



La Academia The Partnership Charter School

Amy Ferg, CAO
Maria Provencher, COO

February 27, 2019

La Academia The Partnership Charter School Board Meeting Minutes

Dr. Aida Ceara
President

Carlos Graupera
Vice-President

Ted Darcus

Kenneth Hammel

Victor Ramos

Colleen Wagner

Ellen Svrcek

Ommie Rivera

Radames Melendez

Susana Cortina

Joseph Morales

**Non-Voting
Members:**

Salina Almanzar
SDOL Rep.

Pam McCartney, IU
13 Representative

Board Members Attending: Dr. Aida Ceara, Mr. Carlos Graupera, Mr. Ted Darcus, Mr. Joe Morales, Mr. Radames Melendez, Mr. Victor Ramos, Ms. Ellen Svrcek, Ms. Colleen Wagner, Ms. Susana Cortina, Mr. Ommie Rivera

Board Members Absent: Mr. Kenneth Hammel

Non-Vote Board Members Present Ms. Salina Almanzar, School District of Lancaster Representative, Ms. Pam McCartney, IU 13 Representative

Non-Voting Board Members Present: Ms. Amy Ferg, Ms. Maria Provencher, Ms. Sandy Strunk & Mrs. Christie Helm, Ms. Betsabe Hernandez & Ms. Kristi Baker

I. Welcome - Dr. Ceara welcomed everyone.

II. Approval of December 19, 2018 & January 23, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes
The Board meeting minutes were reviewed.

➤ **Motions**

A motion was made to accept the December 19, 2018 Board meeting minutes by Mr. Graupera and seconded by Ms. Svrcek. All approved and the motion passed.

➤ A motion was made to accept the January 23, 2019 Board meeting minutes by Ms. Wagner and seconded by Ms. Svrcek. All approved and the motion passed.

III. President Report

Dr. Ceara thanked Mr. Graupera & Ms. Weida for attending the February 7th fundraiser at Tellus 360 hosted by Music For Everyone. A total of \$471.00 was collected for the school.

Dr. Ceara also thanked several other people including Mr. Morales for welcoming our students to Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology on 2/26 and Mr. Ramos for his assistance with an upcoming visit to Harrisburg Area Community College on March 15, 2019.

Dr. Ceara updated the Board about the Search Committee's activities for a new Head of School. She stated that Ms. Wagner is the chair of the Search Committee and Mr. Melendez is the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

IV. New Tech Network & Curio Presentation –

- A. Ms. Strunk provided an overview of the New Tech Network and highlighted the following:
- New Tech Network is a national consulting company that works with schools on project and work-based learning. They work together to transform schools. As a leading design partner for comprehensive school change, New Tech Network, a national non-profit, works closely with over 200 districts and schools nationwide. More than twenty years after the first school opened in Napa, CA, New Tech Network is one of the fastest growing school networks with a proven approach for student success. New Tech Network provides support to every demographic and community type.
 - New Tech Network customizes their approach for each school, based on the school's demographics and unique school needs. New Tech Network representatives have visited La Academia and are encouraged by what they have seen. Mrs. Ferg & Ms. Provencher which have been impressed by their availability and listening to La Academia's needs. They have tremendous resources which be of great assistance to La Academia's Leadership Team and faculty.
 - It was emphasized that New Tech does not give solutions but support and that it is up to the La Academia's Leadership Team and staff to implement the programs with the assistance of the New Tech network.
 - The New Tech Network's model is a project-based model built on experiential learning and one that includes 4 pillars; 1) Outcomes that Matter, 2) Teaching that Engages, 3) Technology that Enables, 4) Culture that Empowers.
 - Focus groups were conducted at the school to identify issues and concerns facing the students at La Academia. Students were concerned about safety issues. New Tech representatives said this is a concern in schools throughout the country. La Academia's situation is not unique but one that must be addressed.
 - Dr. Ceara stated that we are in a transition period and going forward need to be proactive in our approach to better educate our students and support the faculty.
 - Ms. Strunk stated that the Steinman Foundation has agreed to fund the New Tech project for 3 years which includes: Year 1 – Middle School implementation, Year 2 – High School implementation and Year 3 – All school focus and at a cost of \$274,120. However, there maybe a need for one or two additional years of support as sustainability will be key to the project's success.
- A motion was made for the Board of Directors to officially endorse acquisition of the New Tech Network by Mr. Ramos and seconded by Mr. Morales. All agreed, and the motion passed.
- B. Curio Presentation
- Curio is a secured collaboration tool. It is an intuitive, freeform notebook environment with all the integrated tools you need to take notes, brainstorm ideas, collect research, and organize tasks and documents. A single, incredibly powerful application where you can be more productive and focus on getting things done.
 - The Steinman Foundation has purchased a license for La Academia.
 - Curio serves as an "Intranet" for small organizations.
 - Curio has an event management and project management section. The key point is that *everything* related to your project is stored, managed, and tracked within a single project file using a single, well-integrated application. You're not juggling a mess of files scattered about your hard disk with a disparate suite of apps.
 - Curio is connected to the LAPCS website.

V. Chief Academic Officer/Chief Operating Officer report

A. Mrs. Ferg's Report

1. 213 students are currently enrolled at LAPCS and we are now tracking reasons for withdrawals.
 2. There is only one vacant position: the lead custodian.
 3. A Paraprofessional, Spanish teacher, Science teacher, Special Education Coordinator & Social Studies teacher have all been hired. The school is now part of the Substitute Teacher Service (STS) as well.
 4. Comprehensive School Improvement Steering Committee meetings set for March 4th - (3-5 pm) & March 27th (1-4 pm).
 5. SY 2019-2020 School Calendar – The calendar has been revised to include a start date of August 13, 2019 (1 week earlier than in the past) and a 3-week Winter Holiday from 12/23/19 – 1/10/20 to accommodate students' travel schedules as many of our students go to Puerto Rico and other places. Mr. Graupera stated that LAPCS has always followed the calendar of the School District of Lancaster which could be a concern since often families have students in both schools. Mrs. Ferg stated that the week of January 6 – 10, 2020 is dedicated for a 21st Century Enrichment Program for students interested in attending and staff that may do as well.
 6. Mrs. Strunk noted that she and Mr. Riggs are completing the 21st Century grant which is due on March 5th which, if approved will fund the January 6-10, 2020 Program.
- A motion was made to approve the 2019-2020 School Year Calendar by Ms. Svrcek and seconded by Ms. Wagner. All agreed, and the motion passed.

B. Ms. Provencher Report

1. Recruitment – Ms. Provencher shared the recruitment packet that includes a welcome letter which provides information about the school, a recruitment brochure, enrollment application and a door hanger. This is done in both English and Spanish. The recruitment packet has been sent to 25-30 organizations.
2. Students were given 10 door hangers each to place at homes in their respective neighborhoods.
3. Ms. Provencher distributed door hangers and brochures to all and asked that all present spread the word that La Academia is enrolling now. She also noted that the enrollment application is on the LAPCS website as well.
4. E-rate grant - E-rate is a US federal program that offers discounted rates on technology and services for eligible schools and libraries across the country. There are two categories: Category 1 – Services & Category 2 – Equipment – La Academia will be applying for this grant since the goal is for each student to have a Chromebook for the 2019-2020 school year.
5. SACA Development has been so helpful to LAPCS. They will be securing the doors between the connector of both buildings and recently fixed a leak at the school. They are also helping with the sump pump.
6. Security grants – Ms. Baker submitted one in October 2018 and we expect to hear sometime in early April. There are two other anti-bullying grants that are possibilities to apply for and Ms. Baker will follow-up.
7. 2 positions – We need a part-time handy person and a part-time cleaning service for 30 North.

8. Comments – Mr. Morales asked if we are creating a marketing plan for student recruitment and it was stated that we do have a formalized Recruitment Plan, but it does not include a marketing plan. Ms. Provencher stated that she was recently hosted on the Spanish radio station (Wlch FM) in which she promoted the school. Ms. Provencher further stated that a new website is being created with a launch target date of June 1st which will include our partnership with New Tech and include all our community partners. She stated that we are partnering with Armstrong Flooring for the United Way Day of Caring which takes place in early September.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Finance/Facilities – Mr. Darcus stated that the Finance Committee met on February 18th. The committee made a motion and seconded it to present the credit card policy and the user agreement to the Board of Directors for approval.

- A motion was made to approve the credit card policy as presented by Mr. Ramos and seconded by Mr. Melendez. All agreed, and the motion passed.
- Mr. Darcus provided the financial report noting the following:
 - The 21st Century Program budget is underspent. Staff will discuss a plan to remedy this situation.
 - They are waiting for the STEM budget for March 1, 2019.
 - Ms. Provencher discussed the need for more cameras in the building for safety and vandalism concerns.

- A motion was made to approve the accept the Finance Report as presented by Mr. Rivera and seconded by Ms. Cortina. All agreed, and the motion passed.

B. Personnel – Mr. Melendez shared a draft of the Organizational Chart. Any and all comments should be sent to him.

C. Development/Public Relations/Communications

Mr. Rivera highlighted key Development & PR/Communications activities including:

1. An updated Targeted Fundraising Report was reviewed highlighting the secured funds to date including recent contributions from Riverside Camping Association (\$500) and a grant from The Emerald Foundation of \$3,000. We will add the Steinman Foundation grant amount to the report.
2. EITC funding continues to be secured with a \$10,000 check from Peoples Bank to be received on 2/28 and BB&T on 3/6. We will work on securing additional funds from various other companies like The High Companies and more.
3. Branding Subcommittee – We will be working with Holdberg Designs to create a new website to go live on June 1, 2019.
4. The Block Party is set for May 23 and a rain date of May 24.
5. Press releases have been sent along with news stories for inclusion in the LNP Schools section published weekly on Tuesdays.

D. Academic Excellence – Dr. Ceara reference four policies that were given to all. These include:

1) Homeless Education Policy

- A motion was made to approve the Homeless Education Policy by Mr. Darcus and seconded by Mr. Morales. All agreed, and the motion passed.

2) Student Wellness policy

- A motion was made to approve the Student Wellness Policy by Mr. Ramos and seconded by Mr. Darcus. All agreed, and the motion passed.

3) Travel Policy

- A motion was made to approve the Travel Policy by Mr. Melendez and seconded by Ms. Cortina. All agreed, and the motion passed.

4) Procurement Policy

- A motion was made to approve the Procurement Policy by Mr. Graupera and seconded by Mr. Ramos. All agreed, and the motion passed.

E. Governance –

1. **Board of Directors Nomination** - Ms. Wagner stated that she is nominating Mr. Christopher Boyd to be a member of the Board of Directors. A video presentation of Mr. Boyd was shared at the January 23rd Board meeting. There was no vote taken at that time due to lack of a quorum.
 - A motion was made to appoint Mr. Christopher Boyd to La Academia's Board of Directors for a three-year term by Ms. Wagner and seconded by Mr. Ramos. All agreed, and the motion passed.
2. **Search for Head of School position** – Ms. Wagner, Chair, stated that they have received 3 resumes to date for this position. The position has been posted on various job websites. The Lancaster County STEM Alliance will cover the costs of the search not to exceed \$10,000.
3. **Old Business/New Business** – There was no old or new business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Baker, Development Manager