



Syracuse Arts Academy Board Retreat Minutes August 5-6, 2011

Place: Newpark Resort Hotel & Conference Center, 1456 Newpark Blvd., Park City, UT 84098

In Attendance: Jerrad Pullum, Nate Schow, Judy Nixon (K-4), Kim Dohrer (AW), Bryan DeGrange, Jan Whimpey (5-9), Cameron Almond, Dawn Kawaguchi, Teresa Peacock (9:56 a.m.) and Gavin Hutchinson (AW 12:32 p.m.)

The purpose of Syracuse Arts Academy is to develop respectful, confident citizens in a solid educational environment enriched by artistic expression.

Minutes

Friday, August 5, 2011

Newpark Conference Center – Preserve 225

9:20 a.m. – Welcome by Cameron Almond

Business Items

- Ratify New Hires – Jan & Judy briefly reviewed their new hires.
- Discuss and Vote on 2011-2012 Parent Handbook – Jan briefly reviewed each of the amendments that the administration is recommending in the Parent Handbook for the new year. There was a brief discussion on a deadline date for lost and found items not claimed. Kim suggested having the handbook available on the website so it can cut back on the high printing costs.
- Discuss and Vote on Theatre Lighting Phase I & II – Nate reported that the total amount of the lighting for phase one came in a little more than we expected. Even though our summer purchasing plan was approved for an overage, we want to make sure that we cover our basis. The committee has chosen Barbizon for the lighting design and curtains. There was a brief discussion on who is doing the electrical. We are waiting on another electrical bid. The electrical is not included in this amount.

Jerrad Pullum made a motion to approve the new hires, 2011-12 Parent Handbook and the theatre lighting project not to exceed \$100,000. Bryan DeGrange seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The board publically thanked Trent and everyone that worked on the lighting committee.

Judy informed the board that “Lake Judy” has come back \$3,000 more than expected. There was discussion on approaching Syracuse City to ask for financial assistance since we share the property. Jan asked if Trent or Sheldon can make contact with the city on behalf of SAA to let them know what has been done here. There was discussion on where our property lines are and what we are liable for if someone were to get hurt. We will ask Academia look into this.

9:56 a.m. Teresa Peacock has joined us.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing auxiliary communicative aids and services for these meetings should call Dawn Kawaguchi at 801-444-9378, giving at least three working days notice.

➤ Review “Charter School Board University” – How Does This Apply to Us?

Board Development Basics

★ **Ch 6** The Starting Line for Your Board – Nate

Chapter 6 is about determining why our board exists. The reason our board exist is to make sure, on behalf of the school’s owners, that all students learn and that nothing illegal, unethical or imprudent is allowed to exist in the school. The board should govern on behalf of the owner/shareholders of the school which are the stakeholders as well. We need to remember that we are still held to the charter which is the agreement that we made with the state.

Jan asked if we could have a break for a SAA celebration. WE MADE AYP! Hooray! This is something that we work very hard on all year.

★ **Ch 7** Governing Verses Managing – Jerrad

Most of us come into this with management experience. The board’s responsibility is to ensure and the administration’s responsibility is to execute. Ensuring is establishing outcomes and evaluating how well those outcomes were achieved. Ensuring has almost nothing to do with how things are going to be done. Executing is about getting things done. There may be times when both the board and administration are at the intersection of ensuring and executing. There was discussion on making board goals that are measurable. If the board gets too involved in the managing then it diminishes its own ability to hold the executive accountable for the outcomes that were achieved or not achieved. Jerrad would like to have the cross graph of the governing vs. managing on every board agenda as a reminder of what our roles are.

★ **Ch 8** What Governing and Parenting Have in Common – Jerrad

Being a member of a charter school board and parenting have a lot in common because you come to both jobs without any real training or preparation. Boards should recognize the need for training to develop its skills. The book talks about four easy ways to do that.

1. Identify the experts sitting at the table
2. Study books and other resources outside of board meetings
3. Attend charter school association annual training conferences
4. Hold an annual retreat

Jerrad feels that we are doing half of these very well. We need to make professional development more of a priority. We need to keep better time of our board meetings. There was discussion on the board attending yearly charter school conferences. The board would like to have some sort of mentoring for new board members from seasoned board members. We should set the expectation during the interview process as well as explain the board member’s role. Jerrad downloaded eleven monographs from the National Charter Schools Institute for the board to review.

★ **Ch 9** Two Questions People Always Ask About Boards – Bryan

1. How big should a board be?
2. What kinds of people make the best board members?

There was a discussion on the size of our board and the pros and cons of having a larger vs. smaller board. The board felt like there should to be a good balance of parents and non parents to be a solid board. There was also a discussion on the time of terms on the board.

★ **Ch 10** Fiduciary Responsibility – Teresa

This is not about finance or money. Fiduciary is an adjective that means involving trust especially with the regard to the relationship of a trustee and beneficiary.

Duty of oversight – aka governance, reasonable level of awareness

Duty of loyalty – be loyal to each other and our organization

Duty of obedience – who we answer to

There was discussion on being careful about the information and the individual opinions that the board shares with the outside world.

★ **Ch 11 *Policy Governance*** – Cameron

Group One: Two sets of policies that constitute the board’s instructions to its chief executive. Ends Policies and Executive Limitations

Group Two: Two sets of policies that constitute the board’s instructions to itself and its members. Board-staff Linkage Policies and Governance Process Policies

There was discussion on how the board can volunteer and just be a parent.

12:17 p.m. Break for Lunch

12:50 p.m. Reconvene Retreat

Board CEO Relationship

★ **Ch 20 *The Board / Executive Relationship*** – Jan

Three Do’s and Don’ts

Three things the Board should do:

1. Speak with one voice
2. Evaluate the executive only against predefined criteria
3. Reward achievement

Three critical things the Board shouldn’t do

1. Avoid interfering with the executive’s management responsibilities
2. Avoid Monday-morning quarterbacking
3. Avoid becoming a complaint processing center

The entire board should know what the Administration’s annual goals are. Administration goals could be addressed at board meetings in their principal report.

★ **Ch 21 *Resolving Complaints the Right Way*** – Judy

Individual board members should say “I have no authority in the matter”. There was discussion on the current grievance policies.

➤ ***Plan 2011-2012 Board Calendar*** – Cameron Almond

★ ***Board Meeting Dates*** – The board set the yearly board meeting calendar. Start time was changed to 6 pm.

★ ***State of the School Address*** – There was the discussion on the possibly at the auditorium ribbon cutting. The board would like to recognize the lighting committee. The board will schedule in mid-September.

★ ***Other Important Dates***

- ✓ POEC Meetings/Activities – We will discuss at board meetings and make assignments.
- ✓ Assemblies – We will discuss at board meetings and make assignments
- ✓ Staff Meetings – The board would like to attend welcome back staff meeting.

➤ ***SWOT Analysis*** – Cameron Almond

Charter Effectiveness Goals

1. Improve student learning and achievement
2. Provide a core curriculum instructional program of enhancing learning through the arts
3. Increased parent opportunities to participate
4. Safe and orderly learning environment.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing auxiliary communicative aids and services for these meetings should call Dawn Kawaguchi at 801-444-9378, giving at least three working days notice.

Strengths

HQ Teachers
Data driven decisions
Strong commitment
Teachers are skillful
Committed Parents
HQ Administrators
Access to good resources
Experienced Teachers
Academica West
Good Facilities
Financially Solvent
Special Ed
Teachers know our students/families

Weakness/Hurdles

Legacy Highway
Common Core (CC)
Non-committed parents
Appropriate curriculum for CC
Gossip
Bullying
Resources for PD for transition to CC
Attracting a lower achievement of students
Transportation cost for parents
Senate Bill 65
SpEd competing with traditional district
Classes limited – electives
Jr. High Media Center
Relationships with Davis School District

Opportunities

Building relationship with Davis School District
Building a relationship with higher education
Online band and choir programs/Improve music program
Offer online opportunities
Auditorium – using to reach out to community
Accreditation
Board PD

Threats/Trends

Legacy Highway
SB 65
Funding from the state
Attracting high needs students
Huge lottery pool
Parent volunteer hours
Decreased parent involvement
Increase # of charters
Davis not doing year round schools

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4:15 p.m. – **Adjourn for the day**

Saturday, August 6, 2011

Newpark Conference Center – Preserve 225

In Attendance: Jerrad Pullum, Nate Schow, Judy Nixon (K-4), Kim Dohrer (AW), Bryan DeGrange, Jan Whimpey (5-9), Cameron Almond, Dawn Kawaguchi (AW), Teresa Peacock and Gavin Hutchinson (AW)

9:21 a.m. Welcome by Cameron Almond

SWOT Analysis cont.

- 5 Year Plan / Accreditation – Jan and Judy reviewed their recommendation for the school’s five year plan which includes the administration, academics, accreditation process, travel experience and finance. They explained how they will be executing this plan year by year. The board buys into the five year plan. They just want to know what they can do to help get the school there.

There was a lengthy discussion on how we can increase volunteer hours. Jerrad stated that we will never be able to control this so what we can do is to create an environment that would give parents the opportunity to want to volunteer.

- Discuss Board Position – Cameron opened up the discussion the open board positions and if we do in fact want to bring on two other members. There was discussion on if we do need to fill the position and who that person looks like. There was discussion on the board advisors positions. The board agreed that the advisors role does not fall under the board of directors but more working and collaborating with the administration. Jerrad and Bryan will meet with the board advisors to discuss their job description. Cameron and Nate will work on a board SWOT analysis to find out what type of board member we need.

11:09 a.m. Board break

- Discuss Compensation Philosophy – Teresa and Gavin lead a discussion on what do we want SAA’s compensation philosophy look like.

- ★ Set a culture that people want to work for
- ★ Be competitive – with area school salaries
- ★ Goal based bonus
 - ✓ Academic Achievement (AYP)
 - ✓ Team Collaboration
 - ✓ Whole School Success

Cameron wants the board to think on “what culture do we want our employees to have”

12:37 p.m. – Nate Schow made motion to go into a CLOSED SESSION to discuss an individual’s character, professional competence, or physical or mental health. Jerrad Pullum seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

12:59 p.m. Teresa Peacock made a motion to come out of closed session. Nate Schow seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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- Board / Administration / PTO Relationship – Kim lead a discussion on what both the board and administration would like the PTO relationship looks like.

Board/POEC Relationship
Information/Updates only

Administration/POEC Relationship
Joint agendas
Collaboration
Organized
Supported
Them doing
POEC take the lead

How can we get them there?
Training
Facilitate PTO President
Meet w/ other schools administration

How can the board support the PTO?
Invite them to a board meeting
Recognize the committees

- Discuss “Parking Lot” Items – Cameron
 - ★ Recognizing Brittani’s resignation at next board meeting.

There was no PUBLIC COMMENT.

1:13 p.m. Jerrad Pullum made at motion to Adjourn. Bryan DeGrange seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.