



Meeting Minutes of the DLS Board of Directors

Oct. 4, 2014

10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Location: Stapleton Foundation

In Attendance:

Dan Baack

Jason Welp

Ryan Hunter

Kristy Fantz

Beverly Haddon

Janine Erickson

Lori Deacon, Finance Mgr.

Administration in attendance:

Kathy Benzel, Principal

Eva Doblaz, Spanish Program Director

Call to Order:

Board Chair Dan Baack called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM

Facilities Discussion:

The challenge: the need to expand facilities, search for a new location, or split the school between two locations.

- Kathy shared current staffing including numbers in classrooms...teachers in classrooms with emphasis on the numbers currently in middle school (5th and 6th grades).
- Kathy emphasized the importance of middle school level teaching license noting that highly qualified elementary teachers can teach middle school...depending on the subject area. DLS will need some part-time instructors in the middle school and will need to find people highly qualified in secondary as well. There will also be a need for more specials teachers. This year administration has done a lot of combining and creative scheduling to make it happen but this may not be possible next year.

- Kathy met with Lori to update the Classroom Staffing Map. Due to the different language programs staffing is more difficult. Eva expressed the need for highly qualified teachers in science and social studies in both Mandarin and Science. DLS does not have the numbers to consider staffing full time teachers in these content areas. Lori commented that it would not be possible to just bring in teachers from other schools to DLS.
- Kenneth noted that actual square footage is going to need to be altered to accommodate the actual numbers in order to have actual classrooms.
- Concern expressed that after 5th grade enrollment numbers will go down as evidenced this current school year from the siblings who have left. Kenneth says our revenue numbers will also change.
- Ryan shared conversations he had with families who have left DLS stating that they left for variety of reasons. He reported that the transition to the new schools for these students has been favorable and they are thriving in their new schools. Ryan added that the amount of foreign language being offered in these schools is *almost* equal to ours. He also stated that those other facilities are better & the specials offered are better. Over time they may change their mind if they lose their language. Example: Swigert McCulliff...students only get 1 ½ hours 3 times a week in the target language. There is concern that the parents may communicate the success students are experiencing to others currently at DLS.
- Kenneth offered two main concerns the board needs to consider:
 - 1) If we want to continue, do we raise capital funds separately to save the cushion we have created over the years, which would give us a one-year solution? Or
 - 2) Whether or not we are currently sacrificing the financial viability of the school by having a middle school in the building.
- Kristy proposed the idea of building up i.e. adding a second floor to Whiteman and keeping enrollment no higher than 650. Construction budget: \$1.2 Million. Construction wouldn't require a foundation so it *should be* cheaper.
- Questions arose about DPS allowing us to do what Kristy proposed and whether or not the neighborhood would want it. Ryan will commit to raising this idea when next they meet with DPS.
- Kristy will spearhead the plan ideas and put together the numbers for capacity and the benefit to DPS. Our contract with DPS is K-5 with a proposal to amend it to K-8. In our original contract we were approved as a Charter K-8.
- Kenneth informed the board that Cavalry Temple is back on as a second location as a middle school and they are willing to talk to us. It would meet our needs. This would put us in two buildings. It would be for middle school. DPS wants us to consider this option. It *may not* be a popular option with parents. With a lease it gives us flexibility in case our numbers go down and some of our best kids may leave. It may also impact our educational model.

- *Bev suggested we each share our priorities:*
- Bev – great performance from the kids in the original immersion model...doesn't in any way cause grief by negative performance and that would be a K-5. Dan, Ryan, Jacob agreed with this assessment.
- Kenneth –we know we can have success with a K-5
- Ryan recommends K-5, create more after school programs, and ultimately work towards a middle school K-8.
- Kristy offered research that says that by 5th grade immersion students catch up and start to advance and surpass their peers. Best test scores should be 6th-7th-8th. If you stop at 5th, performance will not look that great. Janine supported this and agreed that we should keep the original plan with a K-8 school.
- Kathy - in order to maintain the best academic performance, social and emotional needs should be at the forefront.
- Dan summarized our goal: to continue to research all the options as thoroughly as we can.
- Kristy will develop a numbers plan.
- Board will continue to look to see if Cavalry Temple is viable.

Development Coordinator Position:

The position description needs to clearly define what the job would entail. Camilla would like to apply. If she gets the position she would resign from the board.

September Board meeting minutes:

Approval will be tabled until the October 15th meeting.

SAC Parent survey:

Areas of concern are already being addressed. The board will do a fall satisfaction survey and get new numbers. Dan will prepare an overall satisfaction report.

Ryan made the motion to adjourn. Kenneth seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Janine Erickson, Board Secretary

