

# The Academy for Science and Design

## Minutes of the Board Meeting

February 9, 2011

**Present:** David Chauvette, Jim Hochberg, Jack Donovan, Joakim Karlsson, Kent Glossop, Rebecca Paquette, Patty Humphrey, Thomas Frischknecht, Mary Mattingly, Angela Overman, Jim Overman, Phil Canody, Joel Preminger, Ellen Mohnkern, Lee Mohnkern, Heather MacDonald, Stephany Houghton, Judith Klinghoffer, Janet Taft, Kim LaVallee, Rich Ashooh.

**Absent:** Karen Graham, Idina Holden, Izuh Obinelo, Sue Correia, Meili Kronenfeld, Michael White

### **Public Comments**

(These must be related to agenda items.)

Joel Preminger, parent of an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student, made a statement that he supports AP classes for ASD high school students. Talented students need to be challenged, and mainstreaming them with less ambitious or less able students dilutes the challenge.

Judith Klinghoffer, parent of an eighth grader, asked if she could discuss the pre-calculus class. Since it was not included on the agenda, her request was denied.

She commented that all Board activities, such as the allocation of new funds in a budget item, must be reported in public minutes.

Janet Taft, parent, informed the Board that students are making negative comments about incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved.

### **Directors Report—David Chauvette**

- There are approximately 180 applications for next year.
- This will result in a lottery for sixth and seventh grades.
- Certain spots will be pre-empted by siblings.
- We will lose approximately 25 students. Some, who have no possibility of graduating, will be asked to leave.
- The enrollment for next year will be between 280-300 students.
- The Stimulus money has not arrived.
- The \$67,000 Dissemination Grant is on its way. It can be spent flexibly to support teacher dissemination activities over two years.

- There will be 360 students for 2012-13 and optimum enrollment of 450 the following year.
- State funding for charter school tuition will probably be level, based on two bills that are slightly different, but add up to more or less the same amount of \$5500 per student.
- ASD is hosting a professional development meeting for all the charter schools on March 18.
- Ellen Mohnkern is working on the budget. We should be in surplus in July.
- The Annual Fund has raised \$52,000.
- The information for the audits should be submitted by February 18.
- Snow packets should have been aligned with state models, but will be accepted by the state retroactively.
- Nashua Telegraph reporter, Michael Brindley, will visit the school and will be notified when the audits have been completed.

The Board ratified an email vote in support of the Director's proposal to add two part time positions (contract service, not employee) to the staff at a cost of \$6000. This would be for support in the pre-calculus and physics classes.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Curriculum Committee—Kent Glossop**

- A list of actual course changes will be submitted at the March Board meeting.
- The final text of the program of studies will be submitted at the April meeting.
- David will submit a draft statement of a definition of mastery before the start of the next school year.

Kim LaVallee presented the recommendations of the upper grades working group on the subject of AP classes. After an extensive study of the subject, which included discussions with many college admissions officers, a review of the literature, and discussions with AP, the group came to the following conclusions:

- AP is in the process of updating its curriculum. The new course of studies will be more aligned with ASD's charter with more hands on learning and more project based approaches, more problem solving and critical thinking.
- This new AP curriculum will be ready at a time when we will have a large enough number of high school students to cover the \$7000 per course cost of offering AP.
- Meanwhile, ASD should offer Advanced Classes in AP subjects that would cover the content and would enable those students who chose to, to take the AP exams.
- Because the courses would not be labeled AP, there would be no demerit for students who chose not to take the exams.
- College Admissions officers who were consulted emphasized that results of AP exams are only one of a number of criteria used in evaluating applicants.

- AP offers excellent teacher training and should be offered to ASD teachers as part of their professional development and in preparation for the time when the school will be large enough to offer the courses.

David Chauvette said he was in favor of working toward the establishment of AP courses at ASD. He is already teaching an AP history course. AP gives a standard of measurement and can make it possible for students to get course credits in some colleges.

Kim was praised and thanked for the excellent work of her committee.

There was a motion to accept as policy the proposal by the upper grades working group:

For the next year or so ASD will offer Advanced Classes with an option to take the AP exam. Teachers will start to be trained as AP instructors. The goal will be to establish AP courses at the school when the new AP curriculum is available and when ASD can justify the cost by virtue of a larger enrollment.

The motion was passed with one abstention by Thomas Frischknecht, who said he is not familiar enough with the subject to cast a vote.

### **Virtual High School—Ellen Mohnkern**

Ellen presented a chart which showed the range of courses and the costs of investing in a membership in the Virtual High School. The training of one ASD teacher at a cost of \$7000 would make available 25 courses (out of a selection of 140) to ASD students. By comparison, VLAX offers 15 courses at no cost.

VHS would offer the option of a broad curriculum of study to ASD high school students while the high school enrollment is still small.

The Board referred the matter to the Strategic Planning Committee for further study.

In the future, the agenda of the current meeting will include a line item for the next meeting to allow Board Members requesting a topic or subject matter for the following board meeting.

### **The Meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Humphrey

Secretary