**Arlington Classics Academy board of directors**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of DIRECTORS**

**5200 South Bowen Road, Arlington, tx 76017**

**september 19, 2013**

**7:00 P.m.**

***6:30—7:00 There will be an opportunity for informal interaction at a brown bag dinner with some members of the board. you are welcome to bring your dinner and share your thoughts in this non-official gathering.***

1. **CALL TO ORDER: ACA Bowen Cafeteria: 7:10 p.m. by Greg Hale**

**Board members present: Terri Thibodeau, Suzanne Rieter, Debbie Sterba, Greg Hale, Steve Coffee, Mia Russo, Amy Smith, Warren Norred**

**Administration – Betty Duncan Coon, Kurtis Flood, Aaron Dafffern, Janna Allen, Craig Sims, Melanie Schroeder**

1. **MOVE TO CLOSED:** *Section 551.074 - For the purpose of considering the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear complaints or charges against a public officer or employee.* 
   1. ~~Review of BOD Nominee Forms~~ (No Nominee Forms Received)
2. **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**
3. **BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS**

*This time on the agenda allows each board member to inform other board members, the administrative staff and the public of activities which are of interest including:*

* 1. Policy Committee Report – Sept. 9th 200 series revised entirely.
  2. Growth and Finance Joint Committee Report – **Greg Hale** and the committee met to discuss the 12 classroom expansion at Bowen. The City of Arlington has informally accepted the exterior modifications. The Permit process will now begin.

The city insisted on a 40 ft. setback from Bowen Road, which will reduce the number of classrooms to 10. The changes will cost approximately $125,000 more than is in the remaining bond monies.

Depending on financial consultant recommendation, ACA might borrow (short-term) the funds, or use General Funds and have a lower balance.

**Warren Norred** asked if we could ask Planning and Zoning for the an appeal on the setback and/or building material changes costing us that additional $125,000.00?

**Debbie Sterba** shared an article indicating that most Charter schools do not retain teachers for more than two years and this seems to be an industry norm, but ACA is an anomaly to this and teachers seem to stay past the 2 years suggested in the article. She believes this is in large part because of the administration and support ACA teachers receive.

**Debbie Sterba** encouraged everyone to attend the TCSA conference in December, particularly to hear Michelle Rhee give the keynote address.

**Greg Hale** – Charter schools now have a guarantee from the Permanent School Fund now, that will help guarantee the backing of bond packages used to finance growth – the same as other ISD’s. This has now been put into an amendment to Texas Education code.

“BBB-“ is the minimum bond rating to be considered for this program.

ACA is just 2 levels below that. US Economic factors had a great deal to do with this rating.

The size of our wait list and money in the bank will be what Standard and Poors looks at, to raise our rating.

#### NON-AGENDA RELATED PUBLIC COMMENTS

***This forum allows anyone in attendance to address the Board on any matter except personnel and individual student issues. Any personnel concerns should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director of Schools or the Board President prior to the meeting. Speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes and must complete a Comment Card marked “Non-agenda” to be recognized by the President. Non-agenda items will be taken for no more than 30 minutes.***

**Sonja Bean asked about preschool idea**

1. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**
   1. **Principal Report**

**Janna Allen** – Shared her plans for “Parent University” – This will occur before the grading periods end. She hopes to have parents come and meet with staff about issues, calendars, events coming up, spirit days, sharing successful readiness tips for parents, traffic updates, etc.

**Betty Duncan Coon** praised her 3 principals for their enthusiasm and all the good ideas they bring to ACA every day.

Q – what is Edmodo? – Kurtis Flood explained that the Middle School uses Edmodo, which is a Self- paced Math web based tool – currently we just have Algebra I.

* 1. **Personnel Recommendations –** (see attachment)
  2. **Developmental Reading Assessment Report** – IStation – K – 2 to be implemented soon
  3. **Enrollment/Average Daily Attendance Report** – (see attachment) Currently 337 children are on ACA waitlist.
  4. **Academic Services Report** – Q – What is Target Time? A – The Intermediate School is using this technique – Teachers recognize and begin filling in gaps with students based on benchmark tests. Discreet/Specific topics are concentrated on, not an overall review. The entire grade level participates. A second component is allowing small groups to move ahead a grade in math or reading projects. 1 topic - 1 skill - for 4 weeks.
  5. **Technology Instructional Materials Allotment Local Grant and Results** – Kurtis Flood explained the use of 3 grants (about $50K) awarded. The Kindergarten Pod – received one grant for 4 mini IPads per class (36 total).

4th grade (Ms. Yates) – Won another, and asked for 24 IPad mini’s.

Middle School – (Mr. Herr) – Requested full IPads (25 total) – They are being deployed this week.

* 1. **Business Report**
     1. North Texas Giving Day – as of 5 PM $4100 for ACA.
     2. Landscaping Bid – Lowest bid is TruGreen and recommended by Administration.
     3. Audit Dates – Independent: November 4th, Workman’s Comp audit is next week, General Liability: 8/4/13
     4. General Financial Update – (see attachment)

**Betty Duncan Coon** praised Melanie Schroeder on her fidelity to her fiduciary

responsibilities to ACA.

Steve Coffee Q – What has been spent on Free & Reduced Lunch so far this year? A - Food

program shows a loss of $3000 in August.

* 1. **Debbie Silver Books and Training** – Shared copies with the Board of Directors members. Suggested reading: Chp. 5 of Drumming to the Beat of a different Marcher.

**Suzanne Rieter** suggested a link on all ACA websites of “recommended reading” and these Silver books would be good for all parents – as well as, the ED Hirsch books.

* 1. **Charter Renewal Contract** – **Betty Duncan Coon** introduced Elizabeth Sandejo from Chapel Hill Charter school to observe our Board meeting.

Renewal letter was received Monday, September 16, 2013. Renewal is until 7/21/2023.

1. **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

*Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.*

1. Approve June 29, 2013 Closed Minutes – pulled for Open Session
2. Approve July 18, 2013 Closed Minutes
3. ~~Approve August 1, 2013 Closed Minutes~~ There was no closed session
4. Approve August 22, 2013 Open Minutes
5. Approve August 22, 2013 Closed Minutes
6. Approve Personnel Recommendations

**MOTION: Amy Smith moved to accept Consent Agenda items B, D, E and F as presented**

**SECOND: Terri Thibodeau**

**VOTE: Passed (8 – 0 – 0)**

1. **ACTION ITEMS:**
   1. **Consent Agenda Item A – Correction needed for location of meeting. Will be resubmitted for next Board of Directors meeting, October 24, 2013.**
   2. **Discussion and Vote Regarding acceptance and agreement to the charter renewal contract between the Texas Education Agency and Arlington Classics Academy**

**MOTION: Terri Thibodeau moved to accept the Charter renewal contract between the Texas Education Agency and ACA**

**SECOND: Mia Russo**

**VOTE: passed (8 – 0 – 0)**

* 1. **Discussion and Vote Regarding Landscape Services Bid**

**MOTION: Terri Thibodeau moved to accept TruGreen as the Landscape Service for FY 2013/2014**

**SECOND: Debbie Sterba**

**VOTE: passed (8 - 0 – 0)**

* 1. **Discussion and Vote Regarding Module 200: Charter School Governance and Organization, Local and Legal Policies**

**MOTION: Debbie Sterba moved to accept the Policies: Module 200 as presented**

**SECOND: Suzanne Rieter**

**VOTE: passed (8 - 0 – 0)**

* 1. ~~Nominee Interviews and Election of Board of Directors, Seat #5~~ (No Nominee Forms Received)

**BREAK 8:27 – 8:44 PM**

* 1. **Discussion and Vote Regarding BOD Priority: Communication**

The Board of Directors is instituting the Brown bag discussions again.

**Steve Coffee** suggested that the BOD initiate communication with the parents, educate them on what the Board is doing, what committees exist, what situations are coming up.

**Steve Coffee** suggested that the BOD documentation be shared with the parents on the website. **Betty Duncan Coon** hopes to reach the goal of having all documentation ready for the posting of the agenda. Is hoping for embedding the documents.

**Debbie Sterba** suggested updating bios and using photos.

**Steve Coffee** suggested sending the agenda to all parents via School Reach

Subscription to alerts, calendar, by grade level, “school wires” – Craig Sims or Kurtis Flood will investigate all that it offers.

**Kurtis Flood** is looking into School Reach phone and text capabilities.

Public Comments:

Jaimie Foster – likes the idea of sending the agenda out

Sonja – Friends of ACA website

Suggested using the calendar link to the agenda

**Greg Hale** suggested updating the Board “landing” page, to include more information and links to supporting documentation, upcoming events, fundraising, etc.

**MOTION:**

**SECOND: NONE**

**VOTE:**

* 1. **Discussion and Vote Regarding BOD Priority: Long Term Growth**

**Greg Hale** – presuming we have 10 more classrooms, this will allow us to have successful growth for the next two years - what about after that?

* Easiest thing to do is stay K – 8
* Go back to K – 6
* Consider a new campus

**Steve Coffee** brought up the preschool consideration – Greg Hale does not feel it’s part of this discussion.

**Warren Norred** – suggested a transitory High School environment. Maybe appeal to homeschooled children. Possibly utilizing TCC resources. **Warren Norred** – make a decision to specialize and stay with that specialization – i.e. language, or advanced sciences, etc.

Some sports might be something to consider – but not all.

**Betty Duncan Coon** feels that the cost of running a High School academic program, is not as prohibitive as a traditional High School experience.

Our reputation is of an academically superior institution and we would need to be that in High School as well.

Offering electives will be more costly. Specialized teachers (i.e. Calculus, German, etc.)

**Greg Hale** – reason to consider High School is that ACA’s attrition at MS is parents positioning themselves for a HS career for their child. Leaver data will need to be reviewed to ascertain why students have left in the recent past.

**Suzanne Rieter** – why do we have to grow? Stay with 8th and make it a fantastic MS. Instilling a need to stay until the end of 8th grade, because of all the choices the students have with ACA.

**Greg Hale** - More students will have to be accommodated, in order for ACA to grow to the original number of sustainable students that allows ACA to continue.

**Steve Coffee** – suggested leaving the number of enrollees the same for ACA alone and move 8th grade to 9th, then 9th into 10 and not fill the classrooms at the bottom.

**Terri Thibodeau** – K – 8 is a great product and we need to keep offering that to as many kids as possible. This could work if the sites were far enough apart as to not foster the “disjointed or disconnect” we had with two campuses serving the same grades in proximity to each other.

**Betty Duncan Coon** asked if the Middle School parents would be interested if ACA were to offer 9 – 12 grades? 2 of 3 parents who left recently, indicated this was the case.

**Steve Coffee** – Q – is there a number that a High School would not be viable? Meaning – is there a number that would not make this a choice we should pursue?

**Warren Norred** suggested holding a face to face meeting with the parents of our oldest students and asking them what they want to see.

Choices -

1. K – 8 – this is it. Grow enough to accommodate the max. enrollment and stop
2. Lateral move grow to other K – 8 satellite sites
3. Add 9-12 grades

Preliminary preference by choice number:

1 – Suzanne Rieter

2 – Debbie Sterba, Terri Thibodeau

3 – Warren Norred, Amy Smith, Mia Russo, Steve Coffee

Public Comments:

Jaimie Foster – is there a growth maximum? 2000 is our maximum enrollment Feels parents who bring their children to ACA are more likely to stay with ACA through HS. Continue the academic excellence.

Sonja Bean– really likes the idea of HS. Appreciates the culture of ACA. “I’m all in” – trusts the secondary administration staff with the vision and staying on track with the vision.

Gary Soward - is also interested in High School

**Steve Coffee** – indicated the PTO discussions do include the concerns of a lack of HS and sports.

**Mia Russo** agrees with a STEM High School – Science Tech Engineering Math??

**Terri Thibodeau** – agrees to pick a specialization and stay with that specialization and be the greatest at it.

**Greg Hale** – some sports should be “enough” – this will help foster the community – but nothing that will end up costing us.

**Debbie Sterba** suggested offering sports that traditionally offer underutilized scholarships and develop talent for recruiting interested students and be willing to wait for those students to be offered scholarships that become another marketing tool.

**MOTION: Greg Hale moved to explore, beginning with community conversations, expanding through 12th grade, starting with 9th grade as early as 2014 – 2015.**

**SECOND: Steve Coffee**

**VOTE: passed (for 5: Warren Norred, Greg Hale, Amy Smith, Mia Russo, Steve Coffee, Terri Thibodeau –**

**opposed 1: Suzanne Rieter – Abstain 1: Debbie Sterba)**

* 1. Discussion Regarding the Internet and ACA Business & Operations Policies CPA (Local) - OFFICE COMMUNICATION: Media Relations - **TABLED**

1. **MOVE TO CLOSED: 10:40 p.m. by Greg Hale**

**Section 551.074** – *For the purpose of considering appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear complaints or charges against a public officer or employee.*

* 1. Discussion of EDS performance evaluation

1. **RETURN TO OPEN 11:10 p.m by Greg Hale**
   1. Action/, as needed, on Items Discussed in Closed Session
2. **ADJOURNMENT 11:10 p.m.**

**MOTION: Debbie Sterba moved to adjourn**

**SECOND: Mia Russo**

**VOTE: passed (8 – 0 – 0)**

#### Respectfully submitted,

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#### Debbie Sterba, Secretary

#### Board of Directors

#### Certified by:

#### \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#### Gregory R. Hale, President

#### Board of Directors

#### Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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