Laura Jeffrey Academy

Board Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2019

Time: 6:12 pm

**LJA Promise: Laura Jeffrey Academy provides an environment where students are free – to explore their potential, discover their brilliance and develop their intellect.**

**In Attendance:** Devavani Chatterjea, Danielle Jones-Glaser, Anna Veit-Carter, Fahima Aziz, Mimi Mohamud, Anne Marie Hotop, Gaye Fisher

**Ex officio:** Anna Robinson, Leadership representative

**Co-Secretary:** Mimi Mohamud and Danielle Jones

**Guests:** Robert Proccacini, Dieci School Finance

Jacob Bonde, Leadership Team

**Absent:** Angi Faiks and Bryant Noice

**Board Practices:** Duty of Care, Duty of Loyalty, Duty of Obedience

1. Public Comment
   1. No one in attendance for public comment.
2. Approval of agenda
   1. Danielle motions to approve
      1. Fahima second
         1. No objections or abstentions
         2. Agenda approved unanimously by voice vote
3. Approval of January Minutes
   1. Board members suggested adding duration of each discussion at each board meeting.
   2. One suggestion was to add more discussion of the financial concerns and fundraising in the meeting meetings.
   3. Yearly audit reports to be posted with the meeting minutes.
   4. One a board member has a specific concerns, he/she should clearly point it out to the secretary to highlight in the minute meetings.
4. Annie motions to approve January minutes
   * 1. Fahima seconds
        1. No objections or abstentions
        2. January minutes approved unanimously by voice vote
5. Financial report-Jason/Robert
   1. The school is doing well in finances. LJA can pay the bills, for now.
   2. Revenue is based upon 105 ADM with 10% hold back
   3. Actual ADM is 90 based on current enrollment of estimated 106
   4. Today, we are at 88 students
   5. There is less bus needs so saving of $11,000
   6. LJA is utilizing $50,000 of $150,000 line of credit (LOC).
      1. Danielle motions to approve
      2. Devavani second
         1. No objections or abstentions
         2. Financials approved unanimously by voice vote
6. Leadership update
   1. Enrollment, reactions to calendar change etc. – Anna R.
      1. The number of students went down, currently, we have 88 students.
      2. Some of the potential reasons for loss are transportation issues; children want to secure future school spots, peer environment, and social. Only a couple dissatisfied with programming, later students coming in might have difficulties with school mission and goals.
      3. Update on marketing efforts for next year: increase presences in social media, enrolling 5-6, informational sessions, and Earth Day event is a recruiting opportunity; in addition to other events such as Cinco de Mayo and Rondo Day.
         1. What does it mean when kids want different social group?
            1. Parents wanting kids being in different environment. Children comparing their previous school to this new school and have concerns about transition.
         2. What is the retention rate?
            1. **Leadership Team to follow-up on this question.**
         3. What is the update on Advisory?
            1. Sharing the same vision.
         4. In regards to the calendar change: Hosted parent session, had six parents come to the event. At the end of the event, parents’ concerns were heard. Some of the concerns included:

Shorten day

Communication, changing announcement day

Lack of concrete planning for summer school programming

Want schedule for the day

Maintaining unique programs

Bussing concerns, Saint Paul is not reliable, worry of the accountability

Different schedule for families with children going to different schools

* + - * 1. Some of the parents present suggested to have PTO, provide help with homework room or open gym room; creating a survey to administer to get information. Survey to be available at conference days.
  1. Academic Data – Jacob
     1. Summary data took place in January and August. It is broken down in math and reading.
        1. **Math:** growth percentile: you want it to be at 50% or higher; the goal this year is to be at 50% at the end of the year and we are currently at 44.70%. With our small school, only a few students can cause this number to change greatly. Fastbridge assigns risk level, we are doing well with students that are higher risks--they are showing the most growth (54.07%), but we want to push higher those students that are doing well (38.03% showed growth). Some areas that can be improved is enrichment times. Some work is happening to find ways to challenge more those students in higher grades to reach higher levels. Action steps: Look at individual students score and make individual adjustments through person-to-person work. Teachers did this work in January.
     2. **Reading**: the goal is 50% andwe are currently at 55.92%; high risk and high performing are at high levels (57.25% and 63.76% growth, respectively). LJA does well pushing high earners to even higher levels. There are more students with scores on the reading test depending on student’s attendance of the test day.
        1. Would providing books in Spanish to those bilingual students encourage more reading?
           1. It could be possible, individual workplan would be best to help improve.
        2. What is the purpose of this data collection?
           1. Data finding provides teachers a chance to look at where there is need for improvement and make informed curriculum decisions.
        3. High risk and low risk students are not broken down based on race/ethnicity but it could potentially be incorporated in the next data collection.
  2. Organizational Chart – Anna R.
     + 1. Many conversations happened on roles and individual tasks.
       2. LJA Organization Chart meets the expectation of the most of the staff and feels that the needs of the school are being met.
       3. It feels for most staff that even though the work may seem a lot, taking ownership and accountability coming from everyone is well received.
       4. Committee update: started a new committee of fundraising/grant committee. Currently we have three staff on the committee. This committee does not have mission and task yet since it started very recently but it is in the works.
       5. Next steps for the Design Team is to do work in determining roles of Leadership Team (i.e. is it job role or individual role). There will be discussion on teacher evaluation and salary.
       6. Leadership Team discussed extensively about current term limit and other logistics.
       7. What form of communication with parents will be put in place?
       8. Board members have been invited to attend Leadership Team meetings.

1. Updated financial plan review (for ACNW) – Anna R./Robert
   1. Concerns raised about fund balance and general budgetary issues. LJA was asked to provide 3-year budget projection and Robert Proccacini from Dieci School Finance provided a 3-year budget projection. The budget projection provided is very conservative. Overall, the projected budget is positive and realistic.

They are looking for 20% fund balance. Some possible indicators are enrollment is down and low fundraising events. Some expenses include health care costs, staffing with low student enrollment it will still be possible to end in positive. This budget includes a very low amount of unemployment money.

* Some staff from LJA will meet with Macalester College to talk about ways to reduce lease costs.
* Intersession or community ed: still budgeted and paid it for.

FY 19-20, with St Paul transportation why do we still have loss? We need to write off $75,000 for building in fiscal year 2019-2020.

1. By March 1, 2019, MDE needs to know if LJA will go with Saint Paul bussing system.
2. Strategic planning – Fahima
   1. Annie and Fahima met to discuss fundraising opportunities. It was discussed that the Board is responsible for financial help of the school. Some areas of potential include:
      1. Solicitation
      2. Grant writing to be completed by board members and other volunteers
      3. Families/parent engagement, employer fund matching
   2. Board members to engage in financial contribution
   3. Committee will seek fundraising opportunities. Conduct research to identify organization/local corporations to collaborate.
   4. School and board committees to work together in working grant writing and planning for fundraising events.
3. Board member recruitment - Devavani
4. This topic will be covered at the next month’s Board meeting.
5. Adjourn
   1. Jason motions to adjourn
      1. Danielle second
         1. Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm