

**Minutes of the Meeting of
The Davidson Academy of Nevada
Governing Board**

September 10, 2007

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Governing Board was called to order at 2:10pm in the Community Room of the EL Cord Telecommunications Building located at 1670 N. Virginia St., Reno, NV 89503.

Roll Call

President Jan Davidson, Members Brian Krolicki, Keith Rheault, Mark Herron, Hon. Bruce R. James, Paul Dugan and Clerk of the Board, Colleen Harsin were present at roll call. Sen. Richard H. Bryan was present via telephonic conferencing. Chairman Bob Davidson and Members Milton Glick and Annette Whittemore were not present.

Welcome and Introductions were completed by President Jan Davidson.

Approval of Minutes for Meeting of June 11, 2007

Motion was made by Hon. Bruce James and seconded by Mark Herron for approval of the June 11, 2007, Governing Board meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Motion was made by Mark Herron and seconded by Senator Richard Bryan for approval of the Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

1. **Colleen Harsin, Director** began her report by advising the Board that the most updated version of The Davidson Academy 2007-2008 Handbook is available on the private Academy website. She indicated that a User ID and Password would be emailed to all Board members to allow them access. Ms. Harsin further explained that the Handbook includes all Academy policy updates, the Mission Statement, Goals and Cores Values. President Jan Davidson confirmed that she was very proud of the students as a whole in their collaboration with faculty and staff to form the Academy's Core Values. Member Keith Rheault commented that it was important to include the students in these types of discussions in order to accomplish "buy in" from the student body. Ms. Harsin further explained that the Handbook is arranged in alphabetical order by topic with links to applicable Board approved policies which are also located within the Handbook as Appendix A. Ms. Harsin specifically referred to the Academy's Discipline Policy on page 16 and explained that it is a progressive Discipline Policy and from the Academy's experience it has been best for staff to consider discipline on a case by case basis while adhering to the approved policy. She also referred to the Academy's Sexual Harassment Policy on page 23 which is being reviewed by legal counsel. Ms. Harsin concluded the Policies portion of her report by referring the Board Members to the section of the Handbook dedicated to the Parent Group organization, Counseling for the purpose of advising and check in and the sections dedicated to UNR. She also mentioned the Academy's position on Student Demonstrations and Protests located on page 33.

Ms. Harsin continued her report with Academy Staffing Updates. The Academy currently has 7 full-time staff representing 44 students, which includes Amy Dolan-Guidance Counselor, Carmen Garcia-Curriculum Coordinator, Larry Kramp-Technology Specialist & Instructor, Erin Wallace-Communication and Activities Coordinator, Erin Vienneau-Instructor and Aimee Fredericks-Admissions and Records Coordinator. The Academy recently hired one part-time employee, Carol Gabbert, as Project Coordinator at 25 hours or less per week. A University student was also hired to assist students to and from University courses. The Academy continues to receive weekly support and assistance from Davidson Institute Family Consultant staff and parent volunteers.

Ms. Harsin continued with the General Program Update. She reported that the Academy Course Catalog is available on the private Academy website. The Academy currently conducts 24 courses in-house over 7 daily instructional periods. The 24 in-house courses were specifically designed to meet the needs of the current student population which includes both core and elective curriculum. Twenty-two Academy students are taking courses through the University with 38 courses represented among those students.

A recent issue of which Ms. Harsin sought specific feedback from the Governing Board was the Academy's Reimbursement Policy for University Course fees and textbooks. She reported that the original intent in forming The Davidson Academy was to offer an appropriate learning environment for this student population, not to pay for students bachelor's degrees. Ms. Harsin suggested that it would likely be best to consider reimbursement on a semester to semester basis as courses offered at the Academy would change by semester. Up to the present it has been the practice to reimburse students only for courses not available to them at the Academy and necessary to meet graduation requirements. President Jan Davidson invited discussion of this matter by the Board. Members made several suggestions for covering costs associated with Academy students taking UNR courses, which included: Jan and Bob Davidson paying tuition costs, parents paying tuition costs, co-payments from parents, performance standards, fundraising, forming of a foundation, possible discounted fees through the University and scholarship.

In conclusion of her report Ms. Harsin let the Board know that College Consultant Ms. Debra Claymon had visited the Academy on Friday, September 7th. She met with parents in order to provide information concerning college admissions. She continues to work with Academy Administration to assist in developing an Academy transcript and how to best reflect student academic information. Ms. Harsin advised that with Ms. Claymon's help she was considering a standard GPA format; possibly including both weighted and unweighted GPA on transcripts as this may provide the most clear transcript information. Member Keith Rheault advised that the State Board has indicated that all schools must set a standard GPA format, however The Davidson Academy may be exempt. Ms. Harsin advised that she would be considering all aspects of this matter and would likely have an action item on this topic for the upcoming Board Agenda.

Ms. Harsin is currently working with the University in formalizing Academy student matriculation into the UNR system. The issue has been whether or not Academy students can be degree seeking students at the University and remain Academy students. This will ultimately be up to the individual student; however it is the Academy's goal to make this transition as easy as possible.

The Academy is in the process of developing State formalized testing. There may be a hybrid option for Academy students based on age and abilities. Ms. Harsin reported that she would be meeting with a consultant in order to initiate the school accreditation process. Hon. Bruce James suggested that she include him in this process based on his experience serving on accreditation boards. A school profile will be developed in the near future.

President Jan Davidson advised that it was important to mention that we had recently had our first student withdraw from the Academy.

Member Mark Herron introduced Tina Leslie, Accounts Manager for discussion of the budget. Ms. Leslie directed the Board to the proposed budget for the 2007-2008 fiscal year at page ____ of the Board package (and attached hereto). She advised the Board that the budget was straightforward and confirmed that there are no items included that were not expected. However, staffing costs are running more than originally planned as the day to day operation of the Academy requires more people than initially anticipated.

Mark Herron motioned to adopt the 2007-2008 Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Hon. Brian Krolicki. Motion passed unanimously.

Katie Graham, Director of Outreach reported that the goal for 2008-2009 Academy enrollment is 100 students. On November 19, 2007, we will hold an Academy information and tour event for the public. 33 families have indicated that they will attend. To date, 5000 brochures have been distributed in Clark and Washoe Counties. Permission was requested to distribute brochures and information to all Washoe District schools. Member Paul Dugan confirmed that he would authorize all schools to accept and distribute information and outreach concerning the Academy. Ms. Graham referred to the 2007 Davidson Academy Outreach handout outlining recent and future outreach efforts.

Julie Dudley, Director of Communications reported the summary for the year as 13 million for circulation and viewership. The Davidson Academy was the lead article in the August 27, 2007 issue of TIME Magazine. The CNN recently re-ran the piece which originally ran in 2006 about the Davidson Academy and ABC Nightline ran their segment on the Academy in June 2007. Ms. Dudley referred to a media packet that she provided to the Board and reported that a media day was completed at the Academy on Wednesday, September 5th. Local channels 2, 4, 8, 27 attended as well as the Sacramento affiliate for ABC, who had contacted Ms. Dudley following the TIME article. Ms. Dudley confirmed that she would be parlaying Academy media coverage into the Davidson Fellows Program media campaign that was currently underway with pitches to national TV morning shows.

Colleen Harsin, Director reported the Admissions Update. The Davidson Academy Application for 2008-2009 has been available on the public Academy website as of August 1, 2007. On September 1, 2007, the first applications were due. Seven applications were received and 4 interviews have been scheduled. Decision letters will be mailed no later than October 15, 2007. The Academy is working toward a goal of enrollment of 100 students for the 2008-2009 school year. Aimee Fredericks is being trained as the Admissions and Records Coordinator.

Sen. Bryan excused himself from the meeting to attend to a previously scheduled matter.

Mark Herron, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer referred the Board to page 4 of the Board packet concerning the proposed audit. There is no statutory requirement for an audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007. However the Academy will be conducting an audit and will continue to do so. Mr. Herron met with Holthouse, Carlin & Van Trigt; their proposal is outlined beginning on page 4 of the Board packets. Hon. Brian Krolicki questioned conducting the audit according to government audit standards. Mr. Herron will confirm this. Mr. Herron also pointed out that the proposal is for an audit of the balance sheet as of June 30, 2007 and a review (not an audit) of the statement of activities for the one-year period ending June 30, 2007.

Hon. Bruce James motioned for approval of the proposed audit. The motion was seconded by Hon. Brian Krolicki. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Herron concluded his report by advising the Board that the remodel of the JTSU building is on schedule and all bids for the work are due by November 1, 2007; construction will begin in late 2007 or early 2008. The current focus is security, access control, and video surveillance for the new Academy facility. Emergency response, intruders, and campus lockdown procedures are part of the planning process for the new facility and the Academy will have the technology in place to respond to these matters. Hon. Bruce James questioned whether the Academy was under the supervision of the Reno Police Department or Campus Police. Mr. Herron confirmed that UNR Campus Police have supervision of the Academy. Member Paul Dugan suggested that he put the Academy in contact with the School District's emergency response coordinator.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence at this time.

Public Comments

Mr. Lee Schmelzer, parent of a current Davidson Academy student expressed his thanks to the Governing Board and Academy faculty and staff. He commented that the funding issue was a concern they had questions of whether or not they qualified for the Millennium Scholarship or Merit Scholarship. He suggested that the Academy Board and staff also consider what students can do themselves (concerning tuition assistance and funding). Colleen Harsin commented that staff advisement meetings with students will help in letting students know what they can do themselves.

Review of Meeting Schedule for 2007

The next meeting of the Governing Board was confirmed for Monday, November 19, 2007 at 2:00pm.

The following date was proposed for the next Governing Board meeting:

Monday, January 14, 2007 at 2:00pm

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the members of the Governing Board in public meeting, Hon. Bruce James motioned for adjournment; the motion was seconded by Mark Herron. The motion for adjournment carried unanimously. The meeting was declared adjourned by President, Jan Davidson.

Respectfully submitted by Colleen Harsin, Clerk