Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Financial Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

Location:
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy Charter School
326 Ruthar Drive
Newark, DE 19711
(302) 292-1463

November 21, 2011
Starting at 5:30 PM

In attendance: Paul Lloyd, Debbie Scanlan, Greg Panchisin, Melissa Bower, Jissell Martinez, Brian Arban, Terry Richard, Judith Pinto, and Margie López Waite

Meeting called to order with a quorum of attendees 5:50pm. Others filtered in late.

- Introduction of members to teacher attendee, Jeannie Pinto.
- Meeting minutes reviewed and approved. Noted revisions as followed:
  - "meeting" added to last page of meeting minutes after "December" in third bullet.
  - Second page revision under "Web Page Review" change "as mandated by Scot Kessel" to "as mandated by State Law"
  - Wording about transportation on the last page was changed to "as a result of not meeting service contract."
  - Motion made by Paul Lloyd to approve minutes, seconded by Greg Panchisin.

OLD BUSINESS
Audit Update:

- Question of independence from School Board raised by Margie.
- A point was raised that the actual selection of auditor has to be contracted by School Board as we have no power to contract and serve an advisory function to the Board.
- We are independent as far as our internal operations in choice of representatives, meetings, etc.
- Review of "Sample Request for Proposal- Audit Services" (document handed out)
- AOD actually has our "books" from the planning period of the school and will be brought in on the audit with us during the actual audit process. (Paul Lloyd)
  - Margie makes the point that our initial funding came from the "Federal Charter School Grant" and that she has the itemized expenses from the initial period. It was primarily her salary and the initial ICC.
  - The only time AOD got involved was when the school fell short in financing and that amount was added to the overall loan of money we (the school)owes AOD.
  - AOD is then a debtor and not a co-audit body. (Jissell, Margie, Debbie)
  - First year 2009 was funded by the federal grant (125,000). Subsequent year 2010 was funded by Longwood Grant $200,000. (Margie)
- IRS Form 990. Needs to be filed by the Corporate Board and not by the auditor.

By Law Update (Jissell and Brian)

- Blue box items on handout copy:
  - Half of Board serves 1 year term and half 3 year terms. 2 year renewable terms brought up by Debbie with the goal to not have complete turnover at any time.
  - Bill 416, 736 guides board composition and term for Financial Oversight Board (Debbie/Paul).
  - Membership total is 8 years according to state documentation. (4-2 year terms)

- Is it necessary to have a term section for "sub-committees"? (page 3)(Jissell). Paul makes the point that it is probably not necessary due to the short term nature of sub committees. Debbie further notes that no one can be on a committee after their board term.
- Removal of Officers: Posting requirements. Jissell will study what is necessary by law.
- Greg—do we need a ¾ vote instead of "a majority" to remove an officer?
- Jissell and Brian will provide final copy and we will vote ratify the by-laws at the December meeting.
- Note is made that we need a teacher representative and an additional community member to add to the Financial Oversight Committee. (Jissell) (Melissa will ask for interest in an additional parent representative, Margie will look for a teacher representative)

Staffing update

- Para positions (2) are being interviewed for.
- 1 teacher hired.

DDOE Financial Training Recap

- Great information, site was difficult to find.
- All attended except Melissa Bower.

NEW BUSINESS:
Monthly Financial Report Review (Deborah Scanlan)

- We will get reports from Data Service Center of Red Clay in PDF. It is "next day reporting" instead of end of the month. Some information will be "real time".
- Scott Kessell sent out a spread sheet to each of the charter schools that shows a projected balance for the end of the fiscal year. Noted that the state will be tracking financial status of each school. *Brand New* as of today.
    - Reflected incomplete reporting showing that each school needs to "fill in the blanks" so that individual reports are accurate.
    - School needs to supply a copy of our transportation contract to the transportation office (DOE).
    - There was a counting error of students. We were actually at a 303 census instead of a 304 as reflected in state numbers. The state was notified , but numbers are off as a result (Margie). Student subtraction from Capital School District
    - Our multiplier drops from17.99 to 17.93 with one less student.
    - Margie:" Do state numbers or our numbers more accurately reflect the true financial picture?" Debbie: "Since state numbers reflect averages, the school's individual status needs to be updated in each area to make it accurate."
    - Teacher credential s are currently being validated by "Verna" and should be done by December to be reflected in December report.
- Debbie and Greg have been double checking and re-coding individual category items in Expenditure Budget and have moved a number of items between categories. This is a work in progress.
- Note of "Shop Equipment" new this month—Needs to be reviewed by Greg.
- Paul notes high amount of "Obligated" in Building and Custodial Services.
- Once re-coding is complete, state money will likely be freed.
- Jissell asks where "Description Categories" come from. Debbie answers that it is a DOE template, which is why she further breaks it out into sub categories for purposes of clarity.

Final Budget Preparation (Paul Lloyd)

- Will be following a format that follows state codes as in Newark Charter example. More detail than is provided in current summaries is needed.
- Red Clay example is also a possibility and is generated from Data Service Center.

Other New Business:

- We need a "Financial Procedures Manual" as in the example provided by Newark Charter School.
- Debbie notes the omission of unit count procedures. It is a separate document (Margie).
- Paul suggests that we adapt the Newark Charter Example to meet our own needs and adopt it as such.
- Next meeting is December 19. We will wrap up the bylaws, vote for officers, and review a final budget.
- A resignation has been accepted from Administrative Assistant, Evelyn Diaz effective end of December. A strong bilingual person is needed to fill the position. (Margie)
- Meeting is adjourned at 7:30. (Paul)