% to whatever we think it will cost.
What are Dan's (teachers) opinions?
Teachers need to feel comfortable.
Oregon house is now 10% of YRCS enrollment.
Drive is the same.
How realistic is the new facility move in date?

Comments Received in Writing