



Minutes of the

GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, August 18, 2015

5:00 pm

ABQ Charter Academy

405 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Blvd NE

Albuquerque, NM 87102

Council Members Present: Rhonda Seidenwurm (President), Evalynne Hunemuller (Vice President), John Rodarte (Secretary), Jacob Kennedy (Treasurer)

Council Members Not Present: Emily Salazar

Guests: Erik Bose, ABQCA Executive Director; Curt Szarek, ABQCA Business Manager; Amy Roble, ABQCA Principal; Deb Moya, ABQCA Asst. Principal/Special Services Dir.

Minutes: Andrea Kepple, ABQCA Executive Asst./STARS Coordinator

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm by President Rhonda Seidenwurm.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of August 18, 2015 Agenda

John Rodarte made a motion to approve the agenda. Jacob Kennedy seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval of June 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes

John Rodarte made a motion to approve the minutes. Jacob Kennedy seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Title I School Improvement BAR

BAR-0002-I was distributed to the Council along with the expenditure distribution. Mr. Szarek explained that this is an award adjustment/increase for \$25,054.00, which we received notice of at the end of the school year. Jacob Kennedy made a motion to approve the BAR. John Rodarte seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of English Language Learner (ELL) Policy

The Council was provided with a copy of a new policy regarding ELLs. Ms. Roble stated that the school needed to have something in place to ensure compliance with PED's ELL guidelines and to make sure we are reporting ELL information correctly in STARS.

- PED and NMAC were consulted during policy development
- Highlights:



- Sometimes the home language surveys our students aged 18+ fill out do not match what their parents filled out originally
- Students who have been served in NM public schools in the past and were not identified as ELLs will not be identified as such by ABQCA
- Students can refuse to receive ELL services but that does not legally permit us to report them as “not eligible,” only one of the defining tests can (W-APT, ACCESS)

Evalynne Hunemuller asked why the school thought it needed a policy now. Ms. Roble explained that the State has been looking at Title III programs very closely and we wanted to be sure we were in compliance, as the guidelines tend to not be very clear. Evalynne Hunemuller made a motion to approve the new ELL policy. Jacob Kennedy seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION

1. Finance Committee Report/Business Manager Report – Curt Szarek

The check registers for June and July along with the June 30, 2015 year-end financial statements and Cash Reports were sent out electronically to the council prior to the meeting.

- Mr. Szarek pointed out that the school ended the year with a stronger cash position than anticipated. The Operational Fund reflects a Cash balance of \$691K which is slightly more than the \$670K projected. There are also strong Cash balances in both of the Capital Improvement Funds. The only liabilities shown are for NM State WH Taxes, Unemployment Taxes, and employees’ share of the July NMPSIA premium withheld during June payrolls.
 - Evalynne Hunemuller cautioned that the school may be looked at as having too much money. Mr. Szarek concurred and is aware of how a legislative body may view such Cash balances. He offered that in public school finance, a healthy Cash balance is necessary in order for the school to be able to loan monies to flowthrough funds such as Title I, IDEA-B, Lease Assistance, and so on, pending their respective reimbursements. Since it could take in excess of 30 days to receive reimbursement, the school needs to have enough Cash on hand to satisfy its monthly obligations and any front-loaded expenditures such as NMPSIA Risk Premiums and annual curriculum software license fees as well. In addition, he feels the school needs to be able to have enough in reserve to pay for any unforeseen expenditures such as ancillary services for any special needs student(s). Since the school is funded on the snapshot of the 80th and 120th days of the prior fiscal year, it is possible we may not receive any current year funding for any special needs student who is carried on the roster and requires special services. Ms. Roble pointed out that at the present time, the school will be providing ancillary services for a student who is functionally blind.
 - Rhonda Seidenwurm asked if there was anything on the school’s “wish list” that could be purchased to draw down some of the funds. Mr. Bose



informed her that the school is in the process of purchasing 3-D software which is aligned with core standards for use in both the Math and Science classes. The software, equipment, and training is expected to cost about \$20K to implement. Mr. Szarek further explained that whenever possible the school utilizes allowable grant funds first to preserve the Operational Cash balance and that this software will be paid for out of the Operational Cash balance carryover.

- Beverly Aguilar, the school's PED Budget Analyst since inception, has resigned effective mid-July. John Wolfe, Director of the School Budget and Finance Analysis Unit, was assigned as our interim Analyst but he resigned shortly after Beverly. As of July 31st, our new Budget Analyst is Bernadette Garcia.
- The APS Charter School audit entrance conference was held on July 23rd and once again our school had strong showing at the meeting. The audit fieldwork will begin tomorrow morning at 8:30 a.m. and is expected to be completed by Thursday afternoon. An Audit Committee Meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 20th. Mr. Szarek shared he has completed all of the PBC list items and uploaded most of them through the CliftonLarsonAllen web reporting portal and feels the school is well prepared.
- A Finance Committee meeting was held on July 29th to review the year-end reports and supporting documentation. A copy of the meeting minutes were distributed to each Council Member for review.

2. Executive Director Report – Erik Bose

A copy of the Executive Director's report was included in the Council Member packets.

- There are currently 15 graduates since the start of the new school year. Graduation will be held on Thursday, June 16, 2016 at the Kiva Auditorium. This facility is large enough that we can accommodate everyone with one (1) ceremony.
- The first Count Day for the State reporting is October 15th.
- Currently there are 134 Academy students and 73 from Job Corps. The waiting list is at 165. We have been calling in students off the list and registering about 20 per week.
 - Mr. Bose expressed that everyone at the school is concerned that JC has been transferring students to other programs without telling ABQCA staff. Mr. Bose and Ms. Roble met with JC two (2) weeks ago and even discussed setting up a van for the students, which JC administration liked. (They complained last year that they had many students waiting to get in to ABQCA.) Two (2) days after that meeting, JC began pulling kids out.
 - JC has pulled 14 students and told them they were enrolling them with Penn Foster and that they would be done with their diplomas by the end of the month. We met with those students and explained that PF is not accredited by the state of NM and that they are still welcome to finish their diplomas with us at any time. Several of the students (6-7) refused to go the PF route and are still at school. John Rodarte expressed that Penn Foster is not good for NM – it doesn't serve the students, us or JC in the



long run. Mr. Bose expressed that it will be sad to not have the JC students at the school; they are great students, hard workers and really add to the culture of the school.

- We do not currently have a signed MOU with JC. Mr. Bose stated that he presented JC with a new MOU and asked specifically for it to be signed before this GC meeting so it could be approved. When he contacted JC for the signed document, it could not be found. The new MOU did contain clear language that any changes made by JC would be discussed through “clear communication” between JC, ABQCA and the student/s.
- John Rodarte inquired as to what would be in the best interest of ABQCA. Mr. Bose stated that losing JC students would hurt our numbers but that we would start taking more community students to fill the JC slots. Ten (10) student slots per week had been allotted for JC (which they were not meeting) and we have now limited it to 5 per week. We will offer the other 15 slots to community students and may not need to purchase a van.
- John Rodarte also asked if we can counsel JC students at orientation on matters regarding disenrollment. Ms. Roble stated that it is written in the student handbook that students are welcome back to ABQCA at any time if they leave JC; they just need to communicate with us. The school does initiate contact with students when they don’t show up for school.
- Rhonda Seidenwurm asked if JC was still asking to be on our board. They have expressed interest but have been told that there are currently no open positions. Ms. Roble told them when our meetings are held and that they are open meetings and include time for public comment.
- Mr. Bose stated that there is still furniture and computers at JC that belong to ABQCA. If we cannot get a signed MOU from them, we will make arrangements to pick up the equipment immediately.
- There will be an Open House at the school on Thursday, September 3rd at 5pm
- We are still currently working on our AdvancED Accreditation
- Building:
 - A new classroom and ancillary office space were created
 - Fencing around the school is being repainted
 - A new storage shed is being purchased for housing outdoor/landscaping equipment
 - We are looking at quotes for exhaust fans for the restrooms
- Staff:
 - Mr. Michael Mack started the Aspiring Principals Academy
 - We have found a social worker to contract with
 - A Dual Enrollment Coordinator position and 2 classes/day were created to support students who are about 70% complete with core classes
 - Sept. 4th will be an all-staff Professional Development day – we have created a more robust PD plan to meet PED’s requirements



3. Student Grade Data - handout from packet

- These test scores show what level this year's students are starting at – the levels that they tested at on the TABE
- GLE – Grade Level Equivalent (i.e. = 6.3 represents a 6th grade level, at the 3rd month of the year)
- The goal is that students achieve two (2) years of growth per every 10 months at the school
- Out of 177 students who tested in Math, 16 have tested at grade-level (HS); out of 185 students who tested for Reading, 83 are at a HS grade level
- The enclosed test scores are all from students who started with us this year; the next set of tests will show their progression

PUBLIC COMMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting will be held on September 15, 2015.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Evalynne Hunemuller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jacob Kennedy seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Rhonda Seidenwurm adjourned the meeting at 5:52 pm.