

# **Southwest Leadership Academy March 23, 2021 Board Minutes**

## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING SOUTHWEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD**

Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) 38-431.02, notice was given to the public on March 18, 2021, that the Governing Board for Southwest Leadership Academy will hold a meeting open to the public as well as a Board retreat as specified below. The meeting took place at Southwest Leadership Academy 4301 West Fillmore Street, Phoenix, AZ 85043 although all participants joined virtually using Zoom.

- 1. Call to order and roll call. (Board President): President Mike Gantt called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM (MST). Present President Gantt, Treasurer/Secretary Brian Heath, Terry Hines, and Drew Ainsworth. Vice President, Ruben Olivas, was absent.**
- 2. Introduction of Visitors: Mr. Gantt introduced other individuals attending the meeting including Dr. Philip Geiger (Superintendent), Dr. Greg Fowler (Principal), Jessica Vensel (Assistant Principal), Meghan Miller (Assistant Principal), Paula Signorelli (Director of Business Operations), Rachel Parson (Compliance Officer), and SLA teacher, Patrick Newley.**
- 3. Approval of Agenda – President Gantt asked the Board if there was anything they wanted to modify on the agenda.**

**A motion was made by Ms. Hines, seconded by Mr. Heath to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 4. Pledge of Allegiance – President Gantt led the participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 5. A presentation on the use of tax-free bonding to create a new charter school was made by William Gelm, bond counsel at Buchalter, and Paula Permenter, financial advisor of Choice Advisors.**

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- 6. Approval of December 15, 2020, December 29, 2020, and January 12, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Ainsworth, seconded by Ms. Hines to approve the minutes of December 15, 2020, December 29, 2020 and January 12, 2021 Board minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 7. Finance– Paula Signorelli- Review December 2020, January 2021, and February 2021 Financial Reports**

**A motion was made by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. Gantt to receive the December 2020, January 2021, and February 2021 financial reports as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 8. Financial Report from the AZ State Board for Charter Schools – The Charter Board’s financial letter of January 8, 2021 is attached indicating the Charter meets the financial performance expectations.**

**A motion was made by Ms. Hines, seconded by Mr. Ainsworth to acknowledge the January 8, 2021 letter from the Arizona State Board for charter Schools noting that the school received a rating of “good standing” and meets the Charter Board’s financial performance expectations. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 9. Approval of Budget Revisions for FY21 – Dr. Geiger explained that there was not enough time to prepare the budget revisions for this particular board meeting, but they will be presented at the June 2021 board meeting.**

- 10. Update regarding Board Policies – Rite of Passage has started putting all the policies approved by the Board into the ROP format and when completed the final set of policies will be presented to the Board for final adoption as a complete set of Arizona School Board Policies for a Charter School. Attached are samples of the policies that were previously approved by the Board and reformatted into the ROP style. (Many thanks to Rusty Alexander and his staff for providing these reformatting services.)**

**No action taken at this time.**

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- 11. Termination of the Day Care Agreement with Rise ‘N Shine Preschool –** Rise ‘N Shine has been operating since 2019 but the pandemic had a significant negative impact on their operations. They have indicated that they do not want to exercise their option for renewal at this time, so the administration is recommending that we terminate the agreement effective June 30, 2021. If we can finally get DES to work with us so our students who have children can receive day care tuition relief, we will seek another daycare to serve our students and our community.

President Gantt commented about the importance of the childcare option for the students at SLA and wants to revisit the childcare option again at its June 2021 board meeting.

**A motion was made by Mr. Ainsworth, seconded by Ms. Hines to terminate the contract with Rise ‘N Shine preschool effective June 30, 2021 and to authorize the Superintendent, Dr. Philip Geiger, to seek a replacement vendor if SLA can get tuition relief for its students from DES. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 12. Approval to remove Nancey Carter as a Charter School Representative for Southwest Leadership Academy and appoint Rachel Parson as a new Charter School Representative effective immediately.** Since Nancey Carter resigned her position as compliance officer for SLA in December and Rachel Parson has been appointed to replace her, it makes sense to approve the change in charter school representatives. Mrs. Parson will join Mr. Gantt, Mr. Heath, Dr. Fowler and Dr. Geiger as the charter representatives for SLA.

President Gantt commended Ms. Carter for her past contributions and thanked her for her good work.

**A motion was by Ms. Hines, seconded by Mr. Ainsworth to appoint Rachel Parson, SLA compliance officer, as a charter school representative or Southwest Leadership Academy effective immediately replacing Nancey Carter who has accepted a position with another ROP program. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 13. Principal’s Report –** Dr. Fowler presented information on the professional development, current academic programs, student achievement athletics, after school clubs, evening school student behavior, personnel, Galileo, ACT and AZM2 Testing and future plans. He spoke about Student Athlete Moreno who was the top scorer for basketball in the state who was recognized at the recent

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athletic banquet. He indicated that the school is staffed for FY22 and that agreements will be sent out yet this month. He noted that testing will be occurring including AZM2, the state's standardized test. He spoke about the girls' softball team and our field athletes recently won their games. Dr. Fowler praised the staff for their hard work during these challenging times.

- 14. FY22 Reopening Plan** – The Board has already approved the FY22 calendar, but we do need to discuss and approve returning to delivering instruction primarily in-person, or on-line or at evening school effective July 1, 2021. We are only funded 95% of the daily reimbursement by the state so moving students back to in-person is best financially as well as instructionally. If we have a significant number of students enrolling in the on-line program, we may have to modify the designed instructional program which we will have to forward to the AZ Charter School Board.

**A motion was made Mr. Ainsworth, seconded by Ms. Hines to approve opening school effective July 1, 2021 focused on in-person instruction in conjunction with our approved on-line and evening school. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 15. Award of ESSER II funds** – SLA has received \$371,091.85 in ESSER II funds to be used for any purpose approved in our ESSER I application or any of our federal title programs. These funds do not have to be spent until 2023 so we are waiting until the FY22 budget is finalized to determine if those funds need to be expended to maintain a high-quality program at SLA and retain as many programs as possible in FY21 or FY22.

**No action was required by the Board at this time.**

- 16. Approval of 301 Teacher Matrix for FY22** – Attached is a revised 301 teacher award matrix criteria to take effect July 1, 2021. Dr. Fowler explained the proposed changes to the Proposition 301 teacher award matrix.

**A motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. Ainsworth to approve the revised 301 teacher award matrix to take effect July 1, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 17. Announcements** –

- a. The Board was informed that Mr. Connor is resigning effective June 30<sup>th</sup> and moving to California to commence a new career in theology. President Gantt asked that we extend our sincere appreciation to Mr.

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Connor for his years of service to our students and wishes for success and happiness in his family's move to California and his new career path.

**18. Adjournment** – President Gantt adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM.

The next regular meeting is June 29, 2021 @ 10:30 AM (MST) at Southwest Leadership Academy, 4301 West Fillmore Street, Phoenix, AZ 85043.