



LA ACADEMIA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MONTHLY MEETING (VIRTUAL)

May 26, 2021

OUR MISSION

A dynamic learning community sustained by partnerships, La Academia transforms today's learners into tomorrow's leaders through innovative instruction, comprehensive student supports, cultural competency, and work-based learning.

OUR VISION

Our students will be critical thinkers and global citizens, recognized by their commitment to lifelong learning and meaningful contributions to the world.

AGENDA:

Call to Order / Roll Call

Voting Members:

Chris Boyd, Board Secretary (meeting chair)
Ted Darcus, Board Treasurer
Carlos Graupera, Board Member
Leonel Silva, Board Member
Guy Kingree III, Board Member
Kenneth Hammel, Board Member
Victor Ramos, Board Member
James Rovito, Board Member
Jessica Edonick, Board Member
Jessica Gehman, Board Member
Colleen Wagner, Board Vice President (Came in at 4:45)

Board members not present: Aida Ceara, Board President

Non-Voting Members:

Aidalis Lopez, Parent Representative to the Board
Steve Rally, HS Staff Representative/Secretary to the Board
Brittany Smith, MS Staff Representative to the Board
Amy Ferg, Interim Principal
Tracy Jones, Operations

Guests: Nicole Garress, Lissette Colon, Abby Musser, Tracy Jones, Mycal Robinson

(came in at 5:30)

Minutes Recorder: Steve Rally

4:04 pm Meeting called to order (Christopher Boyd)

Approval of April Minutes

Motion requested by Chris Boyd, Board Secretary, to approve minutes

1st : K. Hammel 2nd: T. Darcus and the motion passed without objection, but it was noted that the April minutes were very dense and that they should not be a dialog.

Leadership Team report to Board (Amy Ferg)

1. Focus: Gabriella Wertheim -- Special Education

Comment: Amy Ferg: Taking the lead and offering extra support to scholars and teachers.

2. Introduce new Secretary to the Board: Steve Rally (HS Social Studies Teacher)

3. 30/60/90 day plan

- We are at the 60 day plan. A. Ferg shared plans and updated the Board in general on plan at the 60 day mark.
- J. Edonick asked Amy Ferg what she has learned in this role of interim principal and Amy responded that budgeting, grants, policies, and listening to teachers have been important learning experiences.

4. End of year 2020-2021

- June 4, 2021 (last scholar day)
- Pass Rate: 74%
- Summer Program Begins June 14, 2021
- Scholars requiring Summer School: 36% (73 scholars)
- Questions:
 - V. Ramos asked how the numbers compare to summer school in a typical year and Amy responded that it is higher than prior years, by up to 50 percent.
 - J. Gehman asked if students are passing/failing with the same standards as before and Amy Ferg responded that the same standards are in place, but that it is sometimes a case by case basis (dependent on the credits earned and other factors).
 - Chris Boyd asked how the summer program looked and Amy responded that it is mostly in-person, but virtual is available.
 - Aidalis asked if parents and scholars were informed about

the summer program and Amy responded that calls have indeed been made to everyone.

5. Looking Ahead 2021 to 2022

- NTAC (NTN) Summer Training - July 19-July 23 (virtual)
- Staff Returns August 9, 2021
- Scholars Return August 18, 2021
 - Goal is to have scholars on campus. Awaiting PDE guidance for further clarification on options for the 21-22 year.
- Enrollment
 - 21-22 Goal - 220
 - 20-21 Current - 196
 - K. Hammel commented that 220 might not be enough and suggested 225 or 230 and Tracy Jones explained that the number is 220, due to potential building expansion possibilities, SDoL's granting threshold and our current building capacity with social distancing and safety requirements.
 - V. Ramos asked if 220 provides a balance (for budgetary reasons) and C. Graupera believes that the 220 threshold relates to SDoL students being admitted, but not outside districts. Tracy Jones explained that the board SDoL liaison, Salina, is looking into that number.
 - V. Ramos then suggested that we also check with the legal team regarding the numbers for enrollment.
 - J. Edonick asked about enrollment and retainment and Tracy Jones responded that we have been openly communicating with families. Adding that marketing materials are designed to encourage re-enrollment and enhance relationship building in the community.
 - Aidalis asked about which grades are the focus for recruitment and Mr. Jones responded that sixth and ninth are heavily recruited, due to the nature of creating lasting relationships.

6. Graduation (Nicole Garrass)

Tuesday, June 8

- Program Start @6:00 pm
- Location: Eden Resort Lancaster, PA
- Attendance will be limited due to indoor capacity limits.
- Nicole reminded the board to RSVP to her regarding the event.
- Chris Boyd asked about the possibility of live streaming the event. Nicole and Tracy said that there might be a way using iPads and handheld devices. V. Ramos encouraged us to make sure it was professional, while C. Boyd offered the support of the board.

7. Covid-19 update presented (Tracy Jones)

- CDC issued guidance on 5/13 lifting mask restrictions for fully vaccinated individuals.
- As a school, we are still adhering to the Governor's Orders, 4/5/21 PDE recommendations and the attestation form we submitted regarding our COVID openings/re-openings for the 20-21 academic year. Until state

guidance changes, we will continue with our current masking policies through the remainder of the 20-21 school year.

- From an equity position, enforcing a masking policy based on vaccination status presents issues of fairness and uneven application.
- Additionally, with three weeks left in the academic year, we believe maintaining our current mask policy allows us to continue to operate the Learning Hub in a safe and healthy manner without causing a greater disruption to the delivery of instruction.

8. Learning Hub

Monday - Thursday; 8am - 3pm

- Building 30 & Building 38 (8 Classrooms)
- SPED/ELD Teachers PARAs
- Subject Matter Teacher (MW - STEM ; TTH - Humanities)
- Senior Wednesdays
- Avg Scholar Attendance: (For May)
 - Week of 5/3: 46
 - Week of 5/10: 54
 - Week of 5/17: 60

9. Operations

- Health Clinic Permits
- External Upgrades
- School Landscaping
- Chromebook Return - June 7 - 10
- SACA Building Projects
 - Fence
 - Building Connector

10. Finance

- Budget 21/22
 - Revenue Concentration
 - Expiring Grants / New Funding Streams
 - J. Gehman asked if we hit the budget for the 2020-21 school year and Tracy Jones replied that we did.
- Title Audits
- 6/30/21 F/S Audit

11. Staff Concerns

- Choosing a principal
Brittany Smith read a statement from staff about how teachers are concerned about the process of choosing a principal and would like to provide input -- and referenced the teacher surveys that were completed. C. Boyd responded that the board values staff feedback and the importance of the surveys. Additionally, he stated that the Governance Committee is meeting earlier than usual (beginning of

June) to discuss the leadership plan -- stressing that the board is happy with current leadership and by the next board meeting the plan will be revealed.

- Job security: Brittany Smith also reported staff concerns about the Governor's office wanting to cut funding to charter schools and the possible impact on employment. K. Hammel responded that, while the governor is pushing for this, the PA legislature is supporting charters. He also mentioned joining pro-charter organizations like 143K Rising could help to get the word out.
- Brittany Smith then asked if job security was tied to enrollment.
 - C. Boyd responded that we need to keep it at the 200 plus number.
 - This was followed by a discussion about getting the board involved with enrollment and how the key to this is to continue being part of the community and advocating for the school.
 - K. Hammel recalled a strategy used before which was to give out gift cards to families who refer others to the school.
 - Aidalis suggested asking qualifying questions like "How did you hear about us?"
 - Tracy Jones explained that the next steps for enrollment would be focusing on school leadership and the plan for reopening in the fall.
 - Colleen Wagner asked Mr, Jones to clarify and he said that uncertainty in the plans for leadership and reopening negatively impacts the commitment of families to LAPCS for the 2021-2022 school year. Nicole Garres, Tracy Jones and Steve Rally provided input from the point of view of scholars in the classrooms and the families at home.
 - Aldalis explained how important parental involvement is to this school.
 - Tracy Jones stated that the enrollment coordinator has been calling with a script showing support to parents and outlined the many ways we consistently stay in contact with the families.

Reports, information and Discussion Items

- Finance Committee (Ted Darcus)
 - 2021-2022 School Budget
 - Action Items: IU13 Contracts
 - V. Ramos: makes motion to continue IU13 Contracts as is
 - T. Darcus seconded and motion was passed unanimously.
 - Expenses have been consistent
 - Budget will be examined to see how the money will be spent.
 - Looking to decrease the amount of dependency on the School District of Lancaster
 - Looking to compare pay to other schools
- Planning and Development (Kenneth Hammel)
 - nothing on agenda
- Governance Committee (Colleen)

- Action Items: Anti-Bullying Policy (Amy Ferg explained how and why this policy is mandatory)
C. Wagner made a motion, T. Darcus seconded, motion was passed unanimously.
 - Jessica E. asked about the rise of hazing in schools and A. Ferg said she and Tracy Jones will look into programs.
 - Personnel Matter (executive session), New Hire (executive session) -- see executive session below.
 - C. Wagner explained that the board had approved Steve Rally as the new secretary to the Board
 - C. Wagner reiterated that the Governance Committee is meeting in early June to finalize the plan for school leadership.
 - C. Wagner reminded the board to look at the updated list of committees and their members
- New Business (none reported)
 - Public Comment (none reported)
 - Executive Session (if needed) Personnel Matter (executive session), New Hire (executive session)
 - Voting members of the board and Amy Ferg met in executive session (breakout room) to discuss and approve the personnel matter and the new hire. Both matters were approved unanimously.

Adjournment :

5:37pm meeting was adjourned by Chris Boyd.

Upcoming Dates:

- Parent Meeting June 3rd
- Next Board Meeting: June 23rd, 2021, 4-5 pm (in-person?)