



North Davis Preparatory Academy
BOARD RETREAT MINUTES
Tuesday, June 25, 2013

Location: K-4 Library, 1765 W. Hill Field Rd., Layton, UT 84041

In Attendance: Kristin Elinkowski, Rita Brock, Dawn Kawaguchi (AW), Bevany Garfield, Sheldon Killpack (AW), Quinn Hanamaikai, Trent Brown (AW), Debby Gomberg (Principal), Ryan Arrington (AW), Jennifer Bazzano, Deanna Billings, Linda Larsen, Ryan Robinson (Asst. Principal), Brad Taylor (AW), Kim Dohrer (AW)

Excused: Kathy Thornburg

VISION:

North Davis Preparatory Academy students develop a love of learning, experience high academic achievement, and enjoy high bi-literate proficiency.

BOARD CONSTITUTION:

- We will Govern, not Manage. We will set the direction and goals for the school, but we will not micromanage the day to day administration of the school.
- We will speak with "One Voice". We will recognize that our authority is only valid as a group and not as individuals. We will not use our position on the Board to promote our own personal agendas.
- We will make the Spanish language a key element of our school.
- We will make decisions that will keep NDPA financially stable.
- We will review our Charter before making any dramatic changes to school policy.

BOARD RETREAT MINUTES

12:32 PM – INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

- ❖ Welcome and Introductions – Kristin Elinkowski

Kristin Elinkowski made a motion to approve the CONSENT ITEMS. Motion passed unanimously.

- ❖ Approve June 5, 2013 Annual Board Meeting Minutes
- ❖ Approve June 5, 2013 Closed Board Meeting Affidavit
- ❖ Approve 2013-2014 Board Calendar – *There was a brief discussion on the board calendar. Debby will bring board meeting date change recommendations to the next meeting.*

Debby introduced Ryan Robinson as the new assistant principal. There will only be two administrators at the school instead of three. Kim and Mariam will still be working at the school but will have different job duties which are not in administration. Debby will start everyday in the elementary and work with Ryan in the Jr. High a couple of days of week.

RETREAT ITEMS

- ❖ Principal and Academica West Evaluation – Kristin explained that this is a new tool and the board can make adjustments as the board sees fit. In the past, the evaluations were separate and took two days. Kristin felt that since a lot of the schools progress is due to both the principal and

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Academica West the evaluation should be together. She worked with Debby and many of AW employees to come up with this evaluation.

- **Student Achievement** – The schools test scores and how the state scores the school was discussed in length. Next year the state will be giving schools a letter grade. The board discussed educating the parents and public on the state scoring. There was a discussion on the alumni of the school and tracking their success once they leave the school.
 - ✓ **Threats:** State’s rating/ranking system
 - ✓ **Overall:** The board felt like the scores and the achievement enhances the viability of the school.
 - **Trust in the School** – There has been a staffing change due to another charter school opening but we are hoping that we will be getting some of the students for the Jr. High. Debby informed the board that she is talking to many past teachers that are interested in coming back to the school.
 - ✓ **Overall:** Teacher retention has been good until this year but generally it is very good. The board feels like the trust of the parents from the school is very good.
 - **Retention of Students** – Kristin explained that charter schools are funded on an October 1 count but the state is looking at changing it to an “average daily membership” which our school loses about 3%. Debby reviewed the students lost for the next year. The Jr. High transition is where the school has the biggest loss. There was a discussion on the reasons for losing students especially in the Jr. High. Debby stated that we need to find a way to sustain the Jr. High enrollment. We are growing every year.
 - ✓ **Overall:** The school still does a good job of retaining students even in the Jr. High compared to the other charter schools in the state.
 - **Budget** – Kristin reviewed the state charter baseline performance. Kristin reminded the board that because we own the building it makes the school’s debt ratio high. Kristin stated that we can improve on our adherence to budget. Ryan explained the debt ratio and how that was configured. He also stated that as the years go on the debt ratio will go down. Debby mentioned that in the eight years that she has been at the school, AW has never raised their service rates. In fact, they’ve lowered them twice.
 - ✓ **Overall:** Academica West does a good job managing the budget and Debby does a great job staying in her spending. She also being frugal and always being aware of the budget. Jen stated that AW’s transparency with the board is great.
 - **Compliance** – Kristin asked about a couple of late reports turned in. Debby and AW explained that if you send in a report on time and the state has questions on the report or asks you to change the content the report date is changed and it is considered late. Debby stated that she is unaware of any reports that were actually turned in late. There was a discussion on the MOE report. Debby explained that there are more than 100 reports due every year and AW does the bulk of them. We work together on them and some of them are plans. Every one of these reports are regulated by the state and AW understands those regs. There was discussion on the school’s charter agreement with the state.
 - ✓ **Overall:** The board agrees that the principal and management group do a fantastic job of keeping the school in compliance and turns in all the reports.
- Kristin summed the evaluation with the following:
- ✓ **Threats:** Grading system and Jr. High retention
 - ✓ **Overall:** Both Debby and AW do a very good job and work well together.

❖ **Board Training**

- *Review Board Constitution* – Kristin wrote some questions for the board to evaluate themselves on each item of the board constitution.

- ✓ **We will govern, not manage. We will set the direction and goals for the school, but we will not micromanage the day to day administration of the school.**
 - ★ *How is our relationship with the Principal?* The board and administration feel that the relationship between the two is very good. The board understands their role and does not manage. When individual board members have parents or employees approach them, they send the parents back to Debby.
 - ★ *Does she have a clear understanding of our expectations and long-term goals?* There was discussion on setting long range goals of the school and how it may affect the teachers. The board's expectation is known by Debby and if she has questions she will ask the board if what she is doing goes along with the board vision. The board discussed using the principal and AW evaluation to set board goals. Here's what they might look like.
 1. Improve growth scores and mitigate any fallout from a negative score
 2. Improve 6th Grade retention number
 3. Higher financial rating

There was a discussion on making academic goals. There was discussion on how Debby reviews all test scores with the faculty and how they decide to make improvements. Kim reminded the board that next year the state will be using the new adaptive testing.
 - ★ *What could we do better?* Debby has asked the board to keep her informed when it comes to their expectation.
- ✓ **We will speak as one voice. We will recognize that our authority is only valid as a group and not as individuals. We will not use our position on the Board to promote our own personal agendas**
 - ★ *Do we use our position on the Board for our own gain or for a personal issue?* This is the hard one as a parent. It is hard to make a decision that is best for the school and not for you or your child. Kim stated that just remember that you represent the tax payers.
 - ★ *Are we unified once a decision has been made even if we disagree?* It's okay to disagree but once you vote you are unified as a board no matter what the decision is. Kristin stated that the board hasn't always agreed on every decision but they have been unified once it has been made.
 - ★ *Do we keep all information confidential, specifically anything discussed in a closed meeting?* Kristin reminded the board that there are some very confidential things that are discussed in the closed session that should not be discussed outside of those meetings especially when you are talking about one's character.
 - ★ *What could we do better?* There was nothing that anyone could think of at this time.
- ✓ **We will make the Spanish language a key element of our school.**
 - ★ *How are we supporting our Spanish language focus as outlined in our Charter?* Currently this isn't a problem but Kristin reminded the board that our charter states that we will have a Spanish language focus.
 - ★ *How could we do better?* The board would like to know how our students are supported in Spanish once they leave our school. There was discussion on the 9th graders taking the Spanish AP test.

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- ✓ **We will make decision that will keep NDPA financially stable.**
 - ★ *How are we doing financially?* Ryan stated that the school is doing very well. The results from last year for the school showed that there was about \$110,000 surplus last year after all accruals and cash transactions with a depreciation expense of over a half a million dollars. This will in turn make your financial ratios healthier.
 - ★ *How well are we managing the budget?* The board is ultimately responsible to for the budget. Kristin stated that Jen did a good job this last year and Deanna will be educated to take on this role for next year.
 - ★ *What could we do better?* Ryan stated that he will continue to meet monthly with Debby to review the budget to itemize it better and continue to meet with the financial coordinator to review the financials and answer any questions.
- ✓ **We will review our Charter before making any dramatic changes to school policy.**
 - ★ *How well are we following our charter?* Kristin explained that our charter is what we should be doing. The charter is our legal and binding agreement with the state who is our authorizer.
 - ★ *What could we do better?* There was no discussion at this time. However, Debby reminded the board that Kristin sits on the State Charter Board.

Kristin asked the board if this evaluation worked. She recommended that the board vote on this evaluation at the next board meeting and continue to use it. Debby took this time to thank the board for doing such a wonderful job as a board and know what your role is. Kristin thanked everyone for the working relationship. She stated that it has been a pleasure to work on this board, to have her children attend this school that has great administrators, great teachers and a great direction. Good luck!

3:16 PM – Kristin Elinkowski made a motion to ADJOURN. Motion passed unanimously.
(Duration 2:44:43)

Action Items:

1. Copies of Principal and Academica West Evaluation for everyone – Dawn
2. Send copy of Charterology article to Kristin and any eval tool you have – Kim
3. Article on understanding the state charter scoring for our schools – AW
4. Approve the NDPA board evaluation at the next meeting – Dawn

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