

**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**The Davidson Academy Governing Board**  
**Sept. 18, 2017**

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Governing Board was called to order at 2 p.m. in the Tahoe Room of the Davidson Academy of Nevada located at 1164 N. Virginia St., Reno, Nevada, 89503.

**A. Roll Call**

Roll call was completed by the Chair of the Meeting, Bob Davidson. Roger Davidson, Mark Herron, Brian Krolicki, Annette Whittemore and Colleen Harsin were present. Alan Boeckmann, Steve Canavero, Traci Davis and Marc Johnson were not present.

**B. Welcome and Introductions**

Bob Davidson welcomed Board members present as well as individuals attending from the public.

**C. Public Comments**

There were no comments from the public at this time.

**D. Approval of Minutes for Meeting of May 15, 2017**

Bob Davidson requested approval of the minutes for the meeting of May 15, 2017 under Tab 1 of the Board book (incorporated herein by reference). Motion was made and seconded for approval of the minutes as submitted. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

**E. Approval of Agenda**

Bob Davidson requested approval of the Agenda as submitted to the Board. Motion was made and seconded for approval of the meeting Agenda. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

**F. Reports**

**1. Vice President and Chief Financial Officer**

**a. Presentation of independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017**

Mark Herron, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, introduced John Van Trigt and Michael Ohrt of the accounting firm Holthouse, Carlin & Van Trigt LLP (HCVT) who joined the meeting by conference call.

Mr. Van Trigt began his presentation by referring the Board to the AU260 Letter and Audit Report prepared by his office and provided to the Board (incorporated herein by reference). Bob Davidson asked how long HCVT has been auditing the Academy and Mr. Van Trigt responded that his firm had been auditing the Academy for the past eight to 10 years. He indicated that the three-page AU260 Letter summarizes the 28-page audit report, which includes the financial statements and footnotes. He confirmed that the audit was completed in accordance with the engagement letter, without any scope limitations or problems. All the information provided was satisfactory with completing the audit and issuing the reports. There were no changes in accounting policies from the preceding year. No audit adjustments had to be made. He confirmed that the Academy's accounting practices were in good order with appropriate internal controls in place. HCVT attempts to do something unpredictable each year for the audit. Mr. Ohrt

explained that the difference this year focused on Academy's corporate credit cards and reconciliation process. Based on their analysis, no internal control weaknesses or issues were identified. Mr. Van Trigt said there were no findings of material weaknesses and, thus, no recommendations to improve controls since the ones in place are sufficient.

Mr. Van Trigt reported that the financial statements are consistent in presentation as in past years. The auditors have issued an unmodified (or "clean") opinion on the financial statements. No exceptions were made to the presentation in numbers, financial statements or footnotes. Different this year, the student activities funds are included as a separate schedule. For next year, the online program will be addressed in terms of required reporting and testing.

Mr. Herron, and other board members, thanked Karin Dixson for her work in preparation of materials for the completion of the audit, as well as Colleen Harsin, Mr. Van Trigt and Mr. Ohrt.

Motion for acceptance of the audit report was made and seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

## **2. Academy Director**

### **a. General Program Updates**

Davidson Academy Director, Colleen Harsin, gave an admissions report for the Reno campus stating that 150 students started this school year. Thirty new students were accepted and 24 enrolled and six were deferred until next year. The deferred students are typically younger students who are not quite ready to attend, but who are accepted for 2018-2019. Out of the 24 accepted, 20 decided to attend, which includes 12 boys and eight girls ranging in age from 10 to 16. Thirteen of the 20 attending moved from out-of-state (California, Arizona, Florida, Oregon, Illinois, Washington, Texas and Alaska). Six are from northern Nevada and one is from southern Nevada. The 2018-2019 Reno campus application is open and the first assessment is scheduled for October.

Ms. Harsin also gave an admissions report on the new online program, which started classes Aug. 28. Core classes meet live online for 90 minutes. Electives also meet live online for up to two hours on Fridays. The weekly course schedule has a similar layout as the Reno campus. The eighth grade option was added which brought in an additional 14 students, who are taking some classes for middle school credit and some for high school. Additionally, there are eight full-time high school students. Currently, online courses include the first two years of high school and the more advanced high school courses are being built to be ready by next year. Thus, this year the student body is composed of younger students. There are 10 instructors with the majority of full-time instructors in Nevada. The number of instructors will likely double as advanced high school courses are added. The total online student body has an even number of boys and girls. One student is from Nevada with others in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. The online school has the following clubs: games, math, reading/book and running. Student ages range from 10 to 15, including six 12 year olds, eight 13 year olds and four 14 year olds. Before attending the Academy's online school, 36 percent attended public school, 45 percent were homeschooled, 14 percent attended private school and four percent were accessing another online option. In terms of financial support, 17 students are not receiving financial aid and five are receiving financial aid. A weekly schedule of live sessions and

electives was displayed. The Yearbook Elective is a mix of Academy students from both the Reno and Online campuses. Ms. Harsin shared feedback that families are impressed with the integrity of the online program as well as the quick response time of both the teachers and the administrative team of Stacy Hawthorne and Amanda Mawson.

Ms. Harsin referred to Tab 2 (incorporated herein by reference) with the Academy's Reno campus weekly course schedule and how the Academy building space is being utilized. Some instructors have moved into new roles. For example, some are teaching in the building this year versus teaching online last year, or teaching a mix of Reno campus and online courses. One instructor is now full-time based on teaching electives last year. The foreign language staff doubled this year with two Spanish and two Chinese instructors teaching Reno campus courses this school year while creating online courses for next year. Ms. Harsin also highlighted the new courses and electives for this school year.

Ms. Harsin referred to Tabs 3 and 4 (incorporated herein by reference) with the year-end student and parent survey results from the end of last school year. Quantitative and narrative responses were included for transparency. Topics included Orientation, Back-to-School Night, BlackBoard and the PALS program. Ms. Harsin is in the process of following up with parents and students as needed based on specific survey comments.

Ms. Harsin referred to Tab 5 (incorporated herein by reference) with the 2016-2017 Pupil Enrollment and Attendance Audit, including an explanation of the correspondence and the final report.

Ms. Harsin referred to Tab 6 (incorporated herein by reference) with an ACT test report, which has an error that has been reported. The Academy should be 100 percent college ready, not 96 percent. Last time a similar error occurred, a non-Academy student had their scores mistakenly assigned to the Academy and their scores were re-assigned to the correct school.

Ms. Harsin referred to Tab 7 (incorporated herein by reference) that included correspondence with parents. The first email, distributed Aug. 25, 2017, is in regards to how the Academy and University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) have been handling a number of factors after events in Charlottesville, Va. that have impacted campuses around the country and the fact that there was a student at that rally who was identified as a UNR student. The University administration has been working diligently on how to handle various situations on campus. Since the Academy is located on the University campus with students in University classes, Academy staff members participated in the University staff and faculty discussions to be sensitive to these issues, how to help minimize any version of hate speech or related activities on campus, and to be aware if you see something to report it. The email was sent to Academy families to let them know what was happening on the larger University campus and that the Academy is aware of these issues. The Academy is always in close contact with the UNR President's office on campus.

The second email was sent in regards to the Educational Opportunities Fund to communicate that, as of this school year, this fund will now be a need-based scholarship fund. This fund pays for Academy students who are enrolled in University courses above and beyond the Academy's graduation requirements. Parents agreed to request these funds based on need. Based on this

change, currently half of the funds are still available for travel and other expenditures for students who would not otherwise have access to these opportunities.

### **b. College Planning Updates**

Ms. Harsin referred to Tab 8 (incorporated herein by reference) with a list of National Merit Semifinalists. The students and their recommenders are writing feverishly and working on their college applications. Ms. Harsin explained the National Merit selection index score by state.

### **3. Media and Outreach**

Julie Dudley referred to Tab 9 (incorporated herein by reference) with Media and Outreach report, which included: recent media clips; eNewsletter subscription numbers; social media links; and, a list of upcoming conferences and Academy tour dates. Academy student, Oliver Leitner, was recently interviewed on KUNR radio before his violin performance at a taping of NPR's From the Top in Reno on Sept. 10, 2017.

### **G. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence received by the Board for this meeting.

### **H. Public Comments**

An Academy parent in attendance asked if the school had considered opening the Educational Opportunities fund to pay for summer opportunities, including University courses. Ms. Harsin said this suggestion would be taken into consideration. Another parent had a general inquiry about the Academy's social media pages and posts, which Ms. Dudley answered. Another question was if Academy students at the Reno campus would be able to access some of the Academy's online courses in the future. Ms. Harsin stated that the full high school will be built out next year, and at that time Reno students may be able to access online courses for different electives, a greater variety of courses and scheduling flexibility.

### **I. General Business**

The following 2018 proposed meeting dates were reviewed and the May 14, 2018 meeting was highlighted as being held at a different location:

- Monday, February 26, 2018
- Monday, May 14, 2018 – Meeting Location: KNPB, 1670 N. Virginia St.
- Monday, September 17, 2018
- Monday, November 5, 2018

### **J. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board in public meeting, motion was made and seconded for adjournment; motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.



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Respectfully submitted by Julie Dudley, Clerk of the Board