



DENVER LANGUAGE SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE DENVER LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Location: DLS Cafeteria

Time: 6pm to 8pm

Mission Statement – Achieve academic excellence and intercultural competence through language immersion education

In Attendance:

Jacob Welp
Camilla Modesitt
Dan Baack
Kristy Fantz
Kenneth Ho (by phone)
Beverly Haddon
Janine Erickson

Administration in attendance:

Kathy Benzel, Principal
Amy Percoco, Operations Manager
Chelsea Monahan, Project Manager

Dan opened the meeting at 6:04PM

Camilla moved to approve the minutes, Jacob seconded and it was approved.

Kenneth moved to approve the minutes from the phone call to approve the calendar, Dan seconded the motion and it was approved.

Transportation update – Kenneth 170 respondents to survey ...hope to be able to share with the community, Dan got one negative email about the survey but all other survey comments were positive. Need to know how many plan to take the bus to secure the timing with DPS to execute that plan. Possible scenarios: staggered schedule start time Committee will make sure that we address any concerns...provide a drop off pick up location to accommodate the stagger. Jacob-asked where the stops will be. Kenneth – Stops in Park Hill are near the Boys and Girls club at 33rd and Holly and we will use the stops we have currently and others. We initiated the transition of the board relationship with Pastor Hood over to Kenneth. Ryan is going off the board at the end of this school year. Relationship should continue between Kathy and Pastor Hood. Jacob asked if most households are ok with the \$10 transportation fee. Kenneth replied that most said they are open to the fee.

Kenneth and his team are meeting April 23rd, every other Tuesday to analyze the data and be able to provide the information to the board.

Administration update and Leadership Update– Kathy Benzel

Kathy re-introduced Chelsea Moynahan, Project Manager and went over her responsibilities with the two campuses including inventory and making sure everything is in the right place. Amy Percoco was recently hired as Operations Manager. She will oversee both facilities and office staff in both as well as deal with any emergencies that may arise. She will go back and forth between the two campuses, just as Kathy will. She will be in charge of communications and HR. Taylor will continue to do financial, tuition, and book-keeping and payroll. Amy will be the one who will communicate with DPS, including transportation.

Kathy has been working on staffing plan. She reported that there is a good leadership structure in place. She said she is growing our teacher leaders and giving them opportunities to become experts in certain areas that are important. They have hired 2 specialists for classroom teachers and TA's. They will start in the fall. Kathy met with each member of the DLS staff. She had sent out intent to return forms prior to those meetings so they knew who wanted to return. There are some staff changes that will be revealed at a later date. Kathy says they are half way done with hiring.

DLS office team put together a welcome packet for new families. Amy rewrote the welcome letter to new families. It includes info on summer camp that may help get more participation. Summer camp will be held last two weeks of July. Dan asked if it would be worth it for pedagogical benefit to take a loss on the summer camp. Kathy says having it at the end of July will help. Camilla said the original intent was to help prepare students with the language and over the years, to keep the language. Kathy thinks the available websites that parents use and teachers use is also a good practice for our school throughout the year. Kathy met with Megan to talk about signage and develop new signs for the school.

Kathy mentioned "Schoology" an online blackboard for classes. She feels this is more robust than a website and would be great for both parents and kids. Cost would be \$7,500 for whole school. She thinks it will positively impact the education side.

Lori and Kathy discussed capital construction funds. DLS didn't have any costly projects this year. Good news is that those funds can roll over and we can use them at CT. Lori will send Kathy a list for how we could use those funds.

Kathy met with Jenny from Kaleidoscope...she was able to share that they went to CT to see if it could be licensed and see what they can do there. Next step ... how many kids are we looking at between both DLS East and West? DLS will do whatever is needed to expand your program. Kathy says she will make sure families can get in and sign up. They will do a face to face sign up as well as a portal sign up in early May.

Dan had a question about major issue with staffing here at DLS East. Kaleidoscope is popular and has a long waiting list. Another issue according to Kenneth was the use of the gym (lack of). They want bigger spaces. Their licensing for space is different than our school. Kathy let them know that we will do whatever it takes to get the space they need. Dan suggested that if we cannot follow up and please Kaleidoscope...we might want to explore other options, like the YMCA or other after school programs.

Kids age 12 and up cannot attend Kaleidoscope. They have fewer options. We may look at staffing Friday afternoons so middle school kids could stay and sign up by the month for homework club, project based activities, service learning, or community service opportunities. They could participate with no cost. Activities would be in English but could incorporate some target language activities. Monday – Thursday Fun clubs will continue for upper grades.

Uniforms: 5th grade and up are either red or burgundy, K-4 are the blue. Megan will do a logo specific for the school and change the tone of the blue to a darker blue. The name of the school will be in English. The shirts will be \$12 - \$16. Other options like fleece jackets, sweatshirts, and jumpers will also change. Kathy will share this with the PTA. DLS World Language Expo will be

May 14th and they will hopefully have the shirt decisions made. Camilla asked if we still do scholarships for FRL students. Answer: yes.

Kathy will send the board enrollment numbers.

SAC update - Dan Baack

Teacher Satisfaction Survey was administered. Dan will put together the results and get that information to us. Parent Satisfaction Survey was sent out last Friday and is due next week. Kristy points out that this is one of our school's ratings and very important. DPS says we have never done a student survey that impacts our SPF. We may be a bit delayed in getting the information to DPS due to all the assessments. Kathy has done a lot of work around this to get everyone on board.

Jacob – is there anything we can do to get awareness or build good will with the parent community to take the survey? Kathy says the DLS leadership has put forth an extra effort to get them to take the survey. Dan feels confident that we will have a good turn out.

Communications– Dan Baack

He is not doing the Navigator this month as we had no new information. More appropriate to have it roll out in May when we have more information. We will do a little more due to the Open House/Tours at DLS West on May 2nd.

Board Term Updates –Dan Baack

Each board member serves a 3 year term. Jacob, Kenneth and Dan are all serving their 2nd year. Janine is serving her first year. Ryan's term is up and he is choosing not to come back to the board.

Financial report: Jacob Welp/Lori Deacon

March financial are plugging along nicely. FY15 we expected a surplus of 0 but now that we are in the 4th quarter of the year we are looking at 100K. We have collected all our revenue and our expenses are right on track. Kindergarten revenue seems to lag but this year almost every month we have been on track.

Concern about temporary salaries...Kathy says we use our highly qualified subs from the building that saves us some money. We have a couple teachers going on maternity leave and will require a long-term substitute until the end of the year. Some teachers save their personal days and they tend to use them at the end of the year.

Travel registration for trainings and conferences has yet to be finalized. There are some professional development trainings this summer.

General supplies and office supplies are low. Kathy reported that they have bought most of the necessary supplies. Kathy said Teresa orders the office supplies. Kathy says her office managers have dealt really well with this. Electronics went over budget by about 9K but some of them were licenses and some were upgrades but Kathy will review this and report back to Jacob.

The rest of our items are favorable. Fiscal year ends June 30th. The excess carries over to the reserves.

Another budget item: Kathy's performance was recognized. The board will review her salary and bonus structure at a separate meeting.

Camilla: In terms of hiring there were big discrepancies in terms of salaries. Kathy is working on a structure that is fair. Rather than making big changes she will make some adjustments to those who are on the low end of salaries and will even out the scale to make sense. There are some changes that will make a fair impact on all individuals.

Dan asked questions about insurance packages available to charter schools. Amy says there are other options that we can explore. They will look into other benefits that may have a positive impact on retention. We may not know the rates for these benefits until the summer but they will continue to work on this.

Robin B. was working on some major concerns such as maternity leave, bereavement, etc. Another need is to work on personal days that can be earned. Janine asked about Professional Days. Kathy reported that teachers have opportunities to attend state conferences. Kathy shared a program to give teachers opportunities to enhance our programs and become mentors and enhance technology and knowledge on STEM programs.

Camilla had a question about Human Resource policies. Kathy reported that she works with MSEC- Mountain States Employment Council and will continue to work with them to help follow up with this.

Development update – Beverly Haddon

Beverly will give a report on our vision and development at the strategic plan meeting on Monday.

PTA update – Lisa Peloso

Upcoming PTA events

- Restaurant night at Casa Bonita 4/19
- Scholastic Book Fair – Wed 4/22-Sat 4/25
- Bike Rodeo/Wellness Festival - Saturday 4/25
- PTA elections for exec board 2015/16 –Thurs 4/30 at 8:15am
- PTA Spring Fundraiser – Kickball Tournament - Sunday 5/3
- Teacher appreciation week 5/4-5/8
- May restaurant night – TBD

Spring Fundraiser purpose: Per conversation with Kathy, we are currently planning to fundraise for playground enhancements, basic movement and music supplies and electives/specials and support materials.

Board is asked to consider if they would like the DLS direct giving campaign (probably beginning end of summer and into the fall) to focus on support for transportation needs. We could always raise money to reimburse the school/board budgets.

Motion to adjourn Beverly and 2nd by Jacob.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted by Board Secretary, Janine Erickson

