

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
The Davidson Academy of Nevada  
Governing Board  
May 14, 2012**

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Governing Board was called to order at 2:05 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, Jan Davidson, Marc Johnson, Brian Krolicki, and Colleen Harsin were present. Annette Whittemore, Bruce James, James Guthrie and Heath Morrison and were not present.

**B. Welcome and Introductions**

Welcome of members of the Governing Board and visitors was completed by Bob Davidson. Mr. Davidson also introduced incoming members of the Board, Dr. Marc Johnson, President of the University of Nevada, Reno and Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. James Guthrie. Karin Dixson, Controller and Julie Dudley, Director were also introduced as they would be providing reports to the Board during the meeting.

**C. Public Comments**

There were no public comments at this time.

**D. Approval of Minutes for Meeting of November 14, 2011**

Bob Davidson requested approval of the minutes for the meeting of March 12, 2012, under Tab 1 of the Board books (incorporated herein by reference). Motion was made by Eugene Paslov for approval of the minutes as submitted and seconded by Mark Herron. Motion carried unanimously.

**E. Approval of Agenda**

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

**F. Reports**

**Academy Director**

**1.a. General Program Updates**

Colleen Harsin began her report by referring Board members to the back cover pockets of their Board books for a copy of the Academy's calendar of year end events (incorporated herein by reference). New events recently occurring at the Academy include a student Lock-In, a Senior Sunset, and Arts, Achievement and Awards evening. Also included with the calendar of events (incorporated herein by reference) was a copy of the student newspaper *READ*. A staff training with Dr. Melanie Crawford was scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>.

In follow-up to the presentation from the March meeting by DECA Club members Ikya Kandula and Amy Bodner, Ms. Harsin let the Board know that both Ms. Kandula and Ms. Bodner were International Winners at their recent competition in Salt Lake City. Stephan Kim and Chris Huh received Awards of Excellence.

Under Tab 2 Ms. Harsin directed Board members to a copy of Non-Regulatory Guideline 901 updated as of January 18, 2012 (incorporated herein by reference). The updated Guideline were submitted to and signed by Dr. Keith Rheault as of the last Board

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meeting date of March 12, 2012. Changes include a Personnel Section with a goal of aligning/recognizing the formal practice and spirit and intent of NRS 392A and added information regarding the Academy's Residential Program. A clarification of dual enrollment and credit hour minimum was included along with distance education.

Under Tab 3 a copy of a letter to Dr. James Guthrie of April 19, 2012, and the Academy's Application to Operate an Alternative Schedule were submitted by Colleen Harsin (incorporated herein by reference). Dr. Guthrie had confirmed receipt and final decision on the Application to Operate an Alternative Schedule would be received the following week.

Under Tab 4 Ms. Harsin referenced an e-mail message received from Pam Salazar, Nevada Director for the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), (incorporated herein by reference), announcing that the NWAC was becoming a division of AdvancedED. Julie Dudley, Director, has followed up with AdvancED regarding the Academy being listed on their website as an accredited school.

Ms. Harsin indicated that she was completing meetings with students to gain information from them with regard to what things they felt were working at the Academy and what things they would like to see changed for purposes of continued improvement and an increased sense of community. As a whole, students reported that they feel positively about their teachers, curriculum, small class sizes and accessibility of instructors. For the 2012-2013 school year, some changes will be made with regard to increased use of computers and access with meaningful privileges. Student Handbook updates will be completed during the summer break. Parent surveys will also be completed during the summer with increased participation and volunteer opportunities along with fundraising. Davidson Academy Alumni would also be contacted during the summer. Most are still completing their undergraduate work; none have graduated to date. Of note, Academy graduate, Melanie Malinas has received the Goldwater Scholarship.

Ms. Harsin reported to the Board that it appears that the Academy may experience a decrease in enrollment numbers due to 22 students graduating and possibly as many as 15 additional students choosing to move on for difference reasons including moving back to a home state, study abroad, performing arts options, gap year, sports options and a more social, less academic, traditional high school environment. Eighteen new students have been accepted to date with 17 more to interview and complete readiness assessment on June 13. Total enrollment for the coming school year is estimated at 130 students.

Bob Davidson expressed concern that students choosing to leave the Academy prior to graduation for the reasons stated by Ms. Harsin may be compromising their academics and that it is possible that some things can be done at the Academy to increase options for students. Brian Krolicki commented that students will move on for reasons that the Academy will be unable to address. He then suggested offering a Public Comment opportunity to the public attending the meeting. The Board agreed. A current Academy student commented that most profoundly gifted students need academic rigor and raised concern that the academics at the Academy not mistakenly be watered down to accommodate non-academic interests.

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A parent of an Academy student who had withdrawn for the 2012-2013 school year also commented that it was a difficult decision to choose to leave the Academy for their zoned public high school, but felt that it had been considered from a family perspective and was the right decision for them at this time. She was appreciative of the education that her daughter had received and time spent as a student at The Davidson Academy. A second Academy parent commented that her daughter was thriving at the Academy and had been given lots of opportunities as a student and was looking forward to the years to come. She expressed interest in further elective opportunities for piano and overall individualized instruction in artistic options. Bob Davidson commented that many students are very busy with outside academic and non-academic options and it would be difficult to provide this type of instruction, but was something to further consider. Eugene Paslov commented that he was in the process of developing a charter school for performing arts and that the arts are a powerful part of academics. A final comment was made by a current Academy parent who lives in Carson City and commutes his daughter to Reno to attend the Academy. He confirmed that they have no desire to have their daughter go to another school. He did confirm that his daughter's involvement in competitive volleyball as a part of the team at their zoned high school creates a logistically challenging schedule for their family during the volleyball season. He requested increased flexibility from instructors for students heavily involved in extracurricular activities for completion of assignments.

**1.b. College Planning Updates**

Ms. Harsin advised the Board that Julie Dudley had recently completed a press release listing all Davidson Academy graduates and the schools they will be attending. Seven graduates are National Merit Finalists, and Justin Otor received the National Achievement Scholarship. Graduate, Claire Evans is the Academy's first Presidential Scholar with Alanna Simmons named as her most influential teacher.

The class of 2012 submitted 190 applications to 90 different schools of which; 42 were withdrawn, 50 were denied, 73 were accepted and 25 were wait-listed. Academy graduates were accepted and have chosen to attend the University of Nevada, Reno, Reed College, University of Puget Sound, Mount Holyoke, Stanford University, California Polytechnic State University, Vanderbilt University, Washington University at St. Louis, St. Olaf College, Pomona College, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, Hampshire College, Princeton University, Lewis & Clark College, Villanova College, Sierra Nevada College, Phillips Exeter Academy (gap year), and Wellesley College. Taylor Wilson received the Thiel Fellowship.

**F.2. Media and Outreach**

Julie Dudley, Director for Davidson Institute for Talent Development advised that the Academy has many amazing students with news worthy achievements including recently named Presidential Scholar Claire Evans, National Achievement Scholarship recipient, Justin Otor. The Academy's GECKO Club received a media placement for their effort to initiate apartment recycling in Reno, a competition they participated in as part of *Green Nevada*, reported in the *Reno News & Review*. National media pieces featuring Taylor Wilson were broadcast recently on *CBS Evening News* and *CBS Sunday Morning*. A CNN interview of Taylor for *The Next List* was completed with an air-date to be determined, possibly to run in June. A press release including the list of graduates and the schools they will be attending was sent to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*. Subscribership to the Academy's e-Newsletter had increased by approximately 200 names since the

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last Governing Board meeting in March. One more public tour for prospective students and families is scheduled for June. Public tours will resume in September 2012. The Young Scholar Program currently has 2,000 national students enrolled that are at the same level of students attending the Davidson Academy. The upcoming Young Scholar Summit will be attended by an estimated 300 young scholars and 800 people total.

**G. Correspondence**

Colleen Harsin reported that a note of thanks to the Academy staff and Governing Board members had been received from several Academy families for a wonderful school year (incorporated herein by reference).

**H. Public Comments**

An Academy parent stood and thanked the Governing Board and confirmed that her child would not want to attend any other school but the Davidson Academy.

**I. General Business**

**1. Approve Engagement of Independent Auditors for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2012**

Mark Herron referred Board members to Tab 7 of their Board books for a copy of the Engagement of Independent Auditors for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2012, (incorporated herein by reference). He confirmed that the accounting firm of Holthouse, Carlin & Van Trigt, LLP had completed the independent of The Davidson Academy for five years and John Van Trigt will be the partner in charge and another partner will review the audit. The letter is identical to previous years with three exceptions including an increased fee by \$1250.00, on Page 4, on Page 5, paragraph three indicates that the firm includes owners without CPA licenses and Page 6, second to last paragraph includes typical language about the engagement letter being executed by counterparts. Motion was made by Mark Herron for Approval of Engagement of Independent Auditors for Fiscal Year Ending June, 30, 2012 and seconded by Bob Davidson. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Approve 2011-2012 Revised Fiscal Budget**

Mark Herron referred Board members to Tab 8 of their Board books for a copy of the 2011-2012 Revised Fiscal Budget (incorporated herein by reference). The state requires revisions to the budget based on final student count. There was no change in the student count. Karin Dixson, Controller for The Davidson Academy advised that the revised budget was decreased due to health insurance quotes, Kids 1st not needing time or expense to continue work on the Academy's Residential Program and a tuition decrease for the University of Nevada, Reno. Mark Herron motioned for approval of the Revised Fiscal Budget for 2011-2012 which was seconded by Brian Krolicki. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. 2012-2013 Fiscal Budget**

Mark Herron reported that a Public Hearing on the 2012-2013 Fiscal Budget was completed on May 7, 2012, with three members of the public in attendance. He referred Board members to Tab 9 of their Board books for documentation of the required public hearing along with a copy of the budget (incorporated herein by reference). Karin Dixson confirmed that there were no significant changes from the previous year and that the student enrollment estimate would be adjusted following Count Day. No significant changes were made to staff. Total expenses are estimated to be higher than the

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previous year mainly due to an increase in health insurance costs. Brian Krolicki motioned for approval for the 2012-2013 Fiscal Budget as submitted which was seconded by Eugene Paslov. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. William Raggio Recognition**

Colleen Harsin referred Board members to Tab 10 of their Board books for a copy of the Davidson Academy of Nevada Governing Board Resolution Recognizing the Support of Senator William Raggio (incorporated herein by reference) which will be read at the 2012 graduation ceremony where his wife Dale and daughter Leslie will be in attendance. Eugene Paslov motioned for approval of the Resolution which was seconded by Brian Krolicki. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Harsin indicated that a Resolution was drafted in recognition of the service of Dr. Heath Morrison as Superintendent of the Washoe County School District and participation as a Governing Board member of the Davidson Academy Governing Board. Motion was made by Mark Herron for approval of the Resolution which was seconded by Brian Krolicki. 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 Mark Herron and seconded by Brian Krolicki. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted by Colleen Harsin, Clerk of the Board