

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

June 16, 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 Chairman of the Board Bob Davidson. President Jan Davidson, Mark Herron, Annette Whittemore, Eugene Paslov, Paul Dugan, Milton Glick and Colleen Harsin were present. Hon. Bruce R. James was present via telephonic conferencing. Keith Rheault and Hon. Brian Krolicki were not present.

B. Welcome and Introductions

Welcome and Introductions were completed by Chairman Bob Davidson. Milton Glick presented a framed cover of the Spring 2008 issue of Nevada *Silver & Blue* to Chairman Bob Davidson and President Jan Davidson on behalf of the University of Nevada, Reno.

C. Approval of Minutes for Meeting of January 14, 2008

Chairman Bob Davidson requested approval of the Minutes for the meeting of January 14, 2008 (attached hereto by reference). Motion was made by President Jan Davidson to amend the Minutes on pages two and four to add "Summer Institute" after "THINK" and to amend the last sentence on page two to read as, "He is also interested in advising students in the Robotics and Chess Clubs." The motion was seconded by Eugene Paslov. Motion carried unanimously for approval of the minutes with amendments.

D. Approval of Agenda

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

E. Reports

E.1. Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

a. Audit

Mark Herron, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer began his report by introducing Tina Leslie, Accounting Manager-Davidson Group, Karin Dixson, Controller-Davidson Group and John Van Trigt of Holthouse, Carlin & Van Trigt LLP who

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completed an Independent Accountants Review and Report (attached hereto by reference).

Mr. Van Trigt advised the Board that the Academy's first year audit had been completed. A full audit was not completed which is not unusual for a first year audit. Two opinions were issued, first an audit opinion on the June 30, 2007 balance sheet and the second opinion was a review report on the statement of activities and cash flow. For the year ended June 30, 2008 and into the future, it is anticipated that full audits of the financial statements will be conducted. Neither the audit or review report had significant issues found. Adjustments were made having to do with the separation of the Davidson Institute from The Davidson Academy and employee vacation accrual amounts. No significant problems with internal controls or reporting were identified. A fiscal report will be completed for June 30, 2008 which they will begin working on in September of 2008.

b. Jot Travis Update

Mark Herron advised the Board that he had confirmed with Buzz Nelson, University of Nevada, Reno's Director of Facilities Management, that the construction/remodel of the Jot Travis Building is on schedule for a July 2, 2008, date of occupancy for The Davidson Academy and that this will allow courses for the THINK Summer Institute to take place in the building. He announced that all Board members were invited to tour the building following adjournment of the Governing Board meeting.

E2.

a. Academy Director

Colleen Harsin, Director began her report by introducing Academy student Amy Bodner to the Board for student comment. Miss Bodner addressed the Board advising them of her positive experiences as a student at the Academy beginning in August of 2007, which included individualized attention, the ability to work at her own pace and that the Academy staff genuinely cared about the students. She specifically mentioned Academy Instructor Carmen Garcia and how much she enjoyed taking her philosophy course. She also mentioned her great appreciation of Student Activities Coordinator, Erin Wallace. Miss Bodner confirmed that she is 13 years old, will graduate two years early and that she greatly appreciated the opportunities afforded her through The Davidson Academy of Nevada.

b. Staffing Update

Ms. Harsin indicated that she preferred to report her Staffing Update to the Board at this time to allow present staff members to excuse themselves from the remainder of the meeting as most staff was present. She confirmed she would report on Policies next. Ms. Harsin confirmed that the Academy was retaining the following fulltime staff members:

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Carol Gabbert – Project Coordinator and Receptionist
Erin Wallace – Student Activities Coordinator
Aimee Fredericks – Admissions and Records
Amy Dolan – Guidance Counselor
Gael Oswald – Mathematics Instructor
Christopher Blandford – Humanities Instructor
Erin Vienneau - Humanities and Mathematics Instructor and Curriculum Coordinator
Carmen Garcia – Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Humanities Instructor
Darren Ripley – Mathematics Chair

The following are new fulltime staff members:

Jennifer Harris – Guidance Counselor
Jackie Hedin – Project Coordinator
Rochelle Baxley – Information and Advising Coordinator
Susan Thomas – Interdisciplinary Instructor
Elizabeth Walenta – Science Instructor
Marianne Faker – Science Instructor

With the addition of new staff and instructors, the Academy will experience an increased breadth and depth of courses for the 2008-2009 academic year. Ms. Harsin thanked all staff/instructors for the success of the school and its students and commented that they are a team of very caring professionals.

c. Policies

Ms. Harsin advised that she would be seeking approval of several policy amendments under General Business, but wanted to provide information on the updates with additional context. More on the proposed amendments would be discussed under the General Program update as well. Ms. Harsin referred to TAB 2 within the Board Packets for a copy of the Policy Amendments delineated in red (attached hereto by reference). The proposed policy amendments represent an increase in rigor with a lower minimum GPA and an increase in number of credits in core subject areas and management of electives for graduation. The Academy is developing Merit and Merit with Distinction diploma options. “Honors” terminology will be avoided in this context as baseline course expectations at the Academy are already at an honors level by design. There will be an increased expectation concerning credits considered for transfer so that there is a sound meeting of state standards requirements on transfer credit.

d. General Program Update

Benchmarks for student competency in core subject areas are being drafted by the curriculum team and will be in effect for the 2008-2009 academic year. Additionally, the curriculum team is working on a four year plan for students which equates to a credit load of core subjects of approximately 8-9 credits per year. Presently the Academy is meeting, and in most cases, exceeding state standards in all core subject areas.

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Ms. Harsin advised that she has a meeting scheduled with State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Keith Rheault on June 25, 2008, to further discuss State Non-Regulatory Guidelines and to address the uniform grading scale adopted by the state and how these items may impact the Academy. She also plans to discuss issues that have come up with the Academy's state reporting requirements via the Nevada State Accountability Report Card. Concerning accreditation, the Academy is prepared to begin the process of applying for accreditation through the NAAS with Rochelle Baxley as the point person on this project. With regard to further working with the University for services available to Academy students, Student Services is making itself available to the Academy for academic and career counseling services, mentoring and study workshops. The Mathematics Department is offering credit by exam. The Academy now has been provided the ability to place advising holds through SIS, the University of Nevada, Reno student information system. The details have now been worked out for students transitioning into University of Nevada, Reno as degree seeking students.

Academy improvements include access to a college planning calendar and handbook which is published to the Academy's private website. Students will continue to receive staff advisement on a weekly basis for follow-up with an emphasis on student accountability and course work responsibility. The school profile will be updated by August 25th. During the spring 2008 semester MIT, Brown and Yale scheduled a special visit to the Academy to discuss their programs with Academy students.

Travis Rabe, Vice President of Technology for The Davidson Group, is building a custom database called DAN to manage student personalized learning plan information and student/parent/staff communications. The Academy expects to have information uploaded and the database ready to use by August 2008. The Academy staff is also working on a Student Success Initiative to increase student accountability, organization and communication. Also being worked on at this time is a comprehensive counseling and guidance plan which will include a monthly newsletter to students and families which will focus on timely topics and college planning. The Academy's guidance counseling staff is collaborating with Davidson Institute for Talent Development on this project.

On other topics, the Academy has now applied to the National Honor Society and our application to the National Association of Certified Admissions Counseling has been accepted. The Academy is also in the process of revising its crisis plan to incorporate aspects of the new facility including the new floor plan and security. The revised Application for Admission will be available on September 2, 2008, with October being the first review month. Education policies for instructors and guidelines for assignments, homework, tests, grades, student feedback, parent interactions, grade challenges, and student disabilities has been drafted and will be included on the private website.

Concerning transcripts, Larry Kramp is working diligently to produce transcripts from PowerSchool. To date we have manually produced transcripts on an as needed basis by student.

Year-end parent and student surveys were completed by 40 out of 44 students and 28 out of 44 parents. In general, ratings of instructors, courses and opportunities for

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students were positive. Areas noted for improvement are already being addressed, such as additional college planning and guidance counseling tools. These include, but are not limited to, college planning calendars and a college planning handbook that were customized for the Academy and are available to students and parents. In addition, a monthly electronic newsletter, "Good Counsel" is sent to all Academy families and saved on the Academy private website. The newsletter includes timely counseling and guidance based information and tips, as well as college planning information. Year-end parent and student surveys will continue to be conducted on an annual basis.

e. Admissions

Ms. Harsin referred the Governing Board to the Admissions Review Summary under TAB 3 in the Board packets (attached hereto by reference). The deadline to submit an application for consideration for the 2008-2009 academic year was extended to June 1, 2008 in order to accommodate further SAT and ACT testing dates for applicants. Final decision letters will be provided to all applicants by July 15th, except for qualified applicants unable to interview prior to that date due to summer vacation schedules. Of the current 44 students enrolled in the Academy, one has graduated, two are now degree seeking students at UNR for fall 2008 and three will be moving or transferring to other schools to seek other extracurricular and social activities. To date the Academy accepted 30 new students for the fall with a few remaining interviews and provisional applications awaiting final decision.

E.2. Media and Outreach

a. Update

Julie Dudley, Director of Communications reported a summary of media placements for the Board and referred them to TAB 4 (attached hereto by reference). The most recent placement was in the University's magazine *Silver & Blue* Spring 2008 Issue. The Davidson Institute recently hired Kristin Busse as Marketing Manager. The "Explore The Davidson Academy" Newsletter now has 150 subscribers. On August 19th the Davidson Academy will host an Open House for the public and the media will be invited to the see the new space that day. A sneak peek will also be offered to current Academy families on August 18th. On the 3rd Friday of each month beginning in the fall the Academy will be host a tour of the Academy facility and UNR for prospective students. Publications currently in the works include a recruiting piece and an annual report. Eugene Paslov offered to assist with these projects. Ms. Dudley advised that she was hopeful to have these projects completed for August of 2008.

F. Correspondence

There was no correspondence at this time.

G. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

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H. Consent Calendar

There were no consent calendar items at this time.

I. General Business

la. Approval of Policy Amendments (Tab 2)

Motion was made by Eugene Paslov and seconded by President Jan Davidson for approval of the proposed policy amendments as submitted in the Board packets under Tab 2 (attached hereto by reference). Mark Herron suggested that the motion be carried pursuant to Colleen Harsin's discussion of the proposed policy amendments, with Keith Rheault. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Adjournment

Review of Meeting Schedule for 2008

Proposed dates for the next meeting to occur in late August or late September will be forwarded to Board members for consideration and scheduling.

Milton Glick announced that he was very excited about the upcoming groundbreaking for the Davidson Mathematics and Science Building on the University campus, as a building dedicated to science since 1973 and this building is a critical element to the future of the University campus.

President Jan Davidson commented that she never anticipated that we would be where we are today and that the Academy has exceeded her expectations.

Motion for meeting adjournment was made by Mark Herron and seconded by Annette Whittemore. 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.

Respectfully submitted by
Colleen Harsin, Clerk of the Board