



## **Board Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> 2016 3:00 p.m.

W. G. Mills Building 3301 Whitfield Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34243

### **Board Members:**

**Present:** Philip Brown, Chris Carle, Bill Johnston, Christine Schlesinger (by phone) and Felice Schulaner

**Absent:** Alicia Chalmers, Steve Lobel

**Others Present:** Neil Phillips, Cindy Day, Mitzie Henson, Shannon Rohrer-Phillips, and Mary Luisa Burges

**Quorum present?** Yes

### **Proceedings:**

- Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Bill Johnston, acting for Board Chair, Steve Lobel

### **Approval of the minutes:**

- The Board meeting minutes from 7/12/16 and 9/8/16 were reviewed. A motion was made by Chris Carle and seconded by Felice Schulaner to approve the 7/12/16 minutes as presented and the 9/8/16 with edits recommended by Christine Schlesinger. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **CEO Report (Neil):**

- Neil reaffirmed his enthusiasm about the academic promise of this new school year. Despite teacher morale problems associated with the F rating, he sees them approaching their roles with energy and a sincere willingness to execute change strategies. Students are also demonstrating commitment and effort and a sincere desire to improve. The character and social development process is a lengthy one, but progress is being made.
- Dr. Green is visiting VMA on 9/14/16. It is believed it is in response to the letter Neil sent out to key stakeholders. There is no clarity about the objective of her visit or her agenda at the school.
- Neil introduced the new Assistant Principal, Mary Luisa Burges. She was introduced to VMA by Preston Smith at Rocketship Schools, a highly regarded charter group. She began her career in education at Teach for America, moved to KIPP and then Rocketship. She is currently working on a graduate degree at Teachers College of Columbia University. Mary Luisa expressed her optimism about what can be accomplished at VMA, indicating that she thinks the school has the vision and people needed to achieve the school's objectives. She is focusing

on teacher development, with data driven feedback as a key component. Mary Luisa described the School Improvement Plan and associate numeric goals. One component of the work is sharing the data with parents and educating them on their role in supporting student improvement.

## **2 Gen Update(Shannon)**

- Shannon has been extricating herself from direct responsibilities for social work activities to enable Peg Hughes, the new Social Worker, to assume her role. A key area of opportunity at VMA is the RTI (Response to Intervention) process and the team is working on improving outcomes in this area. Relationship with Forty Carrots will also be transitioned.
- Parent Success Program has started off well, with 20+ parents at the first two sessions. Support from these programs comes from the Women's Resource Center, Sarasota Literacy Council and Unidos Now. A new program, "Wallets to Wall Street" has been introduced to the Fatherhood group. Individuals completing the program will receive \$2500 to invest in an IRA or other savings vehicle.

## **Finance Update (Neil):**

- Neil reported that the September 15<sup>th</sup> payroll has been executed, leaving \$2672 in cash. End of September deficit is expected to be \$48,000
- October 15<sup>th</sup> deficit is expected to be \$60,000.

## **Development (Mitzie)**

- Neil has reached out to Charlayne Hunter Gault to revive discussions about a possible \$75,000 grant from the Clara Elizabeth Jackson Foundation.
- Two former six figure grantors have been approached regarding funding.
- Giving Challenge on September 21<sup>st</sup>-1200 people from mailing list will be contacted. Tropicana, as a corporate partner, will solicit employees to participate. An event at Bookstore 1 with Cedric and Suns doing poetry is planned for 9/20.
- A number of fundraising ideas were shared to capitalize on the Giving Challenge .
- The Teachers Incentive Fund grant was described. It would deliver \$250,000 a year for five years and is intended to fund teacher incentives, tools and development. Communication to grantees is expected at the end of September.
- Neil will reach out to CFSC to discuss funding needs; will do the same with MCF.

## **School Improvement Plan (Cindy)**

- School improvement plan is being implemented.
- All activities will be measured and tracked,
- Students and teachers are engaged.

**Board Governance (Cindy)**

- Cindy Cavallaro Day and Wilson Jones reviewed Board and bylaws and are recommending to expand board to 12-15 members and update bylaws.
- Christine, Phillip, Neil and Mitzie are working on a gift acceptance policy.

**Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

**Next Board Meeting:**

- Tuesday, November 15, 2016-3:00-5:00 pm