

**Create Academy
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 20, 2017
5:00 p.m. Public Session
Create Academy Multi-Purpose Room**

1. Attendance

- a. **Members present:** J. Jackson, A. Pinholster, B. Forst, V. Sidy, J. Pinholster
- b. **Members absent:** None.
- c. **School staff present:** K. Horn – Principal, Tebble Dickerson – Assistant Principal, Erin Smith – 1st Grade, Brunella Provvidente – community outreach, Nydia Perdomo – business manager, Ruth Tejada – 3rd grade, John Meglino – 4/5th grade math/science, Sabrina Delgado – teaching assistant 2/3rd, Nury Perez – teaching assistant, Alexandra Atondo – 4/5th ELA/social studies

2. Call to order: 5:14pm

3. Call to the public: A call to the public was made.

- a. Nydia Perdomo spoke about the sponsorship of families for the holidays. Sign up sheet was circulated. Nine students remain that needs sponsors. Presents should be at the school by 12/15, wrapped and labeled. Staff is also providing turkey or ham to each family.
- b. Alexander and Elka Hristov, guests from Dancesport Education, discussed their December 17 gala. Non-profit organization. Description of program and instructors given. Working on proposal with local donor for school-wide program. Materials distributed.

4. Approval of the minutes: J. Pinholster to approve the minutes from October 17 meeting. V. Sidy seconded. Unanimously approved.

5. BOARD PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS:

- a. J. Jackson introduced discussion agenda for the meeting.

6. PRESENTATIONS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Governance Committee report

i. Strategic Plan

- 1. Discussion and decision on major points of strategic plan

- a. J. Jackson updated staff and public in attendance on current phase of strategic planning.
 - b. J. Jackson clarified that there would not be a formal vote of adoption on the strategic plan at this meeting.
 - c. K. Horn introduced his presentation on the strategic plan and described the process of setting long-term goals and working back toward the present from there.
 - d. K. Horn presentation: (PPT appended below)
 - i. Strategic Initiative #1: Academic Excellence
 - ii. Strategic Initiative #2: Outstanding Teachers
 - iii. Strategic Initiative #3: Community
 - iv. Strategic Initiative #4: Plant, Operational, Financial Security
 - v. Strategic Initiative #5: Advancement
 - vi. Strategic Initiative #6: Leadership
 - e. A. Pinholster suggested that Initiative #2 be amended to be “Outstanding Teachers & Staff”
 - f. K. Horn suggested adding specifics about developing leadership positions (e.g. operations manager) to Initiative #6
2. Discussion and decision regarding addition of 6th grade for 2018-19 school year
- a. J. Jackson introduced the topic and asked for input from the attending staff
 - b. Staff responses:
 - i. A. Atondo: very excited about the idea of expanding, but curious about classroom space.
 - ii. J. Meglino: in favor of 6th grade because K-6 is a cohesive structure and provides a better grade transition to another school.
 - iii. J. Meglino: moving teachers around and allowing students to see teachers in multiple contexts elevates a school.

- iv. R. Tejada: supportive due to ability to accommodate 23 current 5th graders in their ability to remain at Create Academy.
 - v. N. Perdomo: in favor of adding 6th based on growth in 5th grade, good relationship with those families, who have been asking about the possibility of 6th as well as inquiries from potential enrollees.
 - vi. S. Delgado: the school isn't ready yet for this additional grade, should have every child at appropriate level before adding new grades.
 - vii. E. Smith: spoke about progress made with current students in 4th and 5th grade.
 - viii. N. Perez: spoke about nature of at-home support of education.
- c. V. Sidy inquired as to whether 4/5 would continue to be combined next year. K. Horn responded that due to size of 5th grade, that would be unlikely.
 - d. B. Forst inquired how many students would be necessary from a financial perspective to justify expansion. K. Horn responded that 10 students would be sufficient.
 - e. K. Horn addressed concern from S. Delgado about bringing all students up to level before expansion by discussing impact of continuity on development and effect of transferring schools has on students.
 - f. K. Horn addressed complexities of expansion and demand upon staff, relationship with SySTEM Phoenix, transportation, etc.
 - g. A. Pinholster added context to the decision in regards to existing expansion of staff and improvements made in the past year.
 - h. J. Jackson spoke about timeline for decision-making on this issue, in regards to cancellation of December board meeting in favor of a retreat. He asked for feedback on this idea.

- i. V. Sidy inquired about timeline for families of 5th grade students making decisions about next year.
 - j. K. Horn reported that letters were sent home with 5th grade students, and 12 responded positively that they would continue enrollment next year if available.
3. Discussion and decision regarding physical plant expansion.
- a. V. Sidy inquired about the impact of waiting until January on possibility of renovating upstairs. K. Horn indicated that January would still work for renovation.
 - b. K. Horn spoke about possibility of moving to another facility and indicated that he did not feel that this was an advisable decision, based on disruption to students.
 - c. J. Jackson indicated that he believed our wisest course was to maintain a partnership relationship with the Charter School Development Corporation while exploring possibility of buying out the remaining lease.
 - d. J. Pinholster discussed nature of this facility as becoming iconic and recognizable in the greater community.
 - e. K. Horn reported that renovation of upstairs conducted by CSDC would cost \$350,000, resulting in \$3000/mo increase to rent and five additional classrooms
 - f. V. Sidy inquired as to possibility of completing renovations via other contractors through a responsible bidding process.
 - g. J. Jackson encouraged K. Horn to discuss need for competitive bids in the renovation process.
 - h. B. Forst reported that in previous meeting with CSDC, the option of alternative contractors was met with approval by CSDC.
 - i. K. Horn discussed additional factors regarding use of renovated upstairs.
 - j. V. Sidy inquired about financial impact of full build out of full enrollment for all five additional classrooms. K. Horn

discussed possibility of adding multiple classrooms of existing grade levels.

- k. J. Jackson discussion of other options in regards to upstairs level, including no change, portable classroom addition.
- l. V. Sidy inquired about due diligence regarding portable addition. J. Jackson responded that this would be complete before vote in January.
- m. J. Pinholster inquired about utilities, IT, and other costs for renovation and requested that information be available before January retreat.
- n. B. Forst, A. Pinholster, and V. Sidy: added additional requests for information to be made available pre-decision, including multiple scenarios for classroom use, data on surrounding neighborhood, impact of payments on eventual purchase of facility, quotes/estimates on refinancing for immediate purchase of facility, possibility of appraisal in near future.
- o. K. Horn reported on his discussion with financing organizations. General discussion on financing processes and timing followed.
- p. J. Jackson requested that K. Horn provide multiple options for renovation and financing for January retreat.
- q. V. Sidy discussed possibility of donors for making permanent improvements to facility.

ii. Board membership discussion

1. Decision on new board members

- a. Candidate under discussion was unable to attend meeting due to a personal emergency.
- b. J. Jackson reported that two other board candidates are in development.

iii. Future meeting dates

- 1. All members reported availability for January 6.

2. A. Pinholster moved to cancel December meeting in favor of January 6th retreat. B. Forst seconded. Unanimously approved.
3. Discussion of moving board meetings from Monday to Thursday, beginning January 18^{th, 2018}. Decision was made to move to Thursday. No vote required.

b. Principal's report: Report appended below.

- i. Enrollment
- ii. Staffing updates
- iii. Parent engagement
- iv. Facilities
- v. Discussion:
 1. J. Pinholster requested that K. Horn get approval to move away from Spanish classes to music and PE from the State Board for Charter Schools in writing.
 2. V. Sidy inquired about impact of basketball court on parking lot.
 3. Discussion with staff in attendance of proposed change in schedule.

c. Academic Committee report

- i. A. Pinholster reported that the Academic Committee met the previous week to discuss benchmark exams with a full report forthcoming in January.

d. Finance Committee report

- i. Financial dashboard
 1. B. Forst discussed changes to dashboard.
 2. B. Forst reported that accounts are projected to be cash positive for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- ii. Audit summary
 1. K. Horn reported that the audit has been completed successfully with no material findings.

e. Development Committee report

- i. Holiday Market
 1. K. Horn, J. Pinholster, A. Pinholster, and B. Provvidente met two weeks ago to discuss and plan.
 2. Holiday Market will be December 16th. 8:30am – 4:00pm

- a. Snow in playground; Community/Arts market – vendor registration open; Roosevelt Row sent to First Friday vendors; Entertainment: Need a collective slate (DJ is a parent); Kids performance;
 - b. Largely an external community development event, but we will have a 50/50 raffle; A. Pinholster is coordinating mystery presents
 - c. K. Horn successfully acquired special event permitting
 - d. Please coordinate ideas or connections of in-kind donations to A. Pinholster
- ii. Future philanthropic endeavors
 - iii. A. Pinholster reported that we will receive \$38 from the Box Tops for Education program in December and encouraged all present to contribute box tops for the next round.
 - iv.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION: EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES ON RECORD IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT.

- a. A. Pinholster introduced a motion to move into executive session to discuss the 90-day performance review of the Principal. B. Forst seconded.
- b. Executive session began at 7:20pm.
- c. Returned from executive session at 7:59pm.

8. ADJOURN: V. Sidy moved to adjourn. B. Forst seconded. Unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7:59m.

9. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 16 Holiday Market, 8:30am – 4:00

Principal's Report November 2017

Student Engagement:

- i. Total enrollment as of November 15, 2017 is 134 (detailed enrollment metrics attached).
- ii. Coffee with Kelly at 9:00 a.m. on November 30 is scheduled introduce new Strategic Plan.
- iii. Fall Festival was Friday, November 17, and targeted current families in a casual, school- centered family event (retention and promotion of Create). Over 200 were in attendance including several prospective families and one family from the neighborhood.

Facilities/Finance/Personnel:

Updated cash flow analysis continues to project positive cash flow through year end, even with modest ADM projection.

Flooring restoration in admin/cafeteria/5th grade and base throughout school is complete.

CA is hosting a second "Town Hall Meeting" on December 6 at 6:30 p.m. with the neighborhood, City officials, SRP representation and potentially FEMA to discuss the larger scope of the Foote Addition flooding issue.

Create will host two student teachers in the spring. One will work in the Special Education Department and the other will work in 3rd Grade. They represent Rio Salado College and Grand Canyon University.

Create's Spanish teacher is relocating the end of November due to her spouse's job transfer. The school will implement a music and PE program to replace the Spanish curriculum for the remainder of the year.

Teaching and Learning:

The second round of benchmark testing is complete.

All teachers have completed their first observation in line with the new evaluation cycle.

Theater in residence program is preparing for mini exhibitions for the Holiday market.

Dancing in the classrooms brings professional ballroom dancers into the third grade each week.

Presently reviewing options for a shorter school day and more reliable bus transportation in partnership with SySTEM for next year.