

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
The Davidson Academy of Nevada  
Governing Board  
November 15, 2010**

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Governing Board was called to order at 2:06 p.m. in the Tahoe Room of The Davidson Academy of Nevada located at 1164 N. Virginia St., Reno, Nevada, 89503.

**A. Roll Call**

Roll call was completed by Bob Davidson. Mark Herron, Eugene Paslov, Hon. Bruce R. James, Annette Whittemore, Brian Krolicki, Milton Glick, Keith Rheault, Heath Morrison and Colleen Harsin were present. Jan Davidson attended the meeting via conference call.

**B. Welcome and Introductions**

Welcome of members of the Governing Board and visitors was completed by Bob Davidson. Brian Krolicki introduced guest, Ray Sidney, advising he was a friend who currently lives in Douglas County and is very interested in The Davidson Academy.

**C. Approval of Minutes for Meeting of September 20, 2010**

Bob Davidson requested approval of the minutes for the meeting of September 20, 2010, under Tab 1 of the Board books (incorporated herein by reference). Mark Herron indicated that the unapproved minutes needed corrections under item **B., Roll Call**, to include Board member Keith Rheault. He also indicated that under **Reports Section E.1.** that the word "Education" needed to be inserted following "State Board of..." as well as editing of the citation of the Regulation. Motion was made by Hon. Bruce James for approval of the minutes with the reported edits as indicated and seconded by Jan Davidson. Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Approval of Agenda**

Bob Davidson requested approval of the Agenda as submitted. Motion was made by Mark Herron for approval of the meeting Agenda and seconded by Annette Whittemore. Motion carried unanimously.

**E. Reports**

**E.1. Academy Director**

Colleen Harsin advised the Board that during her report, presentations would be made by Erin Vienneau, Curriculum Coordinator; Brett Guisti, Physics Instructor; and students at different times depending upon their afternoon schedules that day.

Ms. Harsin began her report with an application review summary for the 2011-2012 school year indicating that 17 applications had been received with three applicants being accepted, and five scheduled for interview and readiness assessment for Friday, November 19. Bob Davidson indicated that applicants providing interest in the Residential Option would be accepted at a higher standard. Hon. Bruce James questioned what that meant in this regard. Mr. Davidson explained that for the Residential Program applicants needed to have very strong academics already in place

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and that no student funding from the state would be available for these students and they would need to pay tuition. Ms. Harsin advised that the introductory tuition for Residential students would be \$19,500, as this is the approximate per pupil cost for a Davidson Academy student. Room and Board costs are estimated at \$3,500. There has been host family interest from current Academy families as well as outreach to local companies and academic organizations. *Kids First* is the third-party entity that is creating and conducting the host family vetting process.

Hon. Bruce James asked what families' thoughts were on their children living with other families versus a dorm living situation. Colleen Harsin advised that focus groups were conducted in Southern Nevada which resulted in meaningful questions on this topic. A Room and Board option utilizing a dorm living situation would increase tuition to \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year.

Ms. Harsin continued her report by directing the Board to Tab 2 of their Board books and referenced a letter from the State Department of Education (incorporated herein by reference) regarding the Academy's Pupil Enrollment and Attendance Audit of October 11, 2010. Following the Audit Michael Shafer, Auditor II, confirmed the Academy's reported enrollment of 123 students for the 2010-2011 school year. She thanked Aimee Fredericks and Larry Kramp for their assistance with the audit process.

Under Tab 3 of their Board books Ms. Harsin referenced a letter of October 6, 2010, (incorporated herein by reference) from Dr. Keith Rheault congratulating The Davidson Academy for receiving the designation of "High Achieving School". A certificate accompanied his letter which is now displayed at the Academy.

Ms. Harsin referred Board members to Tab 4 of their Board books to a copy of her memorandum to Dr. Keith Rheault regarding the "Report Required for Alternative Schedule, 2009-2010" (incorporated herein by reference). This report was submitted on November 8, 2010, and is due each year regarding the previous year's schedule. She also confirmed that the Academy's School Improvement Plan would be submitted the week of November 15, 2010.

At this time in the meeting Ms. Harsin introduced current Academy students, Stephan Kim and Christopher Huh who came to the meeting to present a new Academy Club to the Board, DECA. The students stated that DECA is an International Business Club. The Academy's DECA Club currently consists of 12 members. Bob Davidson suggested that they contact and develop a relationship with the College of Business on the University of Nevada, Reno Campus to for assistance and advising with this club. Keith Rheault asked how the students came to know about DECA. Stephan Kim indicated that current Academy student Ikya Kandula was aware of the club's existence and suggested forming a DECA Club at the Academy. Mr. Kim and Mr. Huh, reported that as part of the club's requirements they would need to develop a project and possibly attend an out of town competition. Hon. Bruce James suggested that the club's members locate someone at the College of Business who has been through a competition to seek their support and advice in preparing for competitions.

Ms. Harsin referred Board members to Tab 5 of their Board books for a copy of the NWAC Accreditation Committees and Calendar (incorporated herein by reference). She advised that the Academy is on track with steps one and two of the accreditation

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process and is ahead of schedule. Information including achievement data and survey results will be shared at the next board meeting. Standards and Perception Surveys have been completed. Perceptions of "Community" include, Davidson Academy students, alumni, parents, staff and teachers, Davidson Institute for Talent Development Young Scholars families and University of Nevada, Reno instructors and department chairs. Individual follow-up for purpose of continued improvement is being conducted.

At this time in her report Ms. Harsin introduced Erin Vienneau, Curriculum Coordinator for the Davidson Academy. Ms. Vienneau advised the Board that she is further developing a middle school curriculum for English and History and was dedicating her time this year to solidifying the Academy's overall curriculum. As she has taught at the Academy for the last few years she has a lot experience with addressing challenges faced by new and returning instructors and was providing scaffolding and support for the teachers. Ms. Vienneau indicated that she also worked with students one on one through the Academy's diagnostic period and moved student placement in classes as appropriate.

Hon. Bruce James asked Ms. Vienneau how many students typically have to be moved. She answered that changes to class placement more often affect new students rather than returning students and that approximately six to 10 students needed to be moved at the beginning of the fall semester. Keith Rheault asked if the diagnostic procedures used by the Academy were developed or purchased. Ms. Vienneau confirmed that all diagnostic materials were developed in-house except for general science and physics. Bob Davidson asked how the new teachers were fitting in. Ms. Vienneau advised that so far everyone has been very pleased with the new teaching staff and that they were doing well.

Under Tab 6 of their Board books, Ms. Harsin continued her report by referring Board members to a copy of a fundraising letter (incorporated herein by reference) that was sent to Academy families. As a result, \$800 has been raised to date with a \$5,000 grant having been received by the Academy prior to this letter being sent. Parent-driven fundraising efforts have begun with plans for a spring event possibly including a reception on campus with tickets, raffle and auctions items. The parents also are looking to have student supervision at the Academy for parent attendance at the proposed fundraising event. Also pertaining to fundraising and grant awards, Ms. Harsin has confirmed the Academy's eligibility to apply for the McGowan Grant for a third year.

In conclusion to her report, Ms. Harsin directed Board members to Tab 7 of their Board books for a copy of the Student Events Calendar (incorporated herein by reference). The calendar includes all school events since the last Board meeting. "Big Picture" meetings with current Academy families will be scheduled near the end of the semester and over the winter break.

**E.2. Media and Outreach**

Julie Dudley, Director of Communications referred Board members to Tab 8 of their Board books for a summary of current Media and Outreach updates (incorporated herein by reference). Ms. Dudley advised Board members that she had received a draft of the article written by a reporter from *Education Next* who had visited the Academy earlier in the year. She indicated that the article looked very good and would be published on February 28, 2011. Copies would be provided to all Board members.

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Other media updates involving Academy students include a reporter from GQ Magazine working on a freelance piece on Taylor Wilson and a recent press release regarding the Academy's RRR Club receiving a federal grant for their proposed project on Pedestrian Awareness and Safety in the area around the University of Nevada, Reno campus.

Ms. Dudley referred Board members to an excerpt from a book by Philip Brand titled *The Neighbor's Kid – A Cross Country Journey in Search of What Education Means to Americans* (incorporated herein by reference) which includes a section dedicated to the Davidson Academy.

Ms. Dudley concluded her report by advising the Board that recently outreach efforts were made on behalf of the Academy's Residential Program in the form of a call for interest in host family opportunities sent to local companies including IGT, St. Mary's regional Medical Center, and Nevada State Bank.

At this point in the meeting Colleen Harsin introduced Brett Guisti, Academy Physics Instructor. Mr. Guisti advised that this is his first year at The Davidson Academy however he has six years of experience teaching physical science and advanced physics. He is currently teaching an entry level science class as well as an advanced calculus based physics class for three students. He indicated that he feels both he and the students are having fun in the classes and that things are going well.

Eugene Paslov advised that he would get Mr. Guisti and his Advanced Physics Class introduced to Troy Wade who is one of the top scientists in the state, located in Las Vegas, as well as arrange for a tour of the National Lab.

**F. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence at this time.

**G. Public Comments**

There was no public comment at this time.

**H. Consent Calendar**

There were no Consent Calendar items at this time.

**I. General Business**

**a. Approval of Revised Fiscal Year 2011 Budget per LCB File No. R026-09 Sect. 35(7)**

Mark Herron requested action by the Board to adopt the revised 2010-2011 fiscal budget based on final Academy student enrollment of 123 students. As required by State regulations [LCB File No. R026-09 Sect. 35(7)], Karin Dixson, Controller for The Davidson Academy prepared a revised budget based on confirmed enrollment of 123 students (incorporated herein by reference) which was included in the Board books under Tab 9. The previously adopted 2011 fiscal year budget was based on an estimated enrollment of 121 students. A total enrollment of 123 students resulted in a net expense reduction of \$17,672. Hon. Bruce James asked why it appeared from the prepared budget that there had been a \$250,000 loss. Ms. Dixson confirmed that that entry represented

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amortization of the rental agreement for the Academy space. Hon. Bruce James requested to be provided with a full copy of the budget including footnotes. Ms. Dixon confirmed that she would provide a complete copy to all Board members. Motion for approval of the revised 2010-2011 fiscal budget based on final enrollment numbers was made by Brian Krolicki. The motion was seconded by Eugene Paslov. Motion carried unanimously.

**b. Class of 2011 Graduates**

Colleen Harsin referred Board members to Tab 10 of their Board books for a copy of the Proposed Resolution for Academy students and candidates for 2011 graduation. Ms. Harsin indicated that the listed students; Casey Acklin, Erik Jensen, Darlon Jan, Tristan Rasmussen and Hannah Wierson and recommended issuance of a high school diploma to these students upon successful completion of all graduation requirements. Hon. Bruce James made motion for approval of graduation and issuance of a diploma to the referenced students, which was seconded by Annette Whittemore. Motion carried unanimously.

**J. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before The Davidson Academy Board in public meeting Bob Davidson requested motion for meeting adjournment. Motion was made by Eugene Paslov and seconded by Annette Whittemore. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted by Colleen Harsin, Clerk of the Board