

PVPA Board of Trustees Meeting
15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, Ma 01075
Ladenheim Library
Tuesday, November 10th, 2015

Present: Kim Hicks, Gary Huggett, Melinda Winter, Janet Aracena, Will Decherd, Jim Barnhill, Robert Brainin, Geoff Sumi, Sean Moore, Deb Jacobson

Meeting called to order at 6:04pm with quorum

Public Comment (N/A)

PVPA Mission Statement: Kim Hicks recites.

Approval of Minutes from 10/13/15 meeting

Corrections- The date of meeting and GAP is GAAP

VOTE: Minutes approved unanimously

President's Business—Kim Hicks

Jeanne Powers and Ann Biddle give update on the Arts and Academic departments and their work thus far this fall, as well as an update on the structure of our Mentor Teacher Program.

ARTS- Presented by Ann Biddle

THEATER

- Scaramouche Jones- Senior Thesis was a success!
- Children's Theater- written and directed by Trena Loftin
- Life is a Dream by Jorge Rodriguez. Staging will have platforms in large dance studio.
- 7/8 Theater workshop: performing and directing their own pieces
- 7/8 Musical Theater Revue: they will perform songs at Arts Festival

DANCE

- Doug Varone Dance Co. came here to teach master classes
- Dance Education Lab: We have received funding again. We are going to have another Paideia.
- Funkadelic: Just had a trip to the Apollo theater in NYC
- Catalyst is working with Summation Dance this weekend. They are going to learn a new piece for the HS festival in Pittsburgh in March
- WOFA- is going to NYC next weekend to take classes at Foretta West African Dance Studio and going to an East African restaurant
- Felice and Ann went to the NDEO annual conference in Phoenix in October where they presented a workshop for teachers based on the work of Alonzo King.
- Senior Dance Thesis Dance Show- 7 seniors- will be a full day Paideia

MUSIC

- The PVPA Orchestra has 22 students
- Winter Expressions is coming up at the Academy of Music in Northampton (Music Showcase)
- Snapshot- an original production based on the music of Peter Gabriel will be this year's spring musical.
- Macy's A Cappella Challenge- Sarah, Shakia, Frank, Melissa collaboration
- Students from last year's Adv. Theory Music of India class played at the Noho Jazz Festival
- We Came to Play tour- 23rd and 24th of November

VISUAL ARTS

- May '16-show of PVPA student artwork at Hope and Feathers Gallery in Amherst
- Saturday, December 5th Arts Festival at PVPA from 2-6pm

ACADEMICS- Presented by Jeanne Powers

- ELA: erin feldman presented an individual paper titled "School Culture and Community" at the NERA conference in October.
- Karin Kayser presented at two writing conferences this fall: the Western MA Writing Project
- Students in Poetic Voice are writing their own poetry in hopes of being selected to take part in the Student Day of Poetry event at UMASS on Dec. 18th.
- We are offering Playwriting this semester in which students can choose to take the class for ELA or Theater credit.

MATH

- They are working to map out their units with the end goal of bringing in bigger, richer, and messier problems to supplement the CPM curriculum.
- They will then work to plan units that promote diversity awareness and arts enhancement.
- Claudine Margolis is facilitating a PLC with the Western Mass Math Partnership; and 4 of the other math teachers are taking part in the PLC.
- They have been working closely with Academic Support teachers on math literacy & CPM curriculum

WORLD LANGUAGE

- There will be a World Language Showcase on February 11th with a potluck with foods from around the world before the show.
- Ava Fradkin has an ASL field trip to NYC coming up to see Spring Awakenings. She is also taking students to Michigan again this year for D-PAN.
- Sasha is working to create an authentic, arts-related Montreal trip for this school year. In Spanish I students have been learning about the Day of the Dead and have made posters.

SCIENCE

- In Environmental Science, students have been traveling to the wetlands at the bottom of campus to observe ecosystems in action.
- The department is working on incorporate Scientific Practices into lessons and assessments, in anticipation of the new Revised MA Science Standards.
- We have two new half-year science electives this year: Forensics Science and Food Science & Nutrition
- 7/8 Physical Science teachers are incorporating Lego Robotics into their curriculum this year, based on its success as a Paideia.

HISTORY

- US History I just finished their "Dance of the Governments" in collaboration with the Dance department.
- US History II finished the Pullman Trial, highlighting issues of labor, corporations, and the courts from the late 19th Century.

- Latin American History and Culture welcomed a guest troupe of Cuban dancers who they shared with the 7/8 Hip Hop class.
- Honors Globalization students just finished their mini-debated on the World Trade organization.
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Mentor Teacher Program

We are in the third year of our mentor teacher program. We started with five teachers and focused on working with new teachers. With fewer staff turnovers, we have started to turn it into an educational leadership team. Current mentor teachers are Ann Biddle, Jeanne Powers, Mike Arquilla, Freja Joslin and Gary Huggett.

60% of teachers on staff take part in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), where 3-5 teachers meet during their prep block and share/collaborate.

Classroom walkthroughs give teachers an opportunity to see what other teachers are doing.

The Apprentice Teacher Program that started last year is a two year program. PVPA pays for one class at the collaborative in Northampton per year for these teachers.

Move to change order of Agenda. Strategic Action Plan committee will go next.

Strategic Action Plan Update—Will Decherd and Erica Foley

There are a few new categories:

-We merged facilities and technology into one.

-**Student Support**- college prep is in our mission, but this new category is specifically defined as support in regards to helping kids get to college. (Looking at it outside of just curriculum/in class support.) The resounding call from faculty is that student support needs to be part of the next strategic plan.

-**Faculty Support**

-**Staff Support**

-**School Climate**- everything that is *not* the classes or the arts. What makes the school what it is? We provide an emotional safe environment for students, let's name it. We want to figure out how to be sure that this part of PVPA never changes. We are probably going to spend a lot of time on this one.

This Paideia, Erica Foley has leave and will work on the SAP. We want to have our goals before Paideia begins. Erica will be collecting qualitative data and interviewing stakeholders.

We are adding three new goals. Our special education program has changed in the past two years; more students are coming in with special ed plans. We want to be sure we are doing a good job with that. We want to be sure the adjustments we have made will continue on, and that we can still make improvements.

A concern was raised about adding three new goals. (From eight to eleven). Will Decherd explained that the SAP committee discussed this a great deal and decided that where the school was 5 years ago, eight categories worked. Now, however, the SAP needs to be more nuanced. For example, it was decided to separate curriculum from professional development. Will also said that the SAP committee would be eliciting more board feedback in the future.

The Board also encouraged the committee to do more outreach to alumni.

Finance – Robert Brainin, Deborah Jacobson

The committee met last week. It is still early in the fiscal year. The audit was submitted to the state. We sent a copy to the bank. Robert checked with auditors, and next year, in advance the board can agree on some wording (that would also have to be approved by the Charter School office). We have a few new members on the committee.

Development - Mary Cantler

- Two PVPA parents have joined the Friends of PVPA Board. They are Jeff Swetland and Richard Ahlstrom. The Friends welcome these new volunteer board members.
- Scott and I met with John Heaps and Monica Curhan of Florence Bank in October to request their philanthropic/community support in our Arts for All capital campaign. We requested a total of \$50,000 to be distributed over a five-year period. They will present it to their Board of Directors. We have not yet had a response to our request.
- A November meeting is being scheduled with the Davis Foundation.
- We have received three \$5,000 pledges (total \$15,000) from a PVPA family and two Friends of PVPA board members for the Arts for capital campaign.
- We have also received an anonymous scholarship donation of \$1,200. This designated gift is to cover the cost for two PVPA students to attend the 2016 Jazz in July program at UMass which takes place this summer.

We don't know what the situation is with the building fund, likely because it is going to the Friends. Is the money raised for November or as of today?

Deb Jacobson explained that isn't really the Board's function to oversee it, but rather that falls to the Friends. It was suggested that we could have someone from the Friends come and present to us about the Capital campaign since we have vested interest in the campaign. The point was also made that having Director of Development on both Boards was to make communication between Boards more efficient. A request was made to get a report on the capital campaign for each meeting.

Governance—Geoff Sumi

The Governance Committee met last week.

Update on grievance policy:

Jim Barnhill made a proposal last June. He was concerned about a complaint against HoS by a student. If we allow grievances to come to us, it takes board time, and could undermine the authority of HoS. What Jim proposed is that a subset of the board (the officers) would follow up on the complaints and then present a report to the full board and the report would include a recommendation on how to proceed. One of the concerns that Geoff had was that if it appeared that a sub quorum of the Board was making a decision for the full Board would be a violation of Open Meeting Law. By making it have to come to the full Board maintains adherence to Open Meeting Law. Such a change in procedure does not require a revision of the bylaws. The Student/Family handbook would need to be updated to reflect the change in procedure. The proposal was given to Scott and Chris so that the change can be made for next academic year.

Update on new Board members

Cate Damon is a prospective member who should be at the next meeting. We are at the point where we are at 17 members, and we cannot have more than 20. If we are able to add one more parent rep, should we then focus on getting another community member?

Sam Intrator has declined, but Janine Fondon is interested and is going to set up a tour with Mary Cantler.

Making our list of Board members current:

There is a new process for doing this online; it is mandatory. We need resumes from all members.

The 2015 financial disclosure form can only be filled out online, and the link comes from the DESE in an email. They have to be filed in the school and with the town.

Important Forms:

- open meeting law
- conflict of interest- state ethics commission
- financial disclosure- has to be done online.

Head of School - Scott Goldman

Head of School report was emailed by Scott.

Building Expansion Project Update (addressed on Head of School report).

They are working on the interior of the building now. We are also working with the local building inspector and fire department.

Students- Rachel Huggett

It's been a good month. The Peer mentor group has been doing a lot of work with 7th and 8th graders and making sure they feel comfortable.

Staff – Will Decherd and Gary Huggett

Site visit seemed to go really well.

Gary H. was part of a teacher focus group. All the questions posed by the site visit team were answered appropriately.

Will expressed that the general feeling of the last few weeks has been busy: Site visit, mid semester reports, conferences. The middle school teachers are going to focus on the bell schedule at their next retreat.

Open Session (N/A)

Public Comment (N/A)

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:17 pm