

PVPA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
January 13, 2015
Meeting Minutes
School Library
15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, Massachusetts

In attendance: Donovan Arthen, Jim Barnhill, Will Decherd, Rachel Dionne, Kim Hicks, Deborah Jacobson, Jean Powers, Geoff Sumi, Sean Moore

Also in attendance: Janet Aracena, Robert Brainin, Mary Cantler, Scott Goldman

call to order 6:05pm
Sean read mission statement
Rachel motion, Geoff 2nd - minutes

President's Business - Reports

(See Reports From: Llama, Laura, Mike, Brent)

Llama and Laura presented from handout; she and Laura highlighted:

1. The introduction of student feedback surveys into evaluation conferences.
2. Teacher portfolios with teacher selected evidence and artifacts to demonstrate their effective practice.
3. Using a standards-based system for evaluating teachers and evaluators have been trained by Research for Better Teaching.
4. Elaborated on the evolution of the Mentor Program, the PLC initiative and the the classroom walk-throughs with specific foci on specific issues.
5. Elaborated on production guidelines and establishing clear procedures and responsibilities for all involved in productions and created more clarity and transparency for auditions.
6. Use of PowerSchool to consolidate all of the data and information that people need to support students.

Questions:

Will M: Will the achievement data will be shared?

Laura/Llama: Not yet but eventually because we haven't had enough time to see trends so it can be a part of the story. Also, the climate survey is a part of this data collection.

Kate: Do students still have a say on who are in PVPA companies and performance classes.

Laura: We are clarifying the differences between when adults choose and when students choose to ensure ethical and fair decisions.

Mike Hayes: Handed out the information (Math Action Plan - Board had received this.) Mike added a few new items in this report including:

1. Highlighting that we want to look at SAT scores and AP scores over time after the new curriculum has been in place for a few years.
2. New this year is professional development in integrating arts into math with professors from Westfield State University.
3. Assessment has also been a focus, especially looking at student work to establish common standards across the entire department.
4. Implemented a Foundations of math class co-taught with Academic Support and math.

Questions:

Kate: Math is very supportive now and students have really found their groove.

Will D: I had a chance to observe in math and I was so impressed by what I saw with respect to how math is being taught and how students are thinking about math.

Brent: Handout - timing of coming in at PVPA - developing the action plan for the Coordinated Program review

Will D. and Rachel complimented presenters for their outstanding work and our improvement.

FINANCE Committee

Robert/Deb: Deb suggested that we revise the meeting. Jim provided the proper parliamentary process or just agree to add the revised language.

Robert: Good news is that the projected revenue from the state show an increase in revenue of approximately 34,000 dollars. However, that may change due to the potential cuts that will be forthcoming to balance the state budget.

Will M. questioned whether PVPA needs to worry about the deficit. Robert shared that we do not have enough information yet because it depends on where the cuts will be made.

Development: Annual Fund Update. Mary reported that we are currently at 80% of our 51,000 goal. We are well ahead of last year, and shared information about the 10,000 anonymous gift as a result of a person talking about how PVPA has positively impacted their child. So, Board members must continue to share stories about how PVPA works for kids. May also shared an alumna story about Ellen Morehouse, who truly enjoyed her experiences at PVPA.

Governance: Janet Aracena was presented to the Board and introduced herself, why she sends her children here, and why it has been a great choice and that she wants to give back to the school that has given her children so much.

Geoff moves to accept Janet as a parent representative, serving a two-year term which will end on June 30, 2016. Donovan 2nd. Unanimous.

New Waitlist Policy Letter - the governance committee has three proposals for how to go forward.

1. Write a letter to from full board expressing disagreement.
2. Gather more information from other schools.
3. Do nothing.

Jim: I do understand the sentiment that keeping kids on the waitlist, but being the only school to send the letter creates a possible negative impression of PVPA.

Donovan: Talked with Hilltown, and that Hilltown has never done the waitlist the way we have and feels very positively inclined towards the new policy. Feels that the new policy may be more "fair" by giving more families a greater opportunity to get in to a charter school.

Will D: I don't really think it is an equity issue because so much is up to chance. We could get more info but I think what we are doing is fine -- grandfathering current kids and then switching over. And the new policy may create more buy in.

Kim: Should a new vote be taken?

Jim: Motion to vote the "do nothing." -- Donovan-2nd. Discussion: Will: I think it may be useful to get more information. Donovan - Gov. has a lot on its plate so it really does not have a lot time given the upcoming strategic planning process. Rachel: I had a friend who was on a waitlist at another school for a very long time (6 years). But when she finally got in, it was life altering.

Vote: Yes - 8 Abstain - 2

Ad Hoc SP Committee: We are getting closer to a full committee. The Committee is missing one teacher and two students. Chris asked Geoff to extend the deadline for students until the end of the week. If two students, we will have eleven members instead of 13.

Donovan is willing to serve as long as he can attend virtually after August and it should be noted the meetings will be public.

Motion: Donovan, 2nd-Rachel -- Motion to have a committee include between 11-13 members. Vote: Unanimous

Head of School Report:

Scott G reports on on-going discussion about moving the February break to March, in the future.

Will D: Personally, Will likes this proposal. At faculty meeting, teachers raised about childcare: if other schools maintain the February break, teachers with children in those schools may find it difficult to find childcare.

Building Committee Update -

Students:

Will: seniors were very positive about off-campus; juniors less so because they wanted 16 year-olds to be allowed to leave.

Staff

PAB - staff reports that it is great to have the PAB as a resource for teachers to discuss issues

7th Grade - field trip to Lowell was fantastic!

Executive Session: Each Board member was voted individually to go into executive session.