

Career Academy of South Bend, Inc.
Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors
April 29, 2014

Directors Present: Larry Garatoni, Thomas Coley, Bruce Greenberg, Suzanne Wiwi
By Phone: Vivian Sallie (& Steve Hartz, Director Emeritus)
Absent: Tracy Graham, James Summers
Staff Attending: Paul Schlottman, Ken Horvath, Charles Loeser, Sarah Fine, others

A. Call To Order And Student Presentations. Larry Garatoni called the meeting to order at 5:35 and explained that Paul is introducing student presentations to be a feature of meetings.

Paul asked student Tavion Mitchem to tell the board about his experience at SBCA. Tavion said he's a sophomore in his second year at SBCA. He had been unhappy at a prior intermediate school and briefly tried home-schooling. His SBCA experience has been "off the charts" – much better than any prior school, the biggest factor is how much the teachers care.

Student Ariella Witt had been scheduled to speak but could not attend, so Paul asked Sarah Fine to tell the board about Ariella's experience. Sarah said Ariella, who's a senior, had been at a private school and came to SBCA after her father, for whom she'd been the primary care-taker during a long illness, passed away. It was a difficult time for her emotionally, and she felt alienated from her other school. At SBCA she found a caring atmosphere and has thrived. She has a full-ride scholarship to Franciscan University.

B. Minutes of Prior Meeting. Suzanne moved for approval of the minutes of the March 23 meeting, Bruce seconded, and the minutes were approved 5-0.

C. School Operations - Schlottman.

1. Presentations and Updates.

a. Positive Approach to Teen Health presentation. Paul introduced Donna Golob, Executive Director of A Positive Approach to Teen Health, a Valparaiso-based nonprofit organization which offers pregnancy prevention and anti-bullying programs for teens, <http://www.pathblazer.org/>. Jamie Bower, a PATH educator, showed a video about teen pregnancy and described her experience. The programs have been reviewed in the Journal of Adolescent Health.

b. Graduation. Sarah Fine described plans for SBCA's graduation ceremony on June 14. There are ten seniors expected to graduate. Several plan to complete graduation requirements in summer school. There are four seniors who are ineligible, not having completed Core 40 requirements and/or passed ECA requirements; they will be offered summer school and the opportunity to return in the fall. There are also 19 seniors enrolled at SBCA and attending The Crossing, of whom six are expected to graduate. The published data for SBCA will include Crossing students, and the IDOE data will show a low graduation rate for SBCA. Vivian asked about student plans for after graduation. Sarah said only 1 of the expected graduates is undecided. Three have been accepted at 4-year colleges.

c. Student Discipline. Bart Foster presented a chart showing student discipline incidents in all categories dropping significantly from the first semester to the second. He attributes that to good relationships. Bruce asked if it's a factor that some students are gone. Paul said yes but fewer than five.

d. Addition of Fifth and Sixth Grades. Paul reported this has been verbally approved by BSU.

2. Proposals for discussion and approval.

a. Direct marketing. Paul presented a media plan for May-July prepared by Great River Creative with total cost of \$10,090. Bruce commented it seems targeted to parents more than students. Paul said students are encouraged to invite friends to visit, which is crucial, since roughly 90% of those who visit decide to enroll. Upon motion made and seconded, the marketing expenditure was approved 5-0.

b. Purchase of computers. Paul explained it's no longer possible to do standardized testing by pen & paper, the IDOE requires computerized testing. Roger Johnson explained the proposal for purchase of roughly \$30,000 in computers as per the documents distributed before the meeting will not be pursued; instead, he will repair existing machines (mostly by adding memory) to enable them to be used for testing, which will cost about \$1,000. But this is a temporary solution; it will be necessary to buy new computers for the 2014-15 school year, at a cost of roughly \$60,000. Vivian asked if the current \$1,000 expenditure is covered in the budget. Ken said yes, so no expenditure authorization is needed.

c. School calendar. Tami Collins presented a modification to the 2014-15 school calendar. Early dismissal days for professional development have been moved to mid-week. There are still 190 instructional days, as required by the charter. Suzanne moved for approval, Dr. Coley seconded, the motion passed 5-0.

d. Internet Use Policy. Paul presented the proposed Acceptable Use Policy for staff (Section III, pages 1-5, and Section V, pages 6-11) and students (Sections IV-V, pages 5-11). Bruce asked if it is stated that emails are the property of the school. Paul said yes, it is quite clear that there is no expectation of privacy in emails on the school's system (Section V-H, page 11). Dr. Coley asked how students are informed. Paul said it is made clear in the student handbook which every student receives (and signs as accepting) at the start of the school year. Cheri Shuster said this is also covered in a presentation to students at the start of the year. Sue moved that the policy be approved, Bruce seconded, the motion was approved 5-0.

e. Summer School Proposal. Paul explained SBCA's summer school program will focus on mediation in the most-needed subjects, particularly Algebra, biology, English, and history. There will be a three week session for high school beginning June 23 and a four-week session for middle school beginning a week later.

f. Expulsion Appeals. Paul informed the board that under Indiana law, the governing body of a school is required to conduct hearings on expulsion appeals unless the board has previously voted not to hear such appeals, see IC 20-33-8-19(d)(1)(B) and (f). Paul recommended that the board vote not to hear such appeals and instead allow him, as Superintendent, to make final decisions on expulsions. Bruce asked how do most schools handle this. Paul said most schools authorize the superintendent to decide, without appeals to the governing body. Larry asked how many expulsions there have been since Paul came to SBCA in January. Paul said there have been two: Bart Foster presents the evidence and Paul acts as the decision-maker. Bruce moved that the board not hear expulsion appeals and instead authorize Paul to make final decisions. Sue seconded and the motion was approved 5-0.

D. Recruitment/Retention Update. Paul distributed the recruitment update prepared by Chad Addie. There have been 76 student inquires since early February, resulting in 25 registrations and five who are already attending. A survey of SBCA students in early April indicates roughly 50 siblings will be attending SBCA in grades 5-7 in the fall. Turnout at the April 25-26 open house was excellent (25 families).

Paul reported the most recent count is that there are 253 students attending SBCA. This is a reduction from the February Count Day, but a drop as the year progresses is common.

E. Financial Review. Ken explained the March financial statement was more favorable than budgeted by about \$18,000 due to a grant which had not been budgeted, but April will be less favorable since the budget assumed reimbursement from the State for book purchases which will not be received. Ken said he did not believe there would be other significant variances from the budget between now and June 30. Bruce asked if additional cash would be needed before June 30. Ken said yes, this will be addressed in May, the procedure has been that advances from Larry are requested quarterly. Suzanne asked if the enrollment target of 400 is reached in the fall if that will significantly reduce the need for additional funding. Ken said yes, the key is staffing ratios, it is projected that the current ratio of roughly 7:1 will be at 12:1 if the target is reached; that would not be enough to break even operationally, but the shortfall would be greatly reduced. Ken said he believes the operational breakeven point is roughly 600 students. Bruce moved for approval of the financial statement and the claims paid/bank detail, Vivian seconded, the motion was approved 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.



Vivian Sallie, Secretary