Board Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2019

Time: 6:15 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:** Danielle Jones-Glaser, Devavani Chatterjea, Anne Marie Hotop, Gaye Fisher, Anna Robinson, Bryant Noice, Janet Gracia, Anna Veit-Carter, Fahima Aziz

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

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

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

Cassandra Quam, Leadership Team

**Absent:** Mimi Mohamud, Jason Fritts, Angi Faiks

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

1. **Public Comment**
   1. conversation duration: 18:15 - 18:24
   2. Board member introductions
   3. Parent is present to get more information on transportation options for the next school year after bussing changes are in place. He had previously voiced interest in car pooling or joint transportation with other families living in South Minneapolis to get to LJA
   4. Cassandra has been asking prospective families if they are interested in car pooling and is assembling a list of those interested in being connected
   5. By the end of the school year, communications will be sent to help these families connect
   6. Alternative transportation options were also discussed: A-line public bus or getting on at the closest St Paul bus stop. His daughter often bikes to school on good weather days but needs other options in the
   7. Monthly student bus pass costs $60/month when paid directly by families. Metro Transit does not offer bus passes to middle schools for distribution to students (only high schools).
2. **Approval of May agenda**
   1. conversation duration: 18:24 - 18:25
   2. Devavani proposes agenda and asks if there are any changes
   3. Janet motions to approve
      * Bryant seconds
        + May agenda approved unanimously by voice vote
        + No objections or abstentions
3. **Approval of April Minutes**
   1. conversation duration: 6:25p - 6:29p
   2. board collectively discussing what level of detail is truly necessary in the minutes
   3. consensus is that conversation duration is a helpful addition but need to be careful not to make the monthly minutes too lengthy due to the additional detail
   4. Bryant motions to approve February minutes
      * Gaye seconds
        + April minutes approved unanimously by voice vote
        + No objections or abstentions
4. **Review of Policy Language re: Term Extensions and Limitations**
   1. conversation duration: 6:29p - 7:13p
   2. Consideration of term extensions for Danielle Jones-Glaser and Jason Fritts
      * Anna VC proposes changes to 200 policy on board elections to clarify that board members cannot serve more than 2 consecutive terms of three years
      * Anna VC also proposes adding the possibility of a 1-year extension on to a member's first term only which would be approved by a simple majority vote by existing board members
      * Benefits of and reasons for a one year extension are debated including the opportunity that it can provide to ensure that all areas of key expertise on the board are filled at all times (e.g. legal, finance, parent, teacher, etc.)
      * Board discusses whether the 1-year extension vote should be opened up to the full LJA community instead of just allowing board members to weigh in on the conversation.
      * Ranked choice voting is also discussed for future elections to ensure board composition meets minimum membership standards of inclusion for teachers, parents, and community members on the board
      * Policy language is updated based on board member feedback/commentary
      * Fahima motions to approve policy changes
        + Annie seconds
        + Motion is unanimously approved by voice vote
        + No objections or abstentions
   3. Vote to extend Jason Fritts' term
      * Board discusses Jason's contributions to the board and their value
      * Fahima motions to approve policy changes
        + Annie seconds
        + Motion is unanimously approved by voice vote
        + No objections or abstentions
   4. Vote to extend Danielle Jones-Glaser's term
      * Danielle leaves the room during the discussion
      * Board discusses Danielle's role & the fact that the slate does include enough new community members
      * Janet moves to approve
        + Fahima seconds
        + 3 approve, 3 object, 1 abstention
        + Motion is approved
5. **Approval of Candidate Slate for Board Elections** 
   1. conversation duration: 7:14p - 7:23p
   2. Slate of board members are presented and discussed
      * Gaye Fisher (teacher)
      * Morgan Williams (teacher)
      * Sarah Carter (community member)
      * Sonia Feder-Lewis (community member)
      * Katie Agnew (community member)
   3. Anna VC moves to approve
      * Fahima seconds
      * All board members approve
      * No objections or abstentions

1. **Review and Discussion of Voting Process** 
   1. conversation duration: 7:23p - 7:32p
   2. Online voting remains as an option because it's hard for parents to be present at the specific time to vote due to work/travel schedules
   3. 5:45 6/18 will be in person voting
   4. Online voting opens a week before during the school day and will include ranked choice voting
   5. A reminder of online voting will be sent in Cassandra's Sunday LJA update
   6. Anna VC requests a "State of LJA" introduction from the leadership team at the beginning of the annual meeting
   7. Anna VC will present a board recap of the year at that meeting as well
2. **Financials**
   1. conversation duration: 7:33p - 7:48p
   2. Financial dashboard review:
      * Revenue is at 81% of annual budget at 83% through the year
      * Expenses are at 78% of annual budget at 83% through the year
      * MDE has not yet adjusted their payments to the school based on current enrollment so this might happen in the fall
      * LJA may have pulled in more of the LOC than was needed in anticipation of MDE updating their payments earlier this year. We may pay 1/2 of this back now since it's not needed
      * Current FY19 fundraising/grant total is about $40K of $60K goal
      * Target is to increase fund balance to $250K in 3 years and $500K during the following contract term
   3. Lease Update
      * 8% reduction in lease payments plus bathroom remodeling has been negotiated for the next contract term
   4. Janet motions to approve financials
      * Bryant seconds
      * All board members approve
      * No objections or abstentions
3. **Leadership update**
   1. conversation duration: 7:48p - 7:59p
   2. Enrollment update
      * 90 applications for next year are in and awaiting approvals
   3. Update on LJA Contracting Process
      * We are awaiting response from ACNW on a couple of outstanding questions including environmental learning plan
      * Contract must be approved by end of June
   4. Exciting happenings at LJA – Maker’s Space
      * Project scientist is looking for girls age 4-12. scholarships are available
      * Basement maker space area will be remodeled. next planning meeting will be on 5/24 between 12 and 2:00. 3m, macalester, and the architect will be there and would like to a board member to attend to discuss changes.
      * Fahima and Bryant may be able to attend and will be briefed first by Lizzie. Angi will also be consulted since she manages the maker space at Macalester
   5. Women Engineers of ESI – Board Support
      * Board fully agrees to donate money but needs an exact amount
      * Anna R will get additional details
   6. Other:
      * Cassandra summarizes the last couple of years of surveys on how applicants heard about LJA and decided to apply. "Word of mouth" is the most common reason cited. Community events such as PBJam and Cub Foods grocery bagging were also cited and seem to generate at least 1 new student per event.
4. **Enrollment Policy Approval**
   1. conversation duration: 7:59p - 8:02p
   2. Enrollment & Lottery Policy updates are presented by Anna R to clarify how waitlists for student enrollment are processed
   3. Bryant motions to approve
      * Fahima seconds
      * All board members approve
      * No objections or abstentions
5. **By-Laws Updates**
   1. conversation duration: 8:02p - 8:11p
   2. By-laws have been updated to clarify that "teacher participation on the board" is defined as having at least one current LJA teacher on the board
   3. Other updates include replacing "executive director" with "leadership team", adding "board co-chair" to descriptions of board chair responsibilities, and noting that if a board member is not physically present during a meeting that they must be able to see all discussion (per Minnesota open meeting law)
   4. These changes also need to be on the ballot for the next election and approved by the board (required by law)
   5. Each change will be listed separately on the ballot for community members to vote on
   6. Gaye motions to approve adding this to the ballot
      * Fahima seconds
      * All board members approve
      * No objections or abstentions
   7. Annie motions to approve the language changes as written
      * Fahima seconds
      * All board members approve
      * No objections or abstentions
6. **Adjournment**
   1. conversation duration: 8:12p - 8:16p
   2. Devavani reaffirms the importance of LJA in the world today and its mission as she steps down as board co-chair
   3. Anna R thanks Devavani for her leadership
   4. Annie motions to adjourn
      * Anna VC seconds
      * All board members approve
      * No objections or abstentions
        + Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm