



Delaware Design-Lab High School

Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, 23 May 2016, 6:30 p.m.

179 Stanton Christiana Road, Newark, DE 19702

Meeting Minutes [Draft]

Members Present

Matt Urban, Chair

Paul Miller, Vice Chair

Rebecca Collins, Stephen Forbes, Rebecca Girten, Angela Kuchera, Joe LoPorto, Aileen Murray

Also present: Cristina Alvarez, Joseph Mock, Martin Rayala, and Casey Guerke from Innovative Schools

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the 04/25/16 meeting were presented for review prior to the meeting. Mr. Miller motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mr. LoPorto seconded the motion, which was approved with Mr. Forbes and Ms. Girten in abstention.

Financial Reports

Financial Statements

Mr. Guerke from Innovative Schools presented the April 2016 financial statements. April 30 marked 83% of the fiscal year, and the spend rate currently stands at approximately 68% (including encumbrances), while revenue received is 99.55%. He noted that recoding is common at this time of year to achieve proper appropriation and account balances at year end, and that has created a negative monthly expense on some of the line items. Mr. Guerke suggested that some of the year-end surplus be allocated for summer encumbrances. Ms. Collins clarified that we have three years to fully cover summer encumbrances, but teacher salaries need to be fully covered at all times. The school needs an additional \$80k over the current allocation to achieve full coverage. Additional discussion centered on approximately \$20k that is potentially available to be reimbursed for teachers fulfilling their credentials in DEEDS. Karen Thorpe and IS are assisting with pursuing those funds.

Mr. Forbes motioned to approve the April 2016 financials. Mr. Miller seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

2017 Budget

A draft FY17 budget should be ready to be presented for approval at the next board meeting.

Financial Audits

Audit services have been bid out, and we have received a quote for independent audit services from Maillie, LLP that would contract for three years, both with and without the 990. Dr. Alvarez recommended hiring of Lambert, LLP for audit compilation services, and Maillie for the independent audit. Ms. Girten noted that there are two pieces of pending legislation regarding charter school auditing requirements, and, if passed, either might significantly alter the school's need/ability to abide by a multi-year contract. Ms. Collins agreed to review any contractual language accordingly.

Ms. Collins motioned to approve hiring of both firms, pending the inclusion of appropriate contractual language. Mr. Forbes seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Update on Modular Units

There is an escalating fee the longer we wait to execute the modular contract; the board will need to approve the contract within 24 hours of it being finalized, which will likely be within the next day or so. Lease modification terms are also close to being finalized with the landlord, and are expected to go through with no issues. The landlord has already agreed to sign the construction permit when it is issued by the county. Additionally, plans have already been sent to the county for review and indications are that it will be green lighted.

The board agreed to call an emergency session on Thursday, 05/26/16 to vote on the finalized modular contract. Ms. Collins will circulate the final copy to the board for review as soon as it is completed, most likely Wednesday.

CEO's and Principal's Reports

The National Honor Society induction ceremony will take place this week. MAP, DCAS, and Career Cruising testing is underway, and PSAT and WIDA have been completed. All DPASS II teacher classroom observations are complete. Teacher recruitment is underway, with multiple promising candidates scheduled for interviews and a summer new hire recruitment fair scheduled for early June. Mr. Mock noted that student feedback is an important part of the hiring process. The most critical vacancy is for a driver's education teacher, for which there is currently a shortage. Recruiting options were discussed.

Positive feedback was delivered about the school climate, with suspensions and detentions continuing to diminish and over 70% of students ranked in the top three (of five) placements earned in the PBIS system. A number of student events—such as a school play, sports games, and a talent show—have been scheduled or already taken place, with favorable response from students and families. Parent communication through multiple channels continues to be strong.

Enrollment is holding tight at 82%. Board members were reminded that they had earlier voted to give authority to school leadership to, on a case by case basis, release students from their enrollment contracts (i.e. those who have been wait-listed and then accepted to other schools), and that will be happening a bit more as the enrollment process continues. Ms. Girten agreed to review student demographic information to determine a target audience for a future bulk mailing of postcards for prospective families.

Update on XQ Super School Challenge

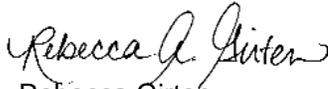
We submitted the project to the site, so it is complete. All board members and the governor are on the Super School team, and we are in the semi-finals. Our financial management section is very strong, and shows the integration of what the grant would do for the school. The visit with the governor was very successful; he stayed for the timed activity and spent 30 minutes longer visiting than he was scheduled to. The documentarians for the project were also present and filmed the team during the timed activity. The 50 finalists will be announced on July 20th, and the five winners will be announced on August 4th. Drs. Alvarez and Rayala noted that the clearest path forward is to continue raising awareness about our place as semi-finalists. Ms. Collins and Ms. Girten agreed to pursue getting other state politicians to make public statements or write personal letters congratulating the school.

Update on Board Committees

Governance draft charges are not finalized, but the contents of the binder have been finalized. A draft of the Academic Excellence draft charges was circulated. The Policy committee will work to compile a board confidentiality policy, and encouraged other board members to forward copies of any other existing policies for compilation. Ms. Collins and Mr. Miller will review and finalize the draft charges for all three committees and send to the board prior to the next meeting for final review and approval at the June meeting. The development of a policy regarding student service hours was also briefly discussed. It was agreed that the Policy committee would review the need for such a policy.

There being no other business, Ms. Collins motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. LoPorto seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca A. Girten". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Rebecca Girten
Secretary