

Career Academy of South Bend, Inc.  
Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors  
February 17, 2015

Directors Present: Larry Garatoni, Vivian Sallie, Thomas Coley, Suzanne Wiwi

Absent: Larry Davis, Jinny Longbrake, Tracy Graham

Staff Attending: Paul Schlottman, Chad Addie, Kim Richardson, Charles Loeser, others

Larry Garatoni called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm.

A. Student Presentation. A presentation was given by a group of students, led by physics/math teacher David Ebersol, who are participating in a major annual robotics competition (FIRST Robotics, <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/2015-game>). A student displayed the robot, which under remote control picked up and stacked boxes on a pallet, similar to a fork lift. Mr. Ebersol explained the device took six weeks to build, using CASB's tools, the students working 5pm – 9pm evenings and 9am – 9pm on Saturdays. The device worked well, and will be shown at a state competition in Kokomo.

B. Minutes of Prior Meeting. Vivian moved for approval of the minutes of the prior (January 20) meeting, Suzanne seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

C. Acuity Results. Lydia Jagger presented the results of Acuity testing completed in early February and the initial Acuity tests completed in November.

The Acuity tests for the Algebra I and English 10 End of Course Assessments showed good increases, particularly in Algebra, which was a significant problem last year. The percentage of students predicted as passing in Algebra rose from 39% in November to 48% in February, significantly better than the the 24.6% pass rate in 2013-14, although still needing improvement. The percentage predicted as passing English 10 rose from 49% in November to 53% in February, compared to the 47.7% pass rate last year.

For the Acuity tests for ISTEP, the tests are no longer predictive of ISTEP passing rates (Acuity for ISTEP tests are now "readiness" tests rather than predictive). More importantly, ISTEP passing rates this year cannot be compared with prior years since this year's tests will be substantially harder due to Indiana's new academic standards adopted in 2014, sometimes referred to as the "College And Career Readiness" ("CCR") standards.<sup>1</sup> It is generally agreed among educators that the harder ISTEP tests this year will result in significantly lower passing rates state-wide than in prior years. CASB's results show improvement from November to February for both English and math for grades 5-8, with two exceptions (Grade 6 math and Grade 7 English), but it appears that pass rates will be well below last year's.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/standards/assessmentandaccountabilityaug2014.pdf>.

Lydia outlined strategies the school is using to improve scores, including but not limited to the following:

- Test results are used to create individualized learning plans for each student
- All Algebra 1 and Geometry students have two math classes daily (120 min.) - (Alg. 1 / Alg. 1 Applied Math Lab; Geometry / Applied Geometry Lab)
- Students retaking ECA receive remediation daily
  
- English 10 students who need more support are pulled out of 9th period for work with a reading specialist in small groups three (3) days a week
- 7th & 8th graders needing more support are pulled out of 9th period for work with a Reading specialist two (2) days a week
- ISTEP practice tests are used to target students needing additional support
- Students are ability-grouped (using NWEA test results), and those needing more help are grouped into smaller classes.
- 5th and 6th grades have two ELA classes (Writing and Reading) daily (120 Min.)
- 5th and 6th grade students all received additional Math help during 9th period
- Student achievement data and academic vocabulary are posted in every classroom
- Students will take the test in smaller groups and will take practice tests

There is much that can be done to improve academic performance, and the school expects to see continued improvement, although the use of different tests this year will mean that improvement cannot be shown by comparison with prior years.

D. Building Purchase Update. Larry explained that the purchase of the new elementary school building, at 3408 Ardmore Trail, will be completed on February 18. The design of the new school is in process and there will be features improved from the current school, such as:

- There will be more space around the building for cars to line up for drop-off and pick-up.
- For pick-up, parents will be provided with electronic devices to attach to their cars so that school staff can read from a sensor what cars are next in line for pick-up and help get students lined up for efficient pick-up.
- There will be a low-frequency FM broadcast from the school so that parents can listen to school messages while waiting for pick-up

Larry explained what's being acquired is land and exterior walls: everything inside will be built from scratch, and there will be a new roof. There will be a new gymnasium built on a vacant lot next to the main lot, to be connected to the school building by a hallway. There will be many skylights and a lot of natural lighting. Paul commented that having the gym and auditorium on the northwest side will allow for use by neighborhood organizations. The school will benefit from having the Unity Gardens (<http://www.unitygardens.org/>) next door to the west and LaSalle branch of the St. Joseph County Public Library next door to the east.

E. Trine Application. Charles Loeser said he's almost finished with the application to Trine to become the authorizer for the school. That application will be filed before the end of February, and will also request that grades 9-12 be recognized as a high school with grades 5-8 to be recognized as a separate middle school. There will be a separate application for the new elementary school, which will use much of the material from the change-of-authorizer application but will require substantial additional information. That application will be filed in March or April as additional information on the new school becomes available.

F. Reactivating The Apprentice Academy. Paul explained that for the planned educational program for veterans, as discussed at the January meeting, the plan is to reactivate The Apprentice Academy, Inc. ("TAA") so that the adult education program is kept separate from CASB's K-12 operations. It had been decided in May of 2013 to close TAA after the grant that had funded its operations expired, but it is simple to reactivate a corporation, and the 501c3 approval for TAA, which was set up as principally an adult education program, is still valid. If the board members are willing, TAA will have the same board as CASB. This will be presented in more detail after the federal approval of the veterans program is received, which is expected to be soon. There will be a limited number of courses offered: welding, machine tooling, advanced manufacturing, information technology (including Microsoft, CISCO and CompTIA certification), and Autodesk engineering & design.

G. School Operations. Paul explained there have been two building improvements: installation of a window between the office and hallway to allow discussion with students without entering the office, and replacement of the cafeteria floor (removing carpet that was attractive but difficult to clean). Paul reported that recruitment of teachers for the new elementary school is going well: over 40 area teachers came to a presentation at the school, which lasted several hours in order to answer the many questions. Requisitions for unbudgeted items:

1. Yamaha digital piano (never needs tuning) - \$6,180
2. Technology Capital Projects:
  - a. CISCO Jabber (connects staff smartphones to school phone system to facilitate communication when staff member outside of school: \$6,617
  - b. CISCO Smartnet support renewal: \$6,785
  - c. Harmony server (required by LogicKey): \$8,536 (retail \$9,824)

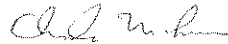
Tom moved that the technology purchases be approved, Suzanne seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. Tom asked if the piano is warranted, Paul said yes. Vivian moved that the purchase be approved, Suzanne seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

H. Financial Reports. Kim presented the claims paid/banking detail report for January 16 through February 9, noting that a new column has been added for tracking building and equipment payments for the new elementary school. Of the \$21,425 total, \$15,000 was for

the earnest money/downpayment for the Ardmore site building. Kim also presented the January financial statement, showing the January net earnings/loss roughly \$70,000 better than budget, fiscal year-to-date roughly \$850,000 better than budget. Suzanne moved that the financial reports be approved, Tom seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Comments/Question. Martin Lebbin, President of the Career Academy Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), responded to Paul's comments in his operations report about efforts to encourage more parent involvement, which is a major focus for the PTO. Paul said the school will call an all-parent meeting in coming months as to the charter for the elementary school.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.



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Charles Loeser, Assistant Secretary