

Minutes of the Meeting
The Davidson Academy Governing Board
September 29, 2021

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Governing Board of the Davidson Academy was called to order at 2:02 p.m. This public meeting was held by videoconference allowing members of the public to hear and observe the meeting. Members of the public were invited to provide comments by telephone, through videoconference, or by email.

A. Roll Call

Roll call was completed by Meeting Chair, Mark Herron. In attendance were Roger Davidson, Bob Davidson, Richard Trachok, Lauralyn McCarthy-Sandoval, Jhone Ebert, Brian Krolicki, and Brian Sandoval. Also present were Controller, Karin Dixon; Academy Director, Colleen Harsin; Director of Online Learning, Dr. Stacy Hawthorne; Legal Counsel, Ann Alexander; and Clerk of the Board, Aimee Fredericks. Kristen McNeill, and Annette Whittemore were not present. Following completion of roll call, a quorum of voting members was confirmed.

B. Welcome and Introduction

Mark Herron welcomed Board members and members of the public in attendance. He thanked Holly Lorge' for her service to the Board as Clerk and welcomed Aimee Fredericks as the new Clerk of the Board. He thanked Ben Brown for providing technical support for the meeting.

Mr. Herron introduced guests, Morris Zlotowitz and Kimberley Hastings, from the independent auditing firm, Holthouse, Carlin & Van Trigt, who would be reporting on the submitted audit report.

C. Public Comment

Mark Herron provided instructions concerning public comment as stated under item C. of the meeting agenda.

Mark Herron stated that this meeting would be held without a physical location, but in compliance with Nevada legislation, was available for visual participation, and audio call-in for public comments. He referenced the public comment details provided in the agenda and confirmed that public comments, if made, would be received by email or by telephone. No comments were received.

D. Approval of Agenda

Mark Herron requested a motion to move agenda item G.1.a. for presentation and consideration by the Board, prior to item F. Reports. Motion was made, and seconded for approval of the amended meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes

Mark Herron requested approval of the minutes for the meeting of August 17, 2021, included in the board book for this meeting. Motion was made and seconded for approval of the minutes as submitted. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Reports

1. Academy Director
 - a. General Program Updates

Colleen Harsin, Director, began her report by referring Board members to Tab 2 of their board books for a copy of the Pupil and Attendance Audit for school year 2020-2021 received from the State of Nevada, Department of Education. There were no findings noted in the audit, and the average daily enrollment was verified for each quarter. Moving to Tab 3, Ms. Harsin reported that the Davidson Academy's updated Emergency Operating Plan was submitted by the deadline. There are some updates forthcoming from the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). Once the changes are confirmed and approved by the NDE, those changes will be implemented in the Davidson Academy Emergency Operating Plan.

Referring to Tab 4, concerning the Memorandum from Amelia Thibault, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding the Path Forward Program of Distance Education, Ms. Harsin confirmed that the Davidson Academy (Reno Campus) started the current school year with fulltime, in-person learning as the primary model, with allowances for a distance/hybrid learning model to be used as needed. Students and staff members have been instructed to stay home if they are experiencing any symptoms of illness and they may learn or teach from home via Zoom. The Davidson Academy is fortunate to have access to technology to support a remote learning option in real time.

Under Tab 5, Ms. Harsin noted that the Academy's Chemistry Instructor, Ms. Elizabeth Walenta received written recognition from MIT as a teacher who positively influenced a Davidson Academy graduate, now attending MIT.

Concerning current enrollment at the Davidson Academy (Reno Campus), Ms. Harsin confirmed that 144 students are receiving in-person learning in compliance with mask wearing mandates and the three feet social distancing recommendation. Back to school night was successfully completed via Zoom. The National Merit Semi-finalist List was received. Fourteen out of 24 upcoming graduates are semi-finalists, with 12 students

being from the Reno Campus and two from Davidson Academy Online. Three additional students are also recognized as Commended Students.

This past summer the Davidson Academy moved its student information system to the Infinite Campus platform. Ms. Harsin reported that while the transition was arduous, implementation of Infinite Campus is seen as an upgrade in terms of time savings. It has also allowed more access to student academic information for students and families, not available in the previous system. The Davidson Academy is now utilizing the same student information system as all other school districts in the state of Nevada.

Concerning Nevada Accountability updates, Ms. Harsin reported that due to COVID-19, results are not considered informative or complete for the 2020-2021 school year test administrations. There was, however, solid participation on behalf of the Davidson Academy with a >95% performance level in English Language Arts and Mathematics on the CRT and ACT, as well as for the High School Science exam. There was a <5% chronic absenteeism rate.

Ms. Harsin confirmed that she is currently working with the University on how COVID-19 vaccination requirements apply to for Davidson Academy students taking courses and accessing University facilities in spring 2022. Currently, about 30 students are taking one or more classes at the University.

In closing, Ms. Harsin advised that the Davidson Academy Reno Campus welcomed 38 new students for the 2021-2022 school year, of which 23 are from the Reno-Tahoe area, four are from California, seven are from other states including Virginia, North Carolina, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and Washington; four are siblings of current or graduated Davidson Academy students.

2. Director of Online Learning

a. General Program Updates

Dr. Stacy Hawthorne, Director of Online Learning, began her report by referring Board members to Tab 6 of their board books for a map of where students and staff members currently live in the United States. Ninety-six students are currently enrolled in Davidson Academy Online; enrollment as of the first day of school was 100 students. During the application review process more applicants completed assessment which resulted in a lower acceptance rate. Davidson Academy Online currently has their largest enrollment in 8th and 9th grade classes and will propose six students for graduation in the spring.

Also under Tab 6, Dr. Hawthorne referred to the included course list. She confirmed that course offerings have increased as well as sections available. All courses, other than the advanced (beyond multivariable calculus) math series have been approved by the University of California System for A-G credit.

Dr. Hawthorne confirmed that Davidson Academy Online continues to focus on and develop social and emotional learning. The first Friday of each month, differing arts events including talent shows and poetry readings are offered. The first school dance is scheduled for October 28th. Davidson Academy Online has received national recognition for its social emotional learning program. Dr. Hawthorne reported that a press release on this would be available on October 12th.

3. Media and Outreach

Concerning Media and Outreach, Dr. Stacy Hawthorne advised that Davidson Academy Online Instructor, Dr. James Bonderchuk, was interviewed by local news station KOLO 8 at the Reno Campus along with Director, Colleen Harsin, as a result of the Davidson Academy being named as the nation's number one public middle and high school by Niche.com. Davidson Academy was named in the number two spot for best online schools.

Former Davidson Academy Online student, Marvin Mao, and Davidson Academy Online were recognized for Mr. Mao's winning the National MATHCOUNTS competition. Mr. Mao was also interviewed on ABC's Live with Kelly and Ryan on July 12, 2021.

The Davidson Academy Online Team was recognized as a 2021 Blackboard Catalyst Awards winner in the Training & Professional Development category.

Davidson Academy Reno campus student Samantha Glover was featured in a number of news stories for her bill to abolish "Period Poverty" by requiring free menstrual products at public high schools and middle schools in Nevada. Davidson Academy Reno campus student Claire Burkhardt was named a "National Cyber Scholar" after winning a nationwide competition. Claire is one of only 10 students in Nevada to be recognized.

The new Davidson Academy website was launched and now includes a Blog feature. Outreach staff continues to work toward improving web traffic.

G. General Business

1. VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

a. Presentation of independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021 (*for possible action*)

Mark Herron, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, referred to Kimberly Hastings and Morris Zlotowitz for presentation of the independent auditor's report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021.

Mr. Zlotowitz began his presentation with discussion of the audit results letter; the required communication from the auditors to those in charge of governance of Davidson Academy financials. He advised that an unmodified opinion, without qualification, was provided following completion of the audit. The financial statements were confirmed as prepared properly and in accordance with Government Accounting Standards. Concerning the accounting policies, there were no transactions entered that lacked authoritative consensus. The financial statements include an entry for original construction costs, which is an estimate of amortized prepaid rent costs. This is not a new entry and was previously communicated to the Board. The financial statements are neutral, consistent, and clear. There were no difficulties in performing the audit. There were two minor adjustments recorded, which Ms. Hastings would further describe in her comments. There were no uncorrected misstatements or disagreements with management and no recommendations indicated.

Mr. Zlotowitz referred to Ms. Hastings for further comments. Ms. Hastings advised that recommendations were provided in last year's audit related to time allocation between various entities, specifically education and non-education related time. The audit staff worked with Karin Dixon and Mark Herron following the previous audit to clarify the recommendation, and new processes were implemented during the year which satisfied the audit requirement.

Ms. Hastings referred to the financial statements, which she reported as consistent with the prior year. With regard to the management discussion analysis, prepared by Karin Dixon, there were few differences with prior years except for the addition of communications concerning COVID-19.

Concerning the footnotes, there is a new note including the creation of Online Resources AZ, LLC (ORAZ) to employ out-of-state staff. Additionally, under risk management and contingencies, there is an expanded note concerning the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak and how the Davidson Academy has responded, and a comment on current uncertainty.

There is an additional footnote under subsequent events with regard to the forming of Davidson Academy Online, LLC, an Oregon limited liability company. Beginning July 1, 2022, Davidson Academy Online, LLC, intends to operate as an independent school in the state of Oregon.

A budgetary footnote is included relating to reduced costs during the fiscal year. Karin Dixon commented that the Davidson Academy was under budget in all categories and that the cost savings was due to cancelation of events and travel of due to COVID-19.

Ms. Hastings reconfirmed there were no findings that need disclosure and no issues with internal controls. She thanked Karin Dixon for her work in providing the audit materials.

Board member Brian Krolicki thanked Karin Dixson for her work on preparing the audit and congratulated her on it being so well done. Ms. Hastings confirmed that there may be further guidance and requirements forthcoming for non-profit corporations from the Government Accounting Standards Board. She will keep the Board apprised and advise Karin Dixson of changes. Mr. Herron asked if the Board had any questions or comments.

There being no further questions coming before the Board concerning the audit report, Mark Herron requested motion to accept the auditor's report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Motion was made and seconded for approval of the auditor's report as submitted. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

H. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public at this time.

I. Adjournment

Chair of the Meeting, Mark Herron, requested that due to scheduling conflicts, the next Board meeting be moved to Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., which was confirmed by Board members.

There being no further business coming before the Board in public meeting, Mr. Herron asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Aimee Fredericks

Respectfully submitted by Aimee Fredericks, Clerk of the Board