APPROVED

Vida Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday October 27, 2014 at 6:30 PM

Location
Eisenhower Building/Vida Gymnasium

Trustees Present
A. Kittelberger, C. Bowen, K. Cunniffe Peña, L. Leonard, S. White

Trustees Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
C. Maldonado

Guests Present
Kathy Hewitt, Vanessa Pellechio

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

S. White called a meeting of the board of trustees of Vida Charter School to order on Monday Oct 27, 2014 at 6:33 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

L. Leonard made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 09-22-14 Board Meeting on 09-22-14.
C. Bowen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Call to the Public

There were no comments from the public.

E. Vida Highlights Feature

C. Maldonado stated that at the board meeting on 11-24 there will be a presentation by students. The public may request specific topics if they desire for future presentations.

II. Old Business

A. Director's report

1) Update on enrollment: There are 236 students. 2) Update on office re-organization: Filing finished, JoAnn sick and is rescheduling, John Tarvin (Ex. Coach) has 11.5 hours left on contract and will assist. 3) Curriculum Updates: Spanish curriculum ordered that aligns with 6+1 traits. Teachers are starting to implement this. 4) Assembly updates: Assembly once each month in Spanish; monthly song, topic and theme. This month is Read-a-Thon, the song is Gato Vuido (Widowed Cat) and special activities per grade level. The children will dress up as their favorite book character and a parade will be held. 5) Run Club met this fall with 54 participants and is finishing up with a Turkey Trot during school. 6) Instructional technology audit is complete. Academic Excellence Committee will review the audit next.
C. Maldonado stated the the Assembly Committee picks the topic and this allows the students and faculty to come together for a fun event. The assembly will be on 10-31 at 1:00 and all are welcome to attend.

B. Leave of Absence Policy

The attorney has not yet completed the adjustments and therefore we will operate with the draft copy until our next meeting 11-24.

C. Board training with solicitors

The board will meet for annual training with our solicitor's firm from 4:30 to 6:30 on 11-3 at the Ragged Edge, which is not a public meeting. The purpose is to educate current board members on rules and regulations; sunshine laws, legal and fiduciary responsibilities, communication procedures, how to ask difficult questions in a public venue, etc. A. Kittleberger requests that questions be sent to her by 10-29 for forwarding unto S. Kearns. C. Maldonado will contact Ragged Edge to confirm.

D. Re-charter update

The GASD recently invited us to a meeting on 11-3 at 7:00 at GA Middle School Auditorium to discuss re-charter issues. On 11-17 the GASD board will vote on the re-charter. The Vida board will attend the 11-3 board meeting of GASD immediately following our board training meeting.

III. Academic Excellence Committee

A. Review and approve goals for the academic excellence committee in 2014-15.

A. Kittleberger stated the Academic Excellence Committee goals for 2014-15: 1) Establish a foundation for excellence in dual language immersion as an instructional model. Make recommendation to board regarding school policy for use of Spanish language in instructional and co-curricular contexts. Make recommendation to board regarding ESL requirements and best practices; address instructional program and staffing. Make recommendation to board regarding Vida language entrance policy and any associated testing requirements. Report to the board on options for a Spanish immersion school-sponsored trip for upperclassemen (5th grade and above) Make recommendation to the board for local dual language immersion school option beyond 6th grade. 2) Establish a foundation for excellence in science. We do not have a comprehensive science curriculum. Complete a targeted review of PSSAs and make recommendations for ongoing improvements in science.
Report to the board on how the science curriculum and external supports are addressing the standards Vida is setting for science. Make a recommendation to the board for assessing student learning and growth in science. Recommend short-term goals for science achievement. Report to the board with recommendations regarding resource allocation and ongoing data study. 3) Establish a foundation for excellence in writing. This year Vida will begin using a comprehensive writing curriculum. Complete a targeted review of PSSAs and make recommendations for ongoing improvement in writing. Report to the board on how the writing curriculum and external supports are addressing the standards Vida is setting in writing. Make recommendation to the board for assessing student learning and growth in writing. Recommend short-term goals for writing achievement. Report to the board with recommendations regarding resource allocation and ongoing study.
5) Review Vida's master schedule. Report to the board on the amount of instructional time in core areas within English and Spanish portion of day. Report to the board on the impact of "specials" on instructional time, providing best practice estimates with which to benchmark Vida's schedule. Following board input, report in a second phase on how the master schedule might be optimized.
C. Bowen made a motion to adopt the 2014-15 Academic Excellence annual goals as described and recommended by Vida Charter School's Academic Excellance Committee.
K. Cunniffe Peña seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Governance Committee

A. Name chair of governance committee and form committee for 2014-15.

A. Kittleberger named the chair of the Governance Committee to be C. Kunniff with the assistance of S. White as co-chair. K. Cuniff's bilingualism will assist the board in

recruiting and including native-Spanish speaking community members in governance activities. S. White will partner with her as a local business person and native of Adams County well acquainted with leaders in the area. K. Cuniff will set the goals at the first meeting. The board has expressed a strong desire to diversify our board members by language, gender, location and skill set. Areas that we are looking for as board members may be from: accounting, construction, community organizations, legal field and teachers. Prospective board members can contact C. Maldonado for further information.
L. Leonard made a motion to to accept K. Cunniff as the Chairman of the 2014-15 Governance Committee with S. White as Co-chair.
C. Bowen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The board notes that the individual committees are looking for additional members and are encouraging parents to assist with the Governance and Finance Committees and are looking for community members for the Governance and Finance Committees as well.

V. Finance

A. Chair's report from finance committee

L. Leonard states that the agenda is a follows: 1.Updates on old business:a.Audit – auditors are still working and should be complete at the latest to present at December BOT meeting.b. Annual goals – revisions, i.Complete a compensation study and develop a corresponding philosophy and plan for adoption in time for implementation into the next budget. – someone at the LIU is offering to provide compensation study as well. ii. Resolve problems with and optimize our financial management processes at Vida. iii. Update Vida’s financial policies and create a plan for periodically updating the policies. iv. Shift the beginning of the healthcare plan year to align with GASD/HPSD health plan years.
We will re-examine our current healthcare plan and look at other options, including other insurance brokers, plans and providers to improve healthcare coverage for staff. Areas needing improvement include comprehensibility, accessibility, ease of use for staff, and better customer service all while continuing to be affordable for staff and Vida. Next steps will be: Cynthia checks with lawyer to get their take on the interpretation of the charter law stating that we must provide “same” coverage as local school districts. Based on the lawyer’s interpretation, Brian and Cynthia will work to create RFP’s for brokers and other insurance providers. C. Maldonado would also like there be a point person at Vida who staff could go to with questions
Begin exploring cost saving measures with regard to 1)facilities 2)retirement 3)healthcare. c. Admin office audit – still ongoing, results will be shared in later November d. Charter Choices – Brian and Cynthia discussed some of the hurdles and challenges with our current financial processes. These include: i. the macro-budget does not allow Cynthia to clearly see available funds at a granular level. ii. Confusion about who is taking care of Vida’s needs at CC. iii. Lack of real-time data iv. Lack of transparency with credit card statements

B.

Approve monthly financials for September 2014

K. Cunniffe Peña made a motion to accept the September 2014 financials.
C. Bowen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Finance committee goals for 2014-15

L. Leonard states the 2014-15 Annual Goals for Vida Charter School's Finance Committee are: 1. Complete a school-wide compensation analysis and develop a corresponding compensation philosophy that is forward thinking and financially sound that will aid Vida in recruiting, retaining, and rewarding teachers and staff. This plan should be adopted in time to implement in the next budget. 2. Improve and optimize our financial management processes and procedures at Vida. 3. Update Vida's financial policies and create a plan for periodically updating the policies. 4. Re-examine Vida's current healthcare plan, provider and broker to improve healthcare coverage for staff. Areas needing improvement include plan comprehensibility, healthcare provider accessibility, ease of use for staff, and better customer service all while continuing to be affordable for staff and Vida. 5. Begin exploring cost saving measures with regard to 1/facilities 2/retirement 3/healthcare.
K. Cunniffe Peña made a motion to adopt the 2014-15 Finance Committee annual goals as described and recommended by Vida Charter School's Finance Committee.
C. Bowen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. eXude proposal to conduct compensation study and to write compensation philosophy

Last summer (2013) Vida teachers submitted a formal letter to the board making a list of requests. One of the requests was for the board to form a step salary schedule for teachers as a way too improve transparency, fairness, and equity for teacher's salaries. After researching this issue for the better part of the school year, the finance committee has obtained a proposal from a respected and highly recommended company named eXude. This proposal is for services involving conducting a market analysis of salary ranges, development of a compensation philosophy and creation of a compensation plan based on those findings. C. Maldonado wants to establish the job descriptions for the office positions before the proposal is acted upon. The board will review the Exude proposal and the matter will be addressed at the 11-24 meeting.

E. Adopt Student Management System

This has evolved from an excel spreadsheet that is impossible to function with since we have 236 students and it doesn't align with PDE. Many systems were looked at by C. Maldonado, the solicitor S. Kearns and the LIU. The recommendation is to go with MMS which has a report card section which is very user friendly and will allow the parents to access for information, i.e. assignments, test reports, etc. and has a Spanish feature.

This system is used by 80 public and 40 charter schools and appears to be the "right fit" for Vida and can begin immediately. Charter Choices has approved the proposal and states that money is available within the budget but has not specified which line item it will come out of.
The price tag of $11,000 which includes technology updates and 5.5 days of web based training with an annual fee of $13.00/student ($3,000.00+/- based upon student enrollment). C. Maldonado has used it for approximately 1 hour and likes the usability of MMS. This system will allow the teachers to keep better track of each student and will aid the PDE report process. The solicitor has reviewed the 1 year contract and is satisfied with the proposal. L. Leonard is concerned with the line item that this expenditure applies to in the annual budget as she is the Chairman of the Finance Committee and wants to be assured that we are being good stewards of our money. A. Kittleberger stated that the new ED, C. Maldonado has the allowance to adjust the line items of the budget to accurately reflect her needs for the school. The overall dollar amount will not change however as the new ED she has discretion to adjust the line items.
L. Leonard made a motion to approve the purchase of the student management system of MMS as recommended by C. Maldonado, et al not to exceed $12,000 and pending the notification of the Treasurer/Chairman of the Finance Committee regarding the line item of said expenditure.
C. Bowen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
A. Kittleberger would like to thank the Finance Committee for their extra work on this matter and commends C. Maldonado for the thorough review of all the proposed systems. This is why our cover materials are so helpful when preparing our agendas.

F. PTO Funds Dispursal

L. Leonard stated that we have money in our budget from the former PAC which is now the PTO. The PTO would like for the board to provide those existing funds to them. It is noted that the PTO is now a non-profit organization and all future funds will belong to them for their use. A. Kittleberger states that we will need legal and financial counsel before performing this process. The proper persons will be notified for counsel and the matter will be moved to the 11-24 meeting.

VI. New Business

A. ESL instruction

C. Maldonado stated that she will begin to look as ESL more closely and that Vida has 3 teachers who are certified. C. Maldonado will determine how to systematically implement the dual language and what the PA requirements are. She is doing an audit of what we have available and what we might be needing for the students. It is noted that Vida met the AMAO state proficiency expectations for annual ESL student progress.

B. Use November 26 PD in June for responsive classroom training

C. Maldonado states that she will need to have 4 days in June for Responsive Classroom program. She would like to use the Wed., 11-26 PD day in June. C. Maldonado will be speaking to teachers for their input.

VII. Facility

A. Update on split class arrangement in dinosaur room.

C. Maldondo states that the arrangement is working out with the split classroom, however it is not optimal. C. Bowen will follow up with Kathleen Birkner of Gettysburg College and make recommendations if any. Dan Soliday of GASD will be contacted to determine the particular specifics of obtaining modular classrooms once the re-charter process is complete. C. Bowen states that the Facility Committee will be meeting on Tues. 11-4 at 4:00 to have further discussions concerning both matters.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Call to the Public

V. Pellechio had requested clarification of the goals of the Adademic Excellence Committee and the notice from GASD regarding the invitation to discuss the re-chartering. V. Pellechio asked how the re-chartering process has aided Vida. C. Maldonado states that our teachers, administrators and the board have had to focus on important issues that needed addresses. GASD has asked very appropriate and basic questions that she is happy to address, although it has been very stressful on the teachers and the students. V. Pellichio asked if the re-charter process was similar to the initial chartering process? A. Kittleberger stated that it has been very difficult being in the midst of a process while the process is being built. She is sure that GASD has learned a lot as have we and expect that the next re-chartering will be much easier. The board credits Dr. Redding and the GASD board with being far more engaged with Vida in the last year than they had to be.
V. Pellechio wondered how many board members we were looking at obtaining. At the max. our board could triple in size, however we need to have representation from Spanish speakers. V. Pellechiio wondered what the 1st graders will be doing with their candy this year? C. Maldonado will look into the matter. A. Kittleberger noted that the board is interested in Media Training with our media representatives. It would aid the board in thinking ahead and how to communicate with the community and how to contact the media properly if they are aware of newsworthy items.

B. Executive Session

A. Kittleberger announced that there was an executive session held on 10-27 at 6:00 until 6:30 for the purpose of addressing personnel issues. We will continue the executive session after the meeting to complete the discussion.
C. Bowen made a motion to enter executive session.
L. Leonard seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
Entered executive session at 8:24 pm.
L. Leonard made a motion to exit executive session.
K. Cunniffe Peña seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The board exited executive session at 8:35 pm.

C. Adjourn Meeting

C. Bowen made a motion to adjourn meeting.
A. Kittelberger seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
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There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. White