



Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Date:	September 17, 2014
Time:	7:00pm
Location:	Renaissance Academy, 3435 North 1120 East, Lehi, UT. 1 st floor in the Rousseau room (southwest corner classroom)
Next Meeting:	October 15, 2014

Attendee Information

Board Members		Invited Guests	
Attended	Name	Attended	Name
x	Carolyn Bayly, Board Chair	x	Jared VanOrden
x	Mariah Fralick, Board Vice Chair		Public in Attendance
x	Ryan Hunter, Treasurer		
x	Cameron Sabin, Board Member		
x	Jennifer Orten, Board Member		
Schoolhouse			
Attended	Name	Attended	Name
x	Mark Ursic, Executive Director		
x	Stephanie McCappin, Dean		
x	Holly Lyons, Executive Assistant		

Motions and Approvals

#	Motion made by	Motion	Vote
1	Cameron Sabin	Cameron moved to extend the time for deciding about expansion 30 additional days.	Mariah Fralick seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
2	Mariah Fralick	Mariah moved to approve the edited vision statement.	Jennifer Orten seconded. All voted in favor.
3	Cameron Sabin	Cameron moved to remove the first three sentences of the global ends policy and replace those sentences with the current vision and mission statements, and he included in the motion the revision of item 1c to say “Be provided an individualized, <i>innovative and experiential</i> learning environment in a feasible way” (addition italicized).	Jennifer Orten seconded. All voted in favor.
4	Cameron Sabin	Cameron moved to make a change to the statement in the Safety policy. Rather than guaranteeing that the school will contact	Ryan Hunter seconded. All voted in favor.

		parents, the policy will state that the school will make “a reasonable attempt” to contact parents.	
5	Jennifer Orten	Jennifer moved to go into a closed session described under Section 53-4-204 “(a) a discussion of the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual and (d) strategy sessions to discuss the purchasing, exchange, lease or sale of real property.”	Mariah Fralick seconded. All voted in favor by name.
6	Ryan Hunter	Ryan moved to close the meeting.	Mariah Fralick seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10pm.

Time	Topic/Subject Discussion
7:07pm	Welcome and Call to Order.
7:08pm	<p>The minutes from the previous Board Meeting on August 20th reflect that the Board was not specific about their understanding and approval of the grading policy that was presented. The minutes will include a reference to the policy that was presented, and a print-out of the presentation will be attached to the minutes. Ryan moved that this addition be made to the minutes. Cameron seconded. But Carolyn clarified with Stephanie before the approval of this motion whether the <i>original</i> motion last week approved the policy and/or the implementation timeline.</p> <p>Grade level teams are allowed to choose implementation of the policy with up to 100% of the grades coming from summative assessments, but some have elected to include homework credited up to 25% of the grade. Carolyn said that interpretation and understanding of the policy might need to be revisited, or perhaps the minutes would need to be revisited. The minutes from August 20th were not approved.</p>
7:15	<p>Red Apple Update</p> <p>Jared VanOrden presented the Financial Summary and Budget Detail Report for August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Purchase services are at 52% -In Property and Equipment, the school is “tapped out” on the budget for Furniture and Fixtures and has dipped into Technology Hardware funds. -Federal funds are reimbursable, so that money must be spent before it is reimbursed. Red Apple requests those funds twice a year. -The Operating Margin is at 0% (This is calculated by dividing the net income by revenues.) -The Debt Service Coverage is 1.02% -Now that it is two months into the school year Jared has been able to start gathering trend data. -At the beginning of next month APR and AFR reports are due. These summarize what happened in the last fiscal year. Carolyn requested an email to the Board when the report is submitted to the state. -The current forecast is \$14,000 for the year. -Enrollment today (9/17) is 687, last year’s number was 714. At this point Jennifer asked if other charter schools were also down in enrollment. Jared replied that he’s noticed a theme of, “it’s not as easy to fill the seats as it used to be” at other board meetings. It was speculated that enrollment is down for both charter and district schools because of the Common Core. Many parents are home-schooling and putting their kids in home-school or co-ops. -Jennifer asked about the fieldtrip fee line item, pointing out that it is low compared to other years. Mark

answered to say that the administration has discussed this with the staff and asked that the grade level teams remind parents about donations through the classroom coordinator.

Originally, parents are asked to make the field trip donation with registration paperwork. There was a reminder in the last RAPP about donations, and another reminder will go out in the following issues. We can't require fees/donations from elementary grades, and each grade's donation income is tracked individually. Carolyn suggested we ask parents to donate less if they could not donate the suggested \$40, because even \$5 or \$10 would be helpful.

Cameron asked, "Will we be making money off the space center?" Mark answered that the school will potentially make money from the space center, but that the revenues are not currently part of the forecast. Mariah asked whether FEC spends all that they bring in, wondering whether FEC revenues could subsidize fieldtrip funds. Mark said that the FEC typically spends what they bring in, but last year they didn't meet their revenue goal. Ryan made the suggestion that with online banking, you could debit family accounts on a schedule (those who opt in) for fieldtrip donations. Cameron emphasized the point that the school should promote and capitalize on the space center, especially as competition increases.

7:37pm

Grading Policy Update

Stephanie, Mark and Shelby Dieters have held a variety of presentations, meetings and discussions to introduce the new grading policy to teachers and help them learn how to implement it. Grades 6-9 have all gone to the model, as it was presented. In grades K-5, teachers were asked to implement the policy in Language Arts and Math, with the modification of 75% of the grades coming from summative assessment and 25% formative assessment. Stephanie said some teachers didn't even want to use the 25% formative. Cameron asked if there is a target date for when all subjects taught to the elementary grades will be graded according to the policy. Stephanie said she expected this could happen by next year, and Mark explained that implementing the policy for the two most significant subjects (in terms of grade-tracking), Math and Language Arts, would create an easier transition for teachers to track all subjects according to the policy next year. One of the major reasons to delay full implementation of the policy is to manage stress levels, especially for new teachers.

Jennifer asked about the purpose of turning to primarily summative testing. She pointed out that a student, despite success in homework and classwork, could receive a D due to test anxiety. Mark and Stephanie both responded to say that 1) the testing is to see exactly what students have retained from formative exercises and assess what strategies should be used to reteach specific concepts, and 2) this grading process creates a lot of extra work for the teachers, because it forces them to look at the specific needs of each student. Even for a student who is performing well, teachers will be able to find areas for improvement. Mark explained that this type of grading shows the teacher a specific action plan for each student. If test anxiety seems to play a big factor in the summative testing, the teacher will discover a different way to assess the student. This grading policy also opens up more opportunities for the parent and teacher to meet and plan to address what approach is most appropriate for a specific student. This type of grading gets parents involved in their kid's teaching, because of how it makes parents aware of their student's performance.

The Administration noted that meetings with the teachers brought up important conversations for unique situations such as World Language or Special Education.

Cameron asked what parent feedback had been like, but Mark and Stephanie reported there had been no parent feedback, probably because there had not been time for noticeable differences.

Cameron asked if it is a teacher-by-teacher choice about how students take summative tests. Mariah pointed out that leaving summative testing policies up to teacher discretion means that testing styles would vary from class to class. Stephanie responded to say that as details get worked out over time, by teachers learning to use the policy, there will be more consistency. She also pointed out that one point of consistency already in place is that teachers are required to release summative grades every quarter. Mark said that maybe down the road summative testing could be more streamlined.

Carolyn asked the Board how they wanted to approach the policy, since it seemed an impossibility to vote on exactly how things would proceed with the grading policy. Cameron answered to say that it seemed as though the goal at some point would be to get teachers at all grade levels grading students with 100% summative assessments, but that he wanted to have the issue come back to the Board before the Middle School makes that transition. Carolyn pointed out that at least with the Elementary, the plan as presented was to go to 100% summative grades. Cameron said he was mainly concerned with the Middle School, but Jennifer said she would like to revisit this discussion before the transition happens for the Elementary grades as well.

7:58	<p>Friday School</p> <p>The first Friday School (this year called “Help”) was held on the previous Friday, September 12th. The deadline for determining who should attend Friday Help starts on Wednesday at 3pm for students. That is the last time teachers take work which is entered into the grade book, and grades are submitted to Stephanie on Thursday. Stephanie emails parents and teachers on Thursday who will be in Friday Help.</p> <p>So far, the parent and teacher feedback has been good. Friday Help goes from 1:15pm-3:00pm (kids bring a sack lunch, and they get one hour between regular classes and the Help session). This session allowed many kids to improve. In Language Arts, most kids were able to pull their grades up and see a benefit in spending their time there. Most students were in Help for only one subject, but there were 3 students that needed Help for Math and CTE, and only 1 student in math and science.</p> <p>Ryan asked what qualified kids for Friday Help. He wanted to assure that students feel rewarded and successful for using that time and that there would always be redemption available for time spent in FS. Stephanie replied that Friday Help could be a time for re-teaching and for finding personalized ways for students to improve their summative grades.</p>
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8:08	<p>Expansion</p> <p>To start the discussion, Mark underscored the relevance of enrollment numbers to the current plan for expansion. In Spring, Mark and the Board outlined a timeline for physical expansion of the building. That timeline showed a drop-dead of September for deciding whether to move forward or not. Mark posed the question: with the current enrollment sitting 25 students-short of the forecasted enrollment, is expansion still something we want to do?</p> <p>Mark talked about the property that is currently for sale next door to the school. The property managers were willing to sell half of the land, which would be about 2 acres, at the time of last discussion. The estimate for that property was close to \$800,000. If purchasing half of that land is no longer an option, then that property is not an option at all. The original growth plan did not leave room for shrinking enrollment numbers.</p> <p>Mark received information from a bond council about three other schools who had recently made property purchases, and of the three schools, only one paid close to \$800,000, while the other two schools paid closer to half of that. Those two schools both bought less than 2 acres, but they bought</p>
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property contiguous to their existing property, and it was situated to get more use out of the land. This is not the case for the 2 acre lot in consideration for Renaissance Academy. It is contiguous, but not situated as advantageously.

Ryan interjected that it is not fair to cannibalize elementary school income to support the middle school. And Mark suggested that with so many new things on the radar, perhaps the September deadline should be extended another 30 days.

Carolyn asked about what options we would have for space if we decide not to expand. Mark's solution would be to discontinue adding classrooms to the grades. Cameron asked, "What is the trend in the size of the elementary school? Has it always been growing?" Mark and Carolyn explained that, three years ago, the school started on a growth plan to increase middle school numbers and to add a class to Kindergarten so that each year, the next grade would gain a class. Stephanie said that although middle school numbers are down this year, the vibe among teachers and students of middle school is happy.

Cameron pointed out that an important motivation for building the space program was to retain older kids. Mark said this is one of the reasons to take some time before making changes with the middle school, because three other schools have opened space centers this year, and that would give us an opportunity to see what those bring to those schools. So far, the schools have said that opening the space centers have added to their enrollment by about 150 kids.

Stephanie brought up Socratic Seminar, which the middle school has loved so far. She said that advertising Socratic Seminar to 6th graders could help retain more 6th graders as they head to 7th. And Mark agreed, adding that a huge difference in their positive outlook for the middle school is the new faculty. Ryan talked about how parents plan to pull their kids after elementary to send them to a public junior high, in order to ease the transition to high school. Ryan said he thinks "we need to work with"--and hopefully change--the mindset of the parents. Mark countered the idea that this is the main problem keeping us from retaining students from elementary to middle school, saying that if kids were begging their parents to stay, the parents would keep them here.

Carolyn asked if it would be possible to not continue with adding another class to the school next year if there has been no decision about expansion within the next thirty days. Mark thinks recent changes have been positive or at least drastic enough that thirty days will prove sufficient for addressing expansion in definitive terms. He read an email from a student to show the positive morale that exists in the middle school. He said you can feel the same positivity from the teachers. Stephanie read other letters from middle school students.

Ryan suggested that with permission from the parents and students, the 6th graders should be asked if they plan to stay. Jennifer suggested using the RAPP as a place to promote the school. Cameron said he thinks this year is going to be "very telling."

8:29pm	Motion. Cameron moved to extend the time for deciding about expansion 30 additional days. Mariah seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
8:30pm	Construction update Mark met with a lawyer in education law about the state purchasing code. They talked about what to do on the bidding of the space center's contract. This lawyer is drafting an RFP to comply with the law. The architect estimated the cost at \$86,000. The contractor gave Mark their thoughts on the estimate. The contractor pointed out that the plans never say "like or equal to," so bids on materials could differ.

	<p>Also, once an RFP goes out, then other stipulations, such as a timeline, can be made.</p> <p>World language teachers go to grade level classrooms to teach their lessons. One of the portables will change over from a World Language class room to the middle school Language Arts classroom, once construction starts in the Rousseau room. Mark offered money to the language teachers who did not get their own classroom.</p>
8:42pm	<p>Afterschool Programs</p> <p>Mark said one of the most significant issues that have come out of that is the Lego League. There was a lot of interest on the front end, but with the necessary parent volunteers and afterschool deposits, the list was whittled down to three teams, with the possibility of building up two more teams.</p> <p>Even with middle school enrollment down, the afterschool basketball program is taking off. This is another example of “why people matter” in your staff. Michael Luthy, the middle school history teacher, has generated a lot of interest for basketball at Renaissance. The school will have a junior varsity team in the charter school league.</p>
8:48	<p>Marketing and enrollment update</p> <p>The school is pushing for target enrollment by the state’s October 1st deadline in two weeks. By December, the school will start promoting to sign up for the lottery, and so Mark said it would be advantageous to continue the push for enrollment after the October deadline to maintain momentum and increase community awareness.</p> <p>Direct Mail marketing went out to Traverse Mountain community, because the school already has several families coming from that area, so they will probably have already heard of the school. Hopefully the mailer could generate more conversation. The next mailer would be about the space center and Farpoint program.</p> <p>The FEC is putting on a carnival. The parents on this year’s committee have been extremely prepared, very coordinated, and have made more money in the presale so far than the whole Carnival brought in last year. This year an Open House aspect will be added to the Carnival to bring in prospective families who want to look at the school.</p> <p>In the future, the simulator will be a good draw for an open house. Mariah said she would like to see more ideas and plans for marketing efforts. Cameron said eventually there should be an annual plan for marketing. Currently, efforts are being focused on a “fourth quarter run” to the October 1st deadline.</p>
9:00pm	<p>Global Ends Policy</p> <p>Last month the Board approved a new mission and vision statement. Since that time, Mariah had made an adjustment to the wording of the vision statement, changing “Building the future” to “We build the future.”</p>
9:01pm	<p>Motion. Mariah moved to approve the edited vision statement. Jennifer seconded. All voted in favor.</p>
9:01pm	<p>Global Ends Policy Continued</p> <p>Carolyn asked if, in light of the changed mission and vision statement, there were additions the Board would like to make to the Global Ends Policy. Mariah recommended taking out the top three lines and replacing them with the mission and vision statement. Cameron suggested working the concepts of innovative, individualized, experiential learning methods into the policy.</p>
9:04pm	<p>Motion. Cameron moved to remove the first three sentences of the global ends policy and replace those sentences with the current vision and mission statements, and he included in the motion the revision of item 1c to say “Be provided an individualized, <i>innovative and experiential</i> learning environment in a feasible</p>

	way" (addition italicized). Jennifer seconded. All voted in favor.
9:05pm	<p>Global Ends Policy Continued</p> <p>Ryan pointed out Global Ends 2a. The Board agreed that they should create and be aware of academic progress and school improvement goals.</p>
9:05pm	Vote. The Board then voted to approve the Global Ends Policy. All in favor.
9:06pm	<p>Global Executive Limitations Policy 1</p> <p>The Board and Administration had no comment.</p>
9:07pm	<p>Board Management Delegation 2</p> <p>Cameron asked Mark if he had any concern with the number of requests he gets from individual members. Mark said he did not.</p>
9:09pm	<p>Governance Process Policy</p> <p>Mariah and Carolyn discussed how often a review of Board policies should happen. Carolyn suggested doing a review of the policies all at once. The Board decided on January for a Board self-evaluation and policy review. Everything on the annual Board calendar regarding policy should get moved to January.</p> <p>Regarding cost of governance, this is the first year that no funds were allocated for the Board's cost of governance, but it is the first year that the current Board members did professional development training. Next year this should be included in the budget.</p>
9:13pm	<p>Board Elections Policy</p> <p>The charter says that when the Board deems that there is a position open, there needs to be an election. Cameron explained this: rather than an election, a new board member would be appointed by vote of the majority. Mariah showed that the bylaws say that members, having voting rights, shall elect the members, who serve three year terms. Cameron said that the bylaws should be amended because of the terms "members" and "elections." Currently the board is a non-prophet organization, run by a majority vote of the existing, sitting board. Those members have a term of 3 years, subject to renewal, and the board can vote in up to 11 members at any point in time.</p> <p>Carolyn urged that the Board decide if members should be required to serve a one year leave of absence after two consecutive terms before returning again. The Board discussed the lack of a specific designated time period for "vacating" after serving two consecutive terms.</p> <p>Cameron's recommendation was to draft an amendment creating a minimum requirement of 5 board members, to leave the maximum board size at 11 members, and to say that members serve 3 year terms, indefinitely, and get voted back on by the majority of the sitting Board. Carolyn said she would draft the changes and send them to the Board. Voting and approval of these changes was left to a later date.</p> <p>The Board and Administration had a conversation about changes happening with the State School Board elections.</p>
9:25pm	<p>Charter Review</p> <p>The Board is going to wait 30 days to submit a revised Charter. Mariah asked the Board if there were any other changes they would want to submit at that time, aside from organizational structure changes made last year and aside from the mission and vision. The Board agreed that there were no additional changes.</p>
9:26pm	<p>Safety plan</p> <p>Jennifer suggested that the school "give itself an out" in the Safety Policy (second paragraph), to say that the school will make "a reasonable attempt" or "every reasonable effort" to contact parents in emergency situations. Mark said an email would go out through Aspire, because that would reach all the</p>

	parents, and then a post would go out on social media. There was discussion about purchase of an auto-dialer or an auto-texter. The school has looked at that option before, but the program takes a setup fee, a yearly fee, and a per-text or per-call fee.
9:30pm	Motion. Cameron moved to make a change to the statement in the Safety policy. Rather than guaranteeing that the school will contact parents, the policy will state that the school will make “a reasonable attempt” to contact parents. Ryan seconded. All voted in favor.
9:31pm	Motion. Jennifer moved to go into a closed session described under Section 53-4-204 “(a) a discussion of the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual and (d) strategy sessions to discuss the purchasing, exchange, lease or sale of real property.” Mariah seconded. All voted in favor by name.
9:31pm	<i>10 minute break</i>
9:46pm	The Board entered closed session.
10:10pm	<i>Back into open session</i>
10:10pm	Motion. Ryan moved to close the meeting. Mariah seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10pm.