



Da Vinci Schools Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2010

OPEN SESSION: Meeting called to order at 7:52a.m.

Board Members Present:

Chet Pipkin, President; Don Brann, Vice President; Cheryl Cook, Secretary; Gary Wayland, Treasurer

Administration Present:

Dr. Matt Wunder, Executive Director; Dr. Nicole Tempel, Principal; Dr. Tom Johnstone, Wiseburn Superintendent; Colleen O'Boyle, Academic Dean

Visitors Present:

Linda Cuesta, Stand-in Secretary; Marshall Vallelunga, Da Vinci Parent; Melanie Franco, Da Vinci Parent

MINUTES

September 9, 2010 minutes unanimously approved.

FROM THE PUBLIC

- Marshall Vallelunga -
 - Asked if the Board could determine the dates for future Board Meetings so they can be placed on everyone's schedules ahead of time and would like to be included on the email correspondence.

INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD & STAFF

- Cheryl Cook - Da Vinci has kicked off its Annual Giving Campaign. She spoke at Family Association Meeting earlier this month to help promote it. They have already collected \$15,000 from teachers and staff. Carla is doing excellent job. Last year they only had about a 35 % participation from families but are pushing for 100% this year
- Last year's Giving Campaign brought in \$40,000
- Colleen O'Boyle - Thinks back-to-school should be earlier than what it was this year and should have more student involvement. Students could serve as guides.
- Don Brann -
 - Because we are dealing with families of various socioeconomic status, the message to get out is to donate what is comfortable for them
 - During this academic year, the school needs to plan on having Back to School night earlier
 - Discussed the movie "Waiting on Superman". He recommends all teachers and board members see it. Focus of movie - meeting the unmet needs of people in regards to children's' education.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Financial Report and Unaudited Financials (Gary & Matt)

- New budget built based on 665 students
 - Scheduled to receive:
 - \$297per student for an ADA total of \$193,000 -out of the state budget
 - Tier 3 money for a total of \$103,000. (offered to charter schools- categorical funding by the state)
 - \$90,000 federal jobs money
 - Should receive approximately a sum total of \$300,000 for this year
- The school lost a little over \$100,000 by not making enrollment for 10th grade
- Original estimate \$650/student, built on 95% enrollment. Now looking at \$697 per student
- Planned putting away \$100,000 away for 5 years, for Special Education. However, this area is fully funded and the school recaptured this money
- Gary - The Audit report is scheduled to come out in mid-December
- Chet - Spending needs to remain lean. There is no guaranteed that the school will actually receive \$297 per student. He's also heard that bond money is very constricted this year



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Bond Campaign Update (Tom J.)

- Bond campaign had a very successful walk two weeks ago and again this weekend.
- Ernesto (bond consultant being used by WSD) states that to date 115 people have voted by mail (that's about 90%). Ernesto's strategy is to fight complacency; we have to get everyone out to vote.
- The WSD has about a 52 % Latino student population. Da Vinci also has about the same amount. Traditionally the Latino populations haven't voted in large numbers so the school district is targeting this group through having bbq's at the upcoming AYSO soccer games and mailers

Enrollment Update (Matt)

- Current enrollment is 673
The breakdown consists of:
 - 9th Grade = 269
 - 10th Grade = 349
 - 11th Grade = 56
- Lost more 10th graders than expected. May see an increase in 10th graders due to one of the ISEF schools closing its doors
- Currently in the process of hiring a new 11th grade humanities teacher since Colleen was promoted to Academic Dean
- Having difficulty getting a true demographic breakdown since students are able to claim more than one ethnicity.
The current breakdown is:
 - African American: 22%
 - Asian/Pacific Islander: 4%
 - Hispanic: 52%
 - White: 22 %
- 49 % students qualify for free and reduced lunch this year; this is a reduction from last year
- If we know we're going be down in enrollment (due to factors beyond the schools control) by 8 % to 10% annually should we plan to front load the 9th grade enrollment or just calculate this into the overall enrollment numbers?
- Losing students may affect the ability to attract future applicants
- Need an exit interview that asks families why they are leaving the school
- We lost more kids in Design than Science. Feels it's because they didn't clearly define what the Design school was all about and because of the loss of teachers. (Matt)
- Gary would like to know the projected numbers for enrollment for next year. If we have the same decrease in numbers next year, like this year, it will be devastating.
- Chet requested for the next meeting, specifics on how many students we are expecting to lose and a plan to prevent it

Annual Giving Campaign (Matt)

- This agenda item was covered by Cheryl and Matt in the **Information from Board and Staff** section of minutes

Strategic Planning Update (Matt)

- Has a leadership team and external processing team working simultaneously on two strategic plans
- Plan is to collect data and reconvene when there is more concrete information
 - Chet feels Matt is a brilliant strategic planner - created new layout for Dana, and created Da Vinci.
 - Strategic planning needs to be lead by the CEO in order for it to work
 - The Board may have to slightly adjust what Matt comes up with (like how to get other stake holders on board)



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Sports Program (Matt)

- Matt spoke to a parent from Dana who'd like his kids to attend Da Vinci but feels the downside is the lack of a sports program
- Currently have a flag football team that will be competing with Crossroads, New Roads, Wild Woods, New Community Jewish High School, and Vista Mar
- Will be presenting the board with a proposal requesting the start of a soccer and girls volley ball team

Flex K-8 model & Coastal Academy (Matt)

- Per the WSD/Da Vinci petition and state law we are required to serve students in a K-8 program

Why Are We Doing This?

To continue a positive relationship with WSD; seek to serve students in the WSD elementary and middle school we would not otherwise serve; wish to extend current schools into a high school with a PBL approach; provide personalized flexible education; offer responsive, replicable education delivery model that make families lives work well

What Families Will We Serve?

Homeschoolers, military families; families with nontraditional work hours (police officers, firefighters, pro athletes, and performers); advanced learners; struggling students; homebound children; students who require more enrichment opportunities; and families the WSD currently does not serve

The Flex Program Schedule

- Design Track A: blended program – field trip on Monday; at school on Tuesdays & Thursdays; at home on Wednesdays and Fridays
- Science Track B: blended program – field trip on Monday; at school on Wednesday & Fridays; at home on Tuesdays & Thursdays
- 3rd School Track C: work at home 4 out of 5 days. Weekly participation in optional programs on campus

Teacher's who work a Flex Schedule

- Get an entire day to prepare for weeks worth of coursework. Keeps total class size down and financial load down
- Independent study model is the amount of work produced not the amount of time spent “in school”

What We Are Not

- Your traditional neighborhood school; a 5-day program; the right type of school for parents who want the school to carry the entire burden of educating; a hands-off experience

Also Proposed

- Optional User-Pay Services (i.e. extended day/non-instructional childcare)
- Blended Model for Track A (Design) & Track B (Science)
- Enrollment & Staffing Projections for 3rd School (Independent Study Model) – serving 90 students total

Facilities

Design K-8 Track A & Science K-8/Track B would need 3 classrooms first year

Budget

ADA revenue per student for all three tracks projected at \$4900.

Why Open 3rd school?

New opportunity to serve a new population of K-8 students; folds Design and Science K-8 students into 3rd school, and may bring in more revenue to support DV schools

Timeline & Next Steps

Need to be ready internally before moving forward. If the Board approves next step is to prepare for focus group and survey



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Discussion and concerns:

- WSD not legally able to charter a high school because it doesn't serve these grades; the way around this it to go for a K-12 school.
- Do we have the demographics on who wants this? In the past, we have never been able to get the home school families to become a part of the school because they are outside the "system".
- Do we have information on numbers of homeschool children in California?
- Most families are two income families. Students may not have someone at home on the two days
- Matt - Before being able to have answers, research on the viability of this option needs to be completed; would like to use Neil Goldman for qualitative research.
- Chet- If we learn there isn't a market we don't proceed, if there is one we proceed.
- Need a total of \$10,000 between now and end of year; of which \$6,000 will be spent for focus group and survey. Also to attend conferences. Not doable by next month but should be able to have a report available by the end of December.
- Facilities are a big concern.
- Nicole - CAVA academies enrolling about 4,000 students. Many families looking for something different. We need to address and share the burden with those families that want to do home school.

Action Item

Motion to approve expenditures up to \$10,000 and have Matt report his findings to the board no later than Dec. 31.

- **Gary approved motion with the following amendment:**

To include feasibility and if it will solve the Boards' concerns.

- **Cheryl seconded**

1 nay (Brann); 4 approved; motion carries.

Design Symposium (Matt)

- Last Thursday the Design students went to Belkin, Gensler, Getty Villa, Otis College & Design, and Northrop to explore what "design" means and how it gets used in real life application
- After the event students were polled on a scale from 1 – 9 (1 being the lowest, 9 being the highest). They answered consistently with 9's & 10's. The students particularly enjoyed Gensler, Belkin and Otis
- The second day of the symposium consisted of Belkin designers, along with Diane Levitt, leading the kids in a product (backpacks) redesign challenge
- Chet - Heard that the visit was a real positive experience for everyone at the corporation

Rigor, Math & Academic Excellence Program (Colleen)

- Held an informative and educational workshop about Da Vinci's academic plan, core vision, college requirements and anxiety in math on October 5th. Also discussed future goals: college, career and beyond
- Important to make sure we are meeting PBL objectives; applying learning to real work
- Created an Academic Seminar for all entering students who previously had academic difficulties
- Non-track environment creates divide between those on high end from those on the low end. Teachers have to understand that one lecture will not reach all. Goal is to strengthen critical thinking
- Showed where Edutopia.Org has evidence that students who participate in PBL classes outscore their peers who received a traditional typical textbook lecture driven approach.
- We have to assure academic transcript is sound, and that transferring students are on-track (internships, symposiums, etc.)
- Predicators: HS Grades, rank (Da Vinci not doing); core courses; admissions test, SAT 1
- Supplemental achievement predicators (more than on transcript): HS honors, community achievement, athletic achievement, leadership, creative achievement
- Da Vinci academic requirements: DV goes beyond the UC "a-g" requirements. Strongly encourage students take a minimum of 2 college classes
- Students meeting the UC "a-g" requirements are eligible to apply to UC's and CSU's. UC schools don't see transcript until accepted. Really need 4 years + of coursework



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- “Honors” courses aligns with more traditional schools that offer AP courses. If we offer “honor” classes they need to include more in-depth critical thinking aspects
- The Digital Portfolio Defense is a great learning tool
- Need to expose our students to the different “careers” by offering summer programs and internships. Goal for this year is to establish a one week internship immersion program.
- Will also go over college and financial aid applications
- DV offers Naviance/tcci – a program that helps “match” students
- College night scheduled for all three classes (9th, 10th, & 11th) - mandatory for parents and students to attend
- Don –
 - The drop out issue is more complex than the school being impersonal and too large. Need to find why students leave DV so it can be addressed and lessened; need feedback from people we’re serving
 - At the next meeting would like an update on the progress of the creation of internships for the juniors
 -

Jury Duty and Family Leave Policies (Matt/Tom J.)

- Da Vinci doesn’t currently have a Family Leave Policy in place. Suggestion that employees use the days they have accrued
- Chet- the Board should explore WSD and other charter schools general policies then modify it to suit our needs. Should go leaner and add to it if needed.
- Tom J. –
 - Some districts have used personal necessity days (sick leave). Other districts offer a 10 day/year policy.
 - Under AB 109 employees can receive up to six additional days of accrued and available sick leave as kin care leave.
 - Suggestion to offer teachers 10 – 15 days off. Could use accumulated days from last year.
 - Established that personal necessity days do not cover jury duty.
- Don - We should have policies that match as close to those of the WSD in the event the schools merge

ACTION ITEM

1. Approve Ume Works for consulting on website and graphic design work at \$50/hr, not to exceed \$8,200.
2. Approve Maria Patino to move to Step 2 Academic Coach from \$12.00/hr to \$15.00/hr.
3. Approve hiring of three academic coaches at Step 1 \$12/hr

CLOSED SESSION

Adjourn to closed session: 10:55 a.m.

UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

Oct. 20th -22nd - Student Led Conferences
Oct. 25th – 29th - Spirit Week
Nov. 3rd & 4th - College Visit Day
Nov. 17th & 18th - Exhibition Nights
Nov. 22nd – 26th - Thanksgiving Break
Next Board Meeting – Friday, Nov.19th at 8:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

11:55 a.m.