

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

**January 14, 2008**

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Governing Board was called to order at 2:09 p.m. in the Community Room of the KNPB Channel 5 Building located at 1670 N. Virginia St., Reno, Nevada, 89503.

**A. Roll Call**

Roll call was completed by Clerk of the Board Colleen Harsin. Chairman Bob Davidson, President Jan Davidson, Mark Herron, Hon. Bruce R. James, Annette Whittemore, Keith Rheault, Eugene Paslov, Hon. Brian Krolicki, Paul Dugan and Colleen Harsin were present. Member Milton Glick was not present.

**B. Welcome and Introductions**

Welcome and Introductions were completed by Chairman Bob Davidson.

**C. Approval of Minutes for Meeting of November 19, 2007**

Motion was made by Hon. Bruce James and seconded by Eugene Paslov for approval of the November 19, 2007, Governing Board meeting minutes as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Approval of Agenda**

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

**E. Reports**

**E.1. Academy Director**

**a. Policies**

**Colleen Harsin, Director** began her report by referring the Board to the proposed Academy policy changes and handbook updates discussed and conditionally approved at the November 19, 2007, meeting (attached hereto by reference). The Board provided conditional approval pending discussion of the proposed changes with Keith Rheault as he was unable to attend the November 19, 2007 meeting. Ms. Harsin reported that she had met with Dr. Rheault following the November 19, 2007, Board meeting and he provided feedback on the proposed changes. Ms. Harsin indicated that she would be seeking approval from the Board on these changes under General Business. Eugene Paslov questioned Keith Rheault on whether he noted any difficulties with the changes as proposed. Dr. Rheault confirmed that a few inconsistencies with current State policies

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exist, however this was due to the uniqueness of the Academy. Further discussion continued between Board members.

Eugene Paslov questioned the consistency of the current Academy grading scale with that of the State. Ms. Harsin confirmed that until the State establishes a uniform grading scale, the Academy would continue to use the grade scale approved at the November 19, 2007 (attached hereto by reference) for purpose of establishing a uniform grading system at the Academy.

**b. Staffing Update**

Ms. Harsin advised the Board that to date the Academy has employed seven full-time staff members, not including Ms. Harsin. Additional full-time staff members that have been recently hired for the Spring Term are Christopher Blandford, Instructor, who will be teaching Language Arts and American Government. Mr. Blandford will also be working with Carmen Garcia, Curriculum Coordinator, to create a Writing Center. Mr. Blandford is a UNR graduate and was previously a tutor with the Davidson Institute for Talent Developments's program, THINK Summer Institute. Also joining the Academy staff on a full-time basis is Gael Oswald, Instructor. Ms. Oswald has a Bachelors Degree in Pure Math from Australia. She will be teaching math and geometry and working on planning math curriculum for the fall of 2008. Ms. Oswald was most recently employed by the Coral Academy and is also the parent of a current Academy student. Eugene Paslov questioned whether all teaching staff is Nevada licensed. Colleen Harsin confirmed that instructors are either long term substitute licensed or have full licensure. The third full-time employee to join the Academy staff is Darren Ripley. Mr. Ripley is currently a part-time math instructor at the Academy and will become full-time for the fall 2008 term. Mr. Ripley has a Bachelors Degree of Science in Mathematics and a Masters Degree in Mathematics Instruction. He is also interested in advising students in the Robotics and Chess Clubs.

**c. General Program Update**

Colleen Harsin reported that the Academy's Latin course instructor, visiting Professor Emeritus Dr. Frank Tobin, approached the Academy and UNR about having a two credit independent study course of Latin on the UNR campus during the spring 2008 semester. This course is only for Davidson Academy students, six in total, and will take place at Edmund J. Cain Hall. The Academy is very pleased with this opportunity for its students and looks forward to similar possibilities in the future.

Concerning the Academy's accreditation, the Academy has consulted with Deborah Claymon, Independent College Consultant and Consultant Mary Peterson as to how the accreditation process will work best for the Academy. At this point it is projected that the Academy will work toward the reasonable goal of provisional accreditation within the first five years of establishment. Ms. Claymon advised that we need to make sure that the accreditation process moves as smoothly as possible. At present time with the location of the Academy being moved, as well as an anticipated significant increase in the

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Academy's enrollment, it doesn't make the most sense to attempt application for accreditation at this time. Colleen Harsin confirmed that application for accreditation will commence in approximately one year. Hon. Bruce James advised that it would be best to put together a team of two or three individuals to begin a study now on the accreditation process if the plan is to apply in one year. He agreed that the timing of the Academy's application sounds appropriate.

Deborah Claymon will also be assisting staff in creating test and preparation calendars and a college handbook which will assist students with college planning.

Colleen Harsin introduced Annette James, Fundraising Committee Chair, who reported that current parent fundraising effort has resulted in attaining funds totaling approximately \$82,000.

Colleen Harsin confirmed that she would be attending a mandatory meeting in Carson City concerning public funding budget cuts. Keith Rheault advised that every public school will receive a budget cut, however due to the Academy's 44 student enrollment it should not be significantly impacted by the budget cut.

**d. Admissions**

April 1, 2008, is the last day that the Academy is accepting applications for admission for the 2008-2009 academic year. Final decision letters will be mailed by May 15, 2008. Since the 2008-2009 application has been available we have received 26 applications. Fourteen applications have been accepted and thirteen of those have returned Intent to Attend Forms.

**E.2. Media and Outreach**

**a. Update**

**Julie Dudley, Director of Communications** reported that in December of 2007, The Chronicle of Higher Education visited the Academy. On January 28, 2008, the NBC affiliate in Las Vegas is scheduled to visit the Academy and complete interviews of students and parents. To date, total media impressions equal 29 million. On Saturday, January 12, 2008 the Academy had its second informational session and tour for prospective applicants. There were ninety attendees representing 27 families. On January 17, 2008, Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) will tour the Academy and meet with Colleen Harsin and staff for the purpose of learning more about the Academy and facilitating connections in the community.

Eugene Paslov commented that in terms of highlighting what is going on at the Academy the staff should consider developing an annual report inclusive of student accomplishments.

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**E.3. Vice President and Chief Financial Officer**

**a. Jot Travis Student Union Construction Update**

**Mark Herron, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer** confirmed that construction on the new Academy facility at the Jot Travis Building began on January 2, 2008. The work is being completed by Bison Construction out of Carson City. Since construction began some unexpected issues have come up with the building. For example some areas in the flooring are significantly out of level, some asbestos has been found, problems with piping to the second level and some expansive soils have been found in the parking lot all of which will be addressed by the contractor. It will be a challenge but the plan is that the remodel will be completed in time to house the THINK Summer Institute program during the summer. The contractors have given a projected completion date of June 25, 2008. The State contract has given them until the end of July for completion. The construction project should be close to finished by the time of the next Board meeting scheduled for June.

**F. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence at this time.

**G. Public Comments**

There were no public comments at this time.

**H. Consent Calendar**

There were no consent calendar items at this time.

**I. General Business**

Under General Business Colleen Harsin advised the Board that per NRS392A.100 they need to approve graduation and granting of a diploma for Academy students. At this time one student, Alexandra Morris, is petitioning for graduation. Motion to approve graduation and granting of a diploma for Alexandra Morris was made by Hon. Bruce James and seconded by Mark Herron. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously

**1a. Approval of Policy Amendments (Tab 2)**

Motion was made by Jan Davidson and seconded by Hon. Brian Krolicki for approval of the proposed policy amendments and Handbook updates as submitted in the Board

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packets under Tab 2 (attached hereto by reference). There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

**J. Adjournment**

**Review of Meeting Schedule for 2008**

The next Governing Board meeting is scheduled for **Monday, June 16, 2008 at 2:00p.m.**

The following dates were also scheduled:

**Monday, September 15, 2008 at 2:00pm**

**Monday, November 17, 2008 at 2:00pm**

There being no further business to come before the members of the Governing Board in public meeting, the meeting was declared adjourned by Chairman Bob Davidson at 3:45 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted by  
Colleen Harsin, Clerk of the Board