

Minutes of the Southwest Leadership Academy Meeting

May 19, 2020

Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) 38-431.02, notice was given to the public, that the Governing Board for Southwest Leadership Academy will hold a meeting open to the public at Southwest Leadership Academy 4301 West Fillmore Street, Phoenix, AZ 85043 on May 19, 2020 at 10:30 AM (MST).

1. Call to order and roll call. In the absence of President Mike Gantt, Board Vice President Ruben Olivas chaired the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 10:35 AM. Present were Mark Hendershot (Secretary/Treasurer), Ruben Olivas (Vice President), Terry Hines and Brian Heath. President Gantt was unable to attend this meeting as his wife is having surgery. All attended the meeting telephonically due to the Covid 19 pandemic.
2. Introduction of Visitors: The following staff members also attended telephonically: Dr. Greg Fowler (Principal), Dr. Philip Geiger (Superintendent), Paula Signorelli (Director of Business Operations) and Nancey Carter (SLA Compliance Officer)
3. **Approval of minutes of** December 17, 2019, March 17, 2020, April 3, 2020, and May 4, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. Hendershot to approve the minutes of December 17, 2019, March 17, 2020, the April 3, 2020, emergency board meeting, and the May 4, 2020, special board meeting attached. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Finance**– Paula Signorelli Review March and April 2020 Financial Reports

A motion was made by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mrs. Hines to receive the March and April 2020 financial reports as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Appointment of Auditor for FY20 Annual Audit** – The Board is required to select and approve the fee for the annual audit. ROPs CFO recommended Fester & Chapman as the auditor for the FY20 school year to conduct the annual audit and prepare the compliance questionnaire for a fee of \$14,300 and

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\$1,400 to complete the income tax return for a total of \$15,700. (Last year - \$11,900 and \$1,300 = \$13,200).

Mr. Hendershot asked Ms. Signorelli why there was a \$2,500 increase in the fee to which she responded that the firm had assumed additional risk due to repeated findings on the legal questionnaire. Mr. Olivas suggested that further inquiry be made of the accounting firm to ensure that these increases do not continue.

A motion was made by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mrs. Hines to confirm the appointment of Fester and Chapman as the auditors for Southwest Leadership Academy for a total of \$15,700 for FY20. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Approval of Auditor by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

A motion was made by Mr. Hendershot, seconded by Mr. Heath to receive the notice from the AZ State Board for Charter Schools approving the appointment of Fester Chapman for the FY20 audit. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Receipt of 2019 IRS Form 990 –Attached is a copy of the IRS Form 990 for SLA which was filed for the school year ending June 30, 2019.

Ms. Signorelli indicated that she had forwarded this draft of Form 990 to the Board on April 20, 2020 prior to being submitted on May 15, 2020,

A motion was made by Mr. Hendershot, seconded by Mr. Heath to receive Form 990 filed on behalf of SLA for the school year ending June 30, 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Approval of FY21 ROP Strategic Plan- Attached is the strategic plan template used by ROP which has been completed for FY21. Approval of this plan was requested.

Dr. Geiger indicated that a good portion of the plan is to continue to focus on the improvements that have been made and the programs that have been effective to improve student performance. He did indicate that as the Board saw in the April financials, the school has a \$197,000 budget surplus as of April 30, 2020 which will increase in May and June and suggested that the Board may want to consider improving the athletic field in the rear of the school property

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in order to enable the school to conduct athletic competitions on their own site. This issue will be discussed again at a future board meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Hendershot, seconded by Mr. Heath to approve the FY21 Strategic Plan as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

- 9. Update regarding Board Policies** – The Board has been working on developing and approving policies which are necessary for almost two years. It is important for the Board to commence approving policies so SLA can have a comprehensive and legally compliant set of school policies that comport to the federal and state law and regulations. Attached are several policies should be acceptable to the Board and the management firm for your consideration. They are specifically Section I (IA-Instructional Program), (IC- school Year), (ID- School Day), (IGA-Curriculum Development), (IGD Curriculum Adoption), (IHA Basic Instructional Program), (IHAA-English Instruction), (IHAMA Teaching about Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco), (IHAMC-Instruction and Training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation), (IHB-Special Instructional Programs), (IHB-E Exhibit Procedural Safeguards), (IHBA – Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations), (IHBA-RA Regulation for Special Instructional Programs), (IHBA-RB- Regulations -Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations), (IHBA Special Instructional Programs And Accommodations), (IHBA-E Exhibit for Special Instructional Programs and 504), (IHBB- Gifted and Talented Education), (IHBCA Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Students), (IHBCA-R Regulation for Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Students) (IHBHD Compensatory Education – Title1), (IHBD-EA Exhibit for Compensatory Education), (IHBE- Bilingual Instruction/Native Language Instruction), (IHBE-EA Exhibit for Bilingual Instruction), (IHBE-EB Exhibit –Request for Parental Exception Waiver), (IHBF-Homebound Instruction), (IHBHD On Line Courses and IHBHD-R Regulation on line courses), (IIB- Class Size), and (KEB and KBE-Exhibit-Public Concerns/Complaints about Personnel), (KEC and KEC Exhibit- Public Concerns and complaints about Instructional supplies), (KED and Ked Exhibit- Public Concerns and Complaints about Facilities).

Mr. Hendershot gave the report of the policy committee which included Messrs. Gantt, Heath and Hendershot along with Dr. Geiger. Mr. Heath commented on the committee's depth of review and the meaningful dialogue about each policy. Mr. Hendershot said that policies are essential for the

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Board's responsibility to the school and the state. He said that these are generally just the policies which may need procedures for proper implementation. Both Mr. Hendershot and Mr. Heath felt that the committee did a thorough job of reviewing these policies and decided to present some of the least controversial ones for the Board's approval now as others will need to be cross walked with current and applicable ROP policies.

A motion was made by Mr. Hendershot, seconded by Mr. Heath to approve the policies cited above effective June 1, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

- 10. Approval for Summer School for June and Possibly July 2020** – We already have plans for summer school where we will be offering programs in English (Reading), mathematics and science for June 2020. This includes 16 days of instruction for four hours each day, including breakfast and lunch. Assuming that we will have enough interest to extend summer school for July, utilizing ESSER Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Funds (CARES), we are requesting approval in the event that there is adequate interest and our ESSER application for funding is approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Hines, seconded by Mr. Hendershot to approve the summer school program for June and with adequate interest and ESSER funding for July 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

- 11. Review of the Management Agreement with Rite of Passage** – At June 2019 Board meeting, the Board approved a motion to appoint Mike Gantt and Mark Hendershot in consultation with Paula Signorelli and Barbara Ross to the Management Agreement Review Committee to provide recommended changes for the Board to consider at its March 17, 2020 regularly scheduled board meeting.

The committee has not yet met but the agreement term ends on June 30, 2020 and will be renewed as is without any further action by the Board. The current agreement is attached. Mr. Olivas said that this is an issue that needs to be addressed by Mr. Gantt when he is able to do so, preferably between now and the June Board meeting.

No action was taken by the Board other than referral to Mr. Gantt.

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- 12. Approval of Dual Enrollment Agreement for FY21** –Dr. Geiger met with representatives of the Maricopa County Community College District, which has determined that several of our teachers are qualified to teach dual enrollment classes to our students. Dr. Geiger said that it was the school’s intention to offer one course this semester, most likely a business course, which will be offered in a 7th period and that the school pay the full tuition of \$85 per credit hour plus a \$15 registration fee.

A motion was made by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mrs. Hines to approve the dual enrollment agreement with the Maricopa Community Colleges for the FY 21 school year and authorize the superintendent to execute this agreement on behalf of the Board and further to authorize the superintendent to enter into a subsequent agreement for the FY21 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

- 13. Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement with Vail Unified School District** – For the past two years, Southwest Leadership Academy has been using Beyond Textbooks developed by the Vail Unified School district for our curriculum, pacing guides, courses resources, lesson plans and assessment tools. We are requesting a renewal of this program for FY21. The agreement is for all ROP schools in Arizona but the SLA Board and CSA board should approve the agreement and authorize ROP’s CFO to execute the agreement on behalf of the schools The fees, based upon student enrollments, are: CSA \$4,900; SLA \$4,800 and Prestige Day School \$300. Dr. Geiger has now negotiated that regardless of increasing enrollments, the fees will never rise above \$10,000, which is the Beyond Textbooks minimum annual charge.

Dr. Fowler commented on the importance of the Beyond Textbooks program and credited it with the significant change in the performance results of SLA this past year. Dr. Geiger asked Dr. Fowler to also inform the Board about the standards-based report cards that is being developed which will further support the standards based instruction facilitated by Beyond Textbooks

A motion was made by Mr. Olivas, seconded by Mr. Hendershot to authorize ROP’s CFP, CJ Bower, to execute the IGA between the Vail Unified School District and Rite of Passage and specifically Southwest Leadership Academy for the FY21 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

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Principal's Report – Dr. Fowler presented information on the professional development (Elevate), current academic programs, student achievement, athletics, after school clubs, evening school, student behavior, personnel, Beyond Textbooks, Project Based Learning, Trauma Based Training, the new School Social Worker, the New Art Program, Rosetta Stone, Reading 180, Galileo, ACT and AZM2 Testing and plans for FY21.

14. Announcements

The next Board meeting is June 23, 2020 when the Board will conduct a public hearing on the budget followed by the adoption of the FY21 budget and other special meetings as called by the President

THE PROM – We plan on holding a Prom for the Class of 2020 when possible - this fall or winter.

GRADUATION OF THE CLASS OF 2020 – May 21st -The largest graduating class from SLA ever will still get a chance for a real graduation but currently the plan is for a “Drive by graduation Moment” on May 21, 2020 where our graduates can drive through the SLA parking lot with teachers spaced 6 feet apart cheering the students on and giving them their diploma, graduation t-shirt, and school yearbook. We still plan on a formal graduation ceremony either August 20th or a later date depending upon the guidelines of the AZ Department of Health and the CDC.

15. Adjournment – Mr. Olivas adjourned the meeting at 11:32 AM (MST).