

Board of Education Minutes- Southwest Leadership Academy

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING OF SOUTHWEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board for Southwest Leadership Academy held a meeting open to the public on Tuesday, October 23, 2018, at 10:30 AM (MST) at Southwest Leadership Academy, 4301 West Fillmore Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85043.

1. Call to order and roll call. (Board President, Mike Gantt called the meeting to order at 10:33 AM. Those present were: Jenny Diaz, Mark Hendershot, Ruben Olivas, Terry Hines (telephonically), Brian Heath and Mike Gantt.
2. Introduction of Visitors: Mr. Gantt introduced Shaquana Fernandez who attended the entire Board meeting. Ms. Fernandez addressed the Board. She is also the owner of TLC Preschool, which is the licensed preschool provider at Southwest Leadership Academy. Also present were: Dr. Gregory Fowler, school principal and Dr. Philip Geiger, superintendent.
3. **Approval of Meeting Minutes from the July 10 and July 16, 2018 board meetings.**

A motion was made by Ms. Diaz, seconded by Mr. Heath to approve the minutes of the July 10 and July 16, 2018 Board meetings attached. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Resignation of Compliance Officer, Removal and Replacement of Charter representative**

Based on the attached resignation from Matthew Boucher as the compliance officer for Southwest Leadership Academy, a motion was made by Ms. Diaz, seconded by Mr. Olivas to accept Mr. Boucher's resignation and remove Matthew Boucher as one of the charter representatives and to appoint Nancey Carter, current compliance officer for SLA as a replacement for Mr. Boucher as a charter representative effective immediately. The motion passed unanimously.

5. **Agreement with the Arizona School Boards Association for Four Year Policy Service Contract** – The school lacks a coherent set of policies and is unable to maintain needed policy changes resulting from changes in state and

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federal laws and regulations. ASBA has for many years provided this service to public and charter schools in AZ, which enables these schools and school districts to remain compliant. There is a \$1,000 startup fee for the ASBA to review any policies we have already approved and to bring our policies into compliance and they will prepare a recommended set of policies which they will review with the administration to be sure the policies are written specifically for our school(s) and still meet all requirements. There is a \$500 fee once the four-year review has been completed and a \$300 per month subscription fee, which starts after the initial document is completed. This pays for the regular updates that the ASBA forwards to the district.

Ms. Diaz said that she felt that the cost was not prohibitive and Ms. Bower commented that this would be money well spent. Mr. Hendershot said that it was like having your own legal counsel for policy development. Mr. Olivas asked if it was possible to sign an agreement for a shorter period other than four years to which Dr. Geiger noted that there are constantly changing policies and that the initial cost would be far greater if we could not spread the payments over the four-year period. Dr. Geiger also noted that he had asked about a shorter contract period and was told that ASBA did not offer a shorter term. Mr. Heath noted that the Board previously considered using the ASBA Policy Service but it was more expensive at that time and that this pricing is much lower than the Board received previously. There being no further discussion, the Board considered a motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Hendershot, seconded by Mr. Heath to authorize the superintendent to enter into a four-year agreement with the Arizona School Boards Association for policy development and maintenance services at the costs noted on the attached document. The motion passed unanimously.

- 6. Discussion and Possible Action – Evening School Effective 11/5/18** – Most alternative high schools already have evening programs for students who have to work during the day. We had 33 students who left SLA last year and to date have not enrolled at any other high school, which we believe, indicates that they cannot attend school during the day. Therefore, we are proposing starting on November 5 to commence evening school from 5 PM to 9:30. Each night, we plan to have a teacher who can specialize in one subject area: mathematics, English/language arts, science, social studies, and foreign languages. The students will generally be working on Edgenuity courses that they need to graduate and the teacher will be there to help tutor and assist the student in any of their Edgenuity classes or help with the work in their specific subject matter expertise. Dr. Geiger anticipates that we will be able to secure additional

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tutors (without cost to SLA) from 1:11 Tutoring to supplement the teacher. As you will see from the financial projections attached, we “break even” with 14 students but we do expect this to grow. Our risk is low since we could discontinue the program if we determine there is insufficient enrollment.

Dr. Geiger explained that this program was not guaranteed to be successful but that we should make the effort to better serve our student population many of whom have to work on a daily basis preventing them from attending school during the day and it would increase our student enrollment. Mr. Heath said he was most concerned that we serve our students. Dr. Geiger indicated that the Board could later discontinue the program if we did not have an adequate number of students enrolled. Dr. Fowler commented that he felt that based on the students who left SLA already this year because of work, and the 33 students who left last year and have not enrolled in any school to this date, the school should not have a problem enrolling a reasonable number of students.

At that time, Mr. Olivas made a motion to authorize the superintendent to commence an evening program for alternative high school students effective November 5, 2018, for 4.5 hours nightly and to further authorize the employment of personnel to provide instruction and security or a security firm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Diaz. During the discussion period, Mr. Gantt said that he felt that security should arrive at least 15 minutes before classes begin and end 15 minutes after the classes. Mr. Oliva and Ms. Diaz accepted the recommended amendment changing the hours of security to 5 hours per evening. The motion passed unanimously.

- 7. Rosetta Stone Multiyear agreement** – We currently have three classes of foreign language being taught at SLA. Students are working with the software, and our staff finds this to be a good way to provide foreign languages to our students. When we purchased Rosetta Stone, we decided to purchase one year, 250 licenses (some of these licenses have also been purchased by Prestige Day School and Canyon State from SLA) at the cost of \$12,000. We made an arrangement that if we liked the software and wanted to purchase a multiyear agreement, Rosetta stone would re-price the system, which would save SLA \$9,000 over the course of three years. (\$27,000 VS \$36,000) SLA has the cash and the program can be amortized over three years, actually lowering the current budget allocation. The administration is recommending that the Board consider approving a contract for three years before December 31, 2018, when this offer expires.

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During the discussion period, Dr. Fowler presented the Board with data on the number of students enrolled in a foreign language through Rosetta Stone (119) who were taking primarily Spanish but also French.

A motion was made by Mr. Olivas, seconded by Mr. Hendershot to authorize the superintendent to execute a three-year contract with Rosetta Stone for 250 foreign language licenses (multi-language license) at the cost of \$27,000 to be amortized over a period of three years. The motion passed unanimously.

- 8. Review of FY19 Budget, financial Reports for September 2018,** ROP CFO, CJ Bower reviewed the monthly budget summary, expenditures, revenue, and projected budget performance and answered questions. Ms. Bower advised the Board that if the student enrollment remained as it was on the 40th day, 304, that the Board would have to cut the budget by approximately \$177,000 for the FY19 school year. Dr. Fowler commented that the school needed to enroll approximately 34 new students so the school would receive the revenue originally projected in the FY 19 budget. Mr. Heath told the Board that since the school opened, there was concern based on the 40th-day count but enrollment always increased. Ms. Bower told the Board that a revised budget would be prepared for our January Board meeting after the 100th-day count so that the Board would have the best financial data possible to make budget decisions.

Ms. Diaz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hendershot to receive the September 2018 financial reports as submitted, made a motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- 9. Reduction in Force and Reallocation of Funds** – In order to reduce costs and reallocate funds for other school needs, the administration recommends eliminating one behavior mentorposition. We have been working with just two behavior mentors for the past few weeks quite satisfactorily and both the principal and assistant principal can assist in moving students from class to class between each period.

Mr. Heath said that the issue was about deciding where the Board wanted to spend its budget, on instruction or non-instructional items. He also said that the Board had to prepare for possible cuts in January, if that was necessary. Mr. Olivas expressed concern about abolishing the position before the end of the

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calendar year and Ms. Diaz suggested that we make the effective date the start of the FY20 school year. Dr. Geiger indicated that the earlier the reduction in force occurred the more money saved. Mr. Heath reminded the Board members that they were only considering the elimination of a position and how the reduction in force would occur was governed by state law and Rite of Passage Policy #100.607 (Reduction in Force). He also said that included in that policy are provisions for displaced personnel to be reassigned to other ROP sites without interruption or loss of pay or benefits. Ms. Bower also stated that until the Board actually implemented the RIF that the funding for the position would not be reallocated in the budget. The Board then had an extended discussion about the effective date of the RIF.

Mr. Olivas made a motion, seconded by Ms. Diaz to eliminate one behavior mentor's position effective December 31, 2018,. During the discussion on the motion, Mr. Gantt suggested that the motion read "effective no later than December 31, 2018" so the Board could realize the greater savings if the HR department could work out the process and possibly reassign the affected person prior to December 31st. The maker of the motion and second accepted the change. The motion was restated to eliminate one behavior mentorposition no later than December 31, 2018. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Mr. Olivas, Mr. Hendershot and Mr. Gantt. Three Board members abstained including Mr. Heath, Ms. Hines, and Ms. Diaz. The motion passed.

- 10. FY19 Budget Revision** – Since the last Board meeting, we have received new funding information and have modified the spending of certain accounts. This information is being provided to the Board so you are aware of the changes but ROP only adjusts the budget semiannually. Budget revisions will also be reviewed at the January 2019 Board meeting.

Dr. Geiger said that the revisions he provided incorporated additional revenue that was not in the original budget but that this information would need to be integrated with the budget information provided by Ms. Bower. Ms. Bower suggested that instead of the Board holding its meeting on January 8th as currently scheduled, the Board should delay its January meeting until after the 100th day of school (January 18, 2019). Dr. Geiger said that he would poll the Board for an alternate date for the January Board meeting so that the budget

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decisions are based on the most accurate information possible. No action was taken at this time.

- 11. Resignation of Board Member** – The Board received a letter of resignation from Jenny Diaz indicating that her multiple businesses are consuming a great deal of time and that she has to reconsider her volunteer work on the SLA Board. She expressed gratitude for the time she was able to serve on the Board and requests the Board accepts her resignation. Mr. Gantt presented an award for Ms. Diaz service. The entire Board and administration extended its thanks and appreciation to Ms. Diaz’s service to the students, the school and to the Board over many years.

A motion was made by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. Hendershot to accept, with regret, the resignation of Jenny Diaz as a School Board member for Southwest Leadership Academy effective today and with honor and respect recognize Ms. Diaz’s service to the students, the school and to the Board over many years and to thank her for her unselfish years of service to Southwest Leadership Academy. The motion passed unanimously.

- 12. Informational Only:** Dr. Geiger commented that the items below were for informational purposes only and no action was required.
- a. The Maricopa County Health Department inspected the SLA kitchen last week and gave SLA an “A rating”.
 - b. We are planning a flu clinic for 11/1 provided by Walgreen’s (special thanks to John Motley @CSA for connecting me to them) for our students and staff at no cost to SLA for those getting the flu shot. Walgreen’s will accept insurance as payment.
 - c. Nancey Carter and Patrick Newley wrote a grant for musical instruments from Little Kids Rock, a non-profit music education organization to the “tune” of \$2,500, which we were awarded. Our students are now enjoying a new drum set, electric guitar with amplifier, bass guitar with amplifier, Cassio keyboard, and keyboard stand.
 - d. We have launched our first student-driven club – "The Music Club" being managed by Oscar Ortega, a senior at SLA. Eleven of our music club students and four chaperones will be attending the ASU Gammage production of "On Your Feet" November 10th. We were able to purchase discounted tickets for the event. Dr. Geiger is looking to see if we can approve a work-study for the student leader/convener...???
 - e. We are conducting a contest for our students for the next three weeks. Those who are here every day and on time will be entered into a raffle for tickets to see “Elf- the Musical” at the Phoenix Theater along with two chaperones. Of course, we obtained discounted tickets.

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- f. Jarod Pidgeon, one of our new teachers, has an assignment to call approximately 20 parents nightly when their child has irregular attendance. Often parents are not aware that their student has not been coming to school and this type of follow up is essential to get kids to school. We also started at the beginning of the year serving coffee each morning from 8-8:30 when school starts to get more students to come to school on time. It seems to have made an impact.
- g. We have had problems with vandals removing catalytic converters from our vans. We have had to replace them on most of our vans at the cost of nearly \$1,000 each. We are exploring the replacement of one of our vans, which has a lease expiring in May to see if we can replace it sooner since the AC no longer works.
- h. New bathroom partitions were installed in two of the boy's bathrooms. These partitions are made of thick plastic, which can be buffed so any "artwork" by students can be removed easily. They also have stronger braces and full seamless hinges. They also provide greater privacy. The cost was \$5,680 and competitive pricing was obtained. Interstate Interiors was the lowest priced vendor.
- i. Currently, we have three tutors at the school daily through a program whereby the state awarded a grant to a company called "1:1 Tutoring". The tutors have all gone through the state fingerprint screening and work with students in the core subjects, in the class, after school, in the morning, or pulled out of non-core subjects.
- j. Ms. Berry (English teacher) took 30 students to the Odyssey Aquarium Friday, October 19th, as the kick off of a student research project. We were pleased that Odyssey Aquarium awarded a Title 1 Scholarship to the school so students could also attend next semester without charge.

13. Principal's Report – Dr. Fowler presented information on the changes to the school program for FY19 including Galileo Test results, Rosetta Stone, Beyond Textbooks, ?, Reading 180, student academic performance for Quarter One, athletics, after-school clubs, student behavior, personnel, 40th-day results, and future plans.

14. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

15. Adjournment

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- a. Next regular meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2019 @ 10:30 AM (MST) @ Southwest Leadership Academy (telephonic attendance is acceptable) but is likely to change to a date after January 18, 2019.