



**Da Vinci Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2009**

Open Session

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Board Members Present:

Chet Pipkin, President
Don Brann, Vice President
Gary Wayland, Treasurer (by phone)
Cheryl Cook, Secretary
Art Lofton, Trustee

Staff Present:

Matt Wunder, Executive Director
Tom Johnstone, Wiseburn District Superintendent
Tom Cox, Wiseburn Chief Business Official
Nicole Temple, Principal

Visitors Present:

Susan Andriacchi, Recording Secretary
Marshall Vallelunga, Da Vinci Parent
Cheryl Gourgouris, Richstone Family Center
Jean Campbell, Vistamar School

Motion to approve minutes from September 14 and August 10.
First: Brann; Second: Cook, Motion carries.

Information from the Public

- Marshall Vallelunga registered Da Vinci Science and Design for the LA County Science and Engineering Fair.

Information from the Board

- Don Brann:
 - Da Vinci Science had one day with 100% attendance; shows the kids are engaged.
 - Reviewed "Da Vinci Code," there are items related to student attendance and grading that he would like to discuss at a future meeting.
- Art Lofton: Bob McNulty, Northrop Grumman Human Resources, had a tour of Da Vinci and was impressed with the schools.
- Gary Wayland expressed thanks to Northrop Grumman for all of their help.
- Tom Johnstone is already getting phone calls inquiring about tours of Wiseburn schools, will include tours of Da Vinci.

Discussion Items

Richstone Family Center – Cheryl Gourgouris

- Richstone provides mental health interventions for children and families.
- Richstone has been involved in school-based mental health services for over 20 years; provides services at Dana.
- Will provide a dedicated therapist 4 hours per week, interviewing right now, Da Vinci staff will be involved in final selection.



- Three levels of services: school counseling; therapy provided by Richstone, referrals to higher level psychiatric services if needed.
- SELPA has supported Da Vinci by providing counseling services 3-4 hours per week for students with special needs, but they would prefer Da Vinci hire its own counselors.

School Counselor – Jean Campbell

- Counselor at Vistamar, Brianna Shepard, employed 70% or seven half days per week.
- Proposal that she work another 30% (3 half days per week) at Da Vinci.
- Vistamar will pay her salary and benefits, then charge Da Vinci for her time worked but not for benefits (3 working weeks per month, \$2500; 4 working weeks per month \$3300).
- Draft contract was distributed.
- Vistamar insurance covers their staff and students presence at all Wiseburn schools, because students do so many community service projects.
- Allocated \$16k in budget for counseling; proposal from Vistamar is slightly over that.
- Intention is to employ her 100% at Vistamar next year; so the contract is flexible.
- Costs are based on \$70 per hour, which is the LA County rate; bringing in an independent contractor would cost significantly more.
- Board is supportive, but wants to see more details.
- Gary Wayland will work with Matt Wunder and Jean Campbell to get the paperwork ready for the next meeting.
- Next steps: CSSA will have to approve the contract; in-person or telephone meeting for the Board's approval?

Staff Update – Nicole Tempel

- So much energy was expended at the beginning of the year, teaching staff is tired; will take a week off for Thanksgiving.
- 100% attendance was achieved on several days.
- Teachers who didn't make the earlier visit to High Tech High will visit Thursday, Oct 8.

Early College Update – Matt Wunder (see handout)

- Economic reasons for Early College program - there is a gap between high school and college especially for economically disadvantaged students; it's an issue of social justice.
- According to Dr. Elder this kind of program has already been implemented in CA.
- The closest example of a similar early college program is the Hart District, where high school is located on the same campus as college.
- Strengths:
 - Without a collective bargaining agreement, Da Vinci is able to offer more classes.
 - Experienced staff, Nicole Tempel and Sue Beauregard.
 - Make college more accessible and affordable for students from lower income families.
- Threats:
 - Stress on resources being spread too thin.
 - Transferability of courses, especially for 9th graders.



- Weaknesses:
 - Expensive.
 - AA degree means no internship/senior project.
 - Space restrictions.
- College/University Partners – West LA College
 - Free courses before and after school, not geared for classes during the day.
 - Because it's publicly funded they have to open it to the public, willing to work with us to make sure Da Vinci students get enrolled
 - Middle management supports the partnership, but president's opinion is unknown.
- Disclaimers and Full-Disclosures
 - Any grade in a college course is permanent!
 - Transferability – courses may only transfer as electives.
 - 2 year AA may not mean that only 2 years are left for a bachelor's degree.
 - Schedule is too rigorous for student to complete senior project/internship.
- Goal has changed from getting an AA degree to taking transferable units, showing kids that college courses are something they can do.
- Dr. Brann - tailor Da Vinci's programs to our environment; we have great corporate partners, so shift focus to real-world experience through internships.
- Staff will survey the kids to ascertain how many students are interested in the college courses before they set up the program.
- Chet Pipkin recommends adding a net promoter question (brand loyalty to determine future growth) at the end of the survey; questions are there, but answers have to be on a 1-10 scale in order for it to work.
- Recommendations
 - Work with El Camino, West LA College and National University
 - Write grants for EC administrator to handle records, scheduling, communication.
 - Have students sign contract.
- Next Steps:
 - Would it be better for students to have only 2 early college providers, which would mean less paperwork?
 - Board needs to decide which provider to use – El Camino or West LA? Contract with El Camino was approved to be signed at the last meeting.
 - Too many questions: how many students are interested? Will West LA be unhappy if we sign the agreement with El Camino?
 - Survey data will be available October 6th.
 - Direction from Board – investigate the West LA option.

New School Acquisition – Don Brann

- Working closely with Wiseburn staff to make sure there are no surprises; postpone report.

Northrop Grumman Innovation Lab – Art Lofton

- The lab will be organized into centers, each with its own mentor.



- Will use the latest technology including touch screens.
- Portable lab, set up with trade show style truss kits.
- Aggressive timeline - open in December 2009.
- Next steps: storage area, network backup, final design/budget approval.
- Over 300 hours of time volunteered by Northrop Grumman employees to date.

Student and Organizational Metrics – Matt Wunder

- Postpone this discussion until next meeting.

Facility Plan – Tom Cox

- Facility will be used to maximum with additional 240 students next year.
- Plan includes 6 portable classrooms, bringing the total to 27 rooms.
- Two areas to be converted: old science and homemaking rooms convert to 3 science rooms, teacher lounge convert to classroom.
- Challenge as to where to put 6 portables, propose putting them along the southeast corner; don't need a long lead time to install portables.
- Potential to use Wiseburn district office, but may not be economically feasible to convert that building to classrooms.
- Space limitations mean that we have to limit the number of 9th graders next year.
- 2010-11 school year can be served at this facility; something has to change for 2011-12.

Budget – Tom Cox

- Quarterly report will be presented at November meeting.
- Currently \$660k has been borrowed from the Wiseburn District to help with cash flow.
- First state apportionment due in 2 weeks, about \$1M.
- With planning grants cash flow should be adequate for the next few months.
- Enrollment report will bring a second state apportionment, but 25% of apportionment will be delayed until after June 30th
- Important to use same auditors to audit Wiseburn and Da Vinci; current auditors also audit High Tech High so they're very familiar with charter schools.
- Tom Cox will email auditors' references to the Board, at next meeting will propose approving use of these auditors.
- It's important to have audits during the school year, so there are no surprises.
- Will need to take some money in the budget for a beginning teacher support program (BTSA); need to hire BTSA mentors to help the new teachers clear their credentials; should cost \$15-\$20k; will discuss with quarterly report at the November Board meeting.
- Audit refers to year ending 6/30/10; we don't need an audit for year ending 6/30/09 because money received went to Wiseburn and was audited as part of Wiseburn.
- We probably don't need an audit of the non-profit fund for 6/30/09.
- Audits will be done for each school, for the non-profit fund, and consolidated.



Closed Session

The Board entered Closed Session at 11:18 a.m. and reconvened to Regular Session at 11:30 a.m.

Declaration of items from closed session:

- Accept resignation of Jose Sustaita.
 - Authorize staff to begin process of hiring Spanish teacher.
- Motion to approve these items.

First: Cook, Second: Brann, motion carries unanimously.

Upcoming Events Next Board meeting Thursday, November 12, 9-11:30 a.m.

Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.