APPROVED

Hope Academy

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday December 15, 2020 at 7:30 AM

https://zoom.us/j/95479140069?pwd=TGo0anE1UUNkTDNjaUt3NXBvTWpNUT09
Meeting ID: 954 7914 0069
Passcode: Xm9SVv

Directors Present
A. Levander (remote), C. Kenney (remote), J. Finke (remote), J. Gabe (remote), J. Shopp (remote), K. Turner (remote), L. Mannweiler (remote), M. Austin (remote), M. Manlove (remote), U. Oruche (remote)

Directors Absent
A. Tomlin, P. Usher

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened
K. Turner

Guests Present
Brian Anderson (remote), D. Leser (remote), J. Panyard (remote), L. Gagyi (remote), M. Williams (remote), R. Gardner (remote), Ty Spisak (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

M. Manlove called a meeting of the board of directors of Hope Academy to order on Tuesday Dec 15, 2020 at 7:31 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

L. Mannweiler made a motion to approve the corrected minutes from Board Meeting on 10-27-20.
J. Gabe seconded the motion.
The following edits to the minutes were offered:
Under finance report, the correct number that was reported by Brian Anderson for the September 2020 cash balance was $613,037.

Spelling correction on page 4 under Executive Director report the name of the facilitator of the parent group is spelled incorrectly. It should be Aleesha Bullock.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

K. Turner	Absent
U. Oruche	Aye
M. Austin	Aye
L. Mannweiler	Aye
M. Manlove	Aye
J. Finke	Aye
A. Levander	Aye
P. Usher	Absent
J. Gabe	Aye
C. Kenney	Aye
A. Tomlin	Absent
J. Shopp	Aye

II. Public Comment

A. Open comment period

There were no members of the public in attendance other than the guests listed.
K. Turner arrived.

III. Finance

A. Finance Committee Report

Janine Shopp reported that the committee met on Nov. 17, welcoming Jennifer McVey as a new member. Jennifer is a CPA with Greenwalt, an auditor of charter schools.

The committee discussed the 5 year projections as well as a contingency budget since the enrollment is lower than anticipated and how the decreased ADA funding will impact

the budget. Rachelle and Janine will provide an updated projected budget for the next committee meeting which will lay the groundwork for working on next year's budget.

Brian Anderson reviewed finances through October focusing on cash. At the end of October the cash balance was $514,000. Grants receivable will be accrued as well as the Alt Ed revenue. We will adjust/reduce the revenue so that it is not overstated. Adjustments to the financials were made in September to reflect the closing of Hope 1.0 and the donation from Community Health Network.

As of November 30, there were two adjustments related to enrollment. $436K in the bank. Cash flow projections show $440K anticipated, so we are close for cash projections. Although there is a decrease in revenue, we saw an increase in grants and contribution revenue. We are on track for what was projected - nothing new from what was expected. Challenges will occur next month with legislative issues related to education funding. The finance committee will work with the governance committee to keep them apprised of changes in ADA (Average Daily attendance based on students who attend for more than 10 days) and Alt Ed funding. The per student ADA amount is $10K.

Amy Levander reported that our ADA formula is unlikely to change although it could happen in July. Amy has met with the new superintendent of education, Katie Jenner, who was elected in November.

Linda Gagyi reported that our ADA will be at 30 students. In 2018 and 2019 the ADA numbers were higher. COVID has negatively impacted enrollment in the early fall.

Amy Levander asked if the projections on ADA funding are inflated due to expectations of higher enrollment and how that impacts the year end bottom line. Brian said that the projections have been adjusted, although increases in unexpected grant revenue have not been included in the adjustment.

Marissa reminded the board that we have access to a line of credit which has not been used but could be utilized on a short term basis. Brian said we are ok with cash right now and may not need to access the line of credit.

B. Goal Progress

Contingency budget is in progress and will be used to draft a budget for next year.
The new budget will be added to the five year Proforma.
We are on schedule to present a draft budget to the committee later this year.

C. Collaboration/Concerns

While we are slightly below projections in cash flow, as of now we are ok and working on a projected plan for reduced ADA funding for this year.

IV. Academic Excellence

A. Principals Report

Linda Gagyi reported that the goal of retaining 60% of students who are eligible to return will be measured in August 2021. We have had 12 new students this year and expect 2 - 4 more in January.

The Parent engagement group is meeting on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Attendance is growing and appreciated by parents considering enrolling their student.

Activities will be held during winter break and after school in January, providing the mayor doesn't change the pandemic protocols for meeting in person.

The new e-learning schedule has been well received and has been especially helpful in recruiting new students. We are currently doing 3 days in person and 2 days e-earning. We have 5 new students. DCS and probation are aware of our new schedule.

Daily attendance has been very good during COVID as has adherence to COVID protocols..

We are using a new platform (ExactPath) to access where students are in their math and language arts curriculum. We will use the data to determine curriculum aligning with state standards in January. The mayor's office wants to be able to track improvement in NWEA test scores between fall and spring and this platform will help us do that more effectively.

Deb Leser reported that the ExactPath platform is ready to go for January and some students have already started to review it.

B. Goal Progress

Our dashboard shows changes in the number of seniors from 6 to 4, and we expect to have 5 in January. Gender percentages has been steady. The number of Special Ed students has increased. Race & ethnicity has changed slightly due to changes in enrollment. We continue to have a large contingent of students who hail from Hamilton County. Free and reduced lunch program is at 40% of the student population. Attendance percentage is at 87%, and it is improving in December. Online credit completion is good and is increasing this month. Number of A's and B's are climbing and

number of F grades are dropping because the students are acclimating to our processes. 80% of students attended student-led conferences, those who did not were incarcerated and unable to attend.

Graduation progress show freshman are on track, sophomores are 50/50 being on track, juniors were hit hard by COVID and not on track, although getting better by next semester. Big progress has been made in health and wellness scores since the beginning of the semester.

Leah complemented the staff on the report and was thankful to have these scores to be able to track progress in recovery as well as academics.

Rachelle noted that the students are in divided into 3 groups during this time focused on recovery during the afternoons on in-person days. It is helpful to have small group sizes and individual awareness of what changes they need to make to grow in their recovery. Deb Leser reported that having Rachelle in the classroom is making a huge difference.

C. Collaboration/Concern

Linda reported no new concerns regarding academics or recovery.

Leah said it is important to include these scores in our minutes and thanked Rachelle for her commitment to the students.

Rachelle said she plans to continue this involvement with the students next semester. The impact that Hope Academy is making for each of our students is incredible. She is hopeful that in the future the board will be able to get to know the students and see the students' progress for themselves.

V. Marketing Committee

A. Presentation by Marketing Consultant - Ty Spisak

Marissa introduced Ty Spisak who made a presentation on a new marketing plan. Rachelle reported that with the CSP grant and other grants we have been able to put strong funding into marketing. Ty has worked with Hope Academy in the past, so she knows the school well and will be a great leader for us. It was fortunate to have her join the team just 4 weeks prior to Rise & Shine which was a great help for the event.

Ty complemented the board on their passion and enthusiasm for Hope Academy. She shared that the plan is for the next 6 months.

A new committee member, Erin Bledsoe, has been added to the committee.

B. Goal Progress

The committee's goal of increasing number of referrals by 10% was addressed by Ty Spisak.

Ty's plan for increasing recruitment will include a cultivation phase for the south central area as well as Hamilton County for both awareness of potential families and referral sources. The new location provides an opportunity to re-introduce Hope Academy through paid and earned media. We will be using a Community Outreach Team of board members and staff to increase awareness and education about Hope Academy.

We will also be optimizing the website to make it easier for people to interact with the school and improving online forms for enrollment and contributions.

Ty reviewed the key messages:
Tuition-free high school
Year round enrollment
Support for substance use disorder
Free transportation
Minutes from downtown, easily accessible
We moved (especially for north side audiences)
Enrolling now (beginning in June)
Grades 9 - 12

She also reviewed her recommendations for paid media including digital ads, print advertising and billboards/posters around the Indy area. 100,000 weekly impressions for billboards, 50,000 impressions for posters (1/2 the size of billboards)

Print advertising will be focused on publications in our new neighborhood - Weekly Southside Times (free) and the Daily Journal (6 days'week subscriptions.)

Facebook & Google ads will be trackable for those who visit the Hope Academy website so that they will get Hope Academy ads on a regular basis. We are also partnering with Chalkbeat, an education online publication.

Grassroots efforts to those who already know us as well as those who need to know about Hope Academy will be launched in January to reach out with regular personalized communication with targeted prospects.

Building trust and growing our network will be done with a virtual learning series by board members to talk about their expertise and position Hope Academy as experts in the area.

A spring event called Sounds of Hope, if the pandemic allows will also give us another avenue to reach our supporters and prospects.

Media relations - making stories of students and families available through regular press releases to get earned media and to establish Hope Academy as experts.

Monthly videos on social media will also be used in all areas of our outreach. A monthly e-newsletter to be sent to all our audiences.

We will be measuring progress with dashboards and tracking measurable and purposeful results so that regular evaluation and adjustment of the plan can be done.

Social media posts have met or exceeded 2 per week. With a new editorial calendar, we expect to exceed this goal regularly.

C. Collaboration/Concerns

Leah commented that she is very pleased to see the billboard campaign as parents have mentioned that they see it and respond to it. She asked if Hope Academy needed a tag line to express what Hope Academy is - that it meets the needs of students with substance use disorder. She is concerned that the mock-up may not be clear to express why Hope Academy exists.

Kevin said that perhaps the more important message is that Hope Academy is Indiana's only recovery high school and questioned if the website is something that someone driving by might remember.

Michael said he was concerned about having people know what a recovery high school is and should we use words like "addiction" or "substance use"?

Marissa said that she thought it is important to help parents to overcome the stigma of admitting their child has a problem. She suggested that we find a way to grab the attention of parents and find a differentiator for Hope Academy from other charter schools.

Ty pointed out that our pipeline for students is no longer from treatment to the school, but more often directly to the school without treatment. This means we need to stay away from recovery jargon and increase awareness that Hope Academy exists.

Janice added that finding words that have a simple broad appeal like "Help for your student" and more definition for the school would be preferred.

Marissa encouraged the board to reach out to Rachelle with other ideas that she will share with Ty and applauded Ty's comprehensive plan.

VI. Development Committee

A.

Development Committee Report

Colleen Kenney reported on the Development Committee's dashboard and commented on the success of our first virtual event. Colleen thanked the staff and committee for the success of the virtual event

Mariann Williams reminded the board that Hope Academy's mission is as important as ever and we all need to be loud and proud about supporting the school. She thanked the board and volunteers who are making thank you calls to donors as this will help build our retention rate.

Rachelle commented that grant funding is going well and is helpful in getting costs covered without having to implement new programming.

B. Goal Progress

We are on track to meet the goal of raising $300K by June.

The retention rate goal is 50%, we are at 47% through November 30.

Two direct mail pieces were mailed in October and December to current and lapsed donors.

One virtual fund raising event went well. Planning for a spring event, the Sounds of Hope.

We are above the goal for grant funding for the year. We have received $50,000 from a new grant source, the Arthur Dean Family Foundation referred to us by Hedges & Associates, and have another grant pending from another new grant source recommended by Tricia Zachidny who is an Events Committee member.

Identification of new donors - we received gifts from 20 new donors at the Rise & Shine event.
We will look to the board to continue reaching out to lapsed donors and prospective donors to meet both our retention and new donor goals.

VII. Governance Committee

A. Governance Committee

Amy Levander reported that now they are working with Rep. Thompson with state revenue forecasts and messaging to see if we can forego the variability of the enrollment and go with a flat rate for funding. She will share the information with the Representative on the past 5 years ADA funding to make the case for more stable funding.

B.

Goal Tracking

Marissa reported that we are working on recruiting a more diverse board and will update the orientation binder for our new board members. We have added two new committee members, one from a contact shared by the Mayor's Office of Education Innovation.

Amy reported ideas on using her connections with the faith based and minority communities to recruit additional committee and board members.

C. Legislative Update

Amy reported that we do not expect any budgeting changes by the state legislature until July. She is working with Representative Thompson to discuss Hope Academy funding.

D. Collaboration/Concern

Amy has connections to Light of the World, Eastern Star church and the Indiana minority health coaltion to bring awareness of Hope Academy to them as potential referral sources.

VIII. Executive Director Report

A. Facilities Update

Hired a new GPS coordinator who is well connected in the community will start January 4. Her name is Caroline Hartman.

The new outdoor sign will go up on December 22. Thanks to FA Wilhelm Construction Company for preparing the building to installing the signs. With new grant funding, we will also be able to put signage on the south side of the building which will be installed in the spring.

Doors to limit access to the school inside the building have been back ordered and will be installed in February by Wurster Construction.

B. Parent Orientation Group

The parent group is going well with help from previous parents and facilitator Aleesha Bullock.

Marissa spoke to the group last week and found them to be in the early stages of learning about recovery and eager to learn.

Will work with Principal Gagyi to see if we can use parent attendance as credit for wellness grades.

C. School Level Concern/Complaints

Will be working with Aspire to have a social worker twice a week in the school. Aspire is looking to expand to the south side so this will be a win-win for both organizations.

No school level complaints have been registered with Rachelle or Linda.

IX. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Williams

Documents used during the meeting

- Hope_Financials_103120 (1)board.xlsx
- 2020_11_17_finance_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- Finance committee tracker dec.pdf
- 2020_12_09_academic_excellence_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- Principal's Report 12.17.2020.docx
- Nov-December Board Data2020.docx
- Academic Committee Tracker Dec.pdf
- 2020_11_19_marketing_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- Marketing committee tracker dec.pdf
- Hope_Academy_Grants_Chart-November_2020.pdf
- 2020_11_17_development_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- FY2021_Hope_Academy_At_A_Glance_-_thru_Oct_31_2020.pdf
- Development Committee Tracker Dec.pdf
- 2020_11_16_governance_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- Governance committee tracker dec.pdf