



Independence Academy

675 29 Rd Grand Junction, CO 81504
Phone: (970) 254-6850 Fax: (970) 241-2064

Board Meeting Minutes
Monday January 31, 2022
5:00 P.M-Commons Area

Meeting Call to Order: 5:12 pm

Role Call :

Present

- **Sherry Price**
- **Brad Thompson**
- **Brandy Savoni**
- **Hadassa Berger (Via Zoom)**
- **Jeremiah Fenske**

I. Staff and Student Celebrations:

- A. Winners for the CMU Students of the Year 8th graders are Riley O'Hara and Ronan Norman
- B. The library is open and the students are in checking out books
- C. Ella Hall was featured in a sentinel / news media for a Sensory Walk that was installed at IACS. She completed this project as a class project. Ella brought IACS teachers fidget toy kits and presented to them about sensory breaks and how the positively impact student learning.
- D. Margie Wass was the second quarter Golden Apple teacher.

II. Public Comment: Time-limited TBA – individuals may make public comments, limited to items on the agenda, and two (2) minutes. The Governing Board asks that each member complete a public comment card, available in the front office, prior to commencement of the meeting. Public comment cards should be given to the Executive Director who will then deliver them to the Governing Board President.

- A. None at this time

III. Approval of the November 29, 2021 Board Minutes.

Motion: Brad thompson
Second: Jeremiah Fenske
Vote: 5-0 Vote Passes

IV. Approval of the November Financials.

Motion: Jeremiah Fenske
Second: Brad Thompson
Vote: 5-0 Vote Passes

V. Approval of the December Financials.

Motion: Brad Thompson
Second: Jeremiah Fenske
Vote: 5-0 Vote Passes

VI. Discussion and possible approval of budget readoption.

- A. Lisa Gonsalves explained the changes to the budget due to the October 1st changes after official counts were taken for PPR purposes. She reviewed where the additional \$180,000.00 was distributed to.
- B. IACS should be receiving approximately \$89,000.00 in ESSER II reimbursement.

Motion: Brandy Savoni
Second: Jeremiah Fenske
Vote: 5-0 Vote Passes

VII. Approval of the engagement letter for Kate Hall CPA

Motion: Brad Thompson
Second: Brandy Savoni
Vote: 5-0 Vote Passes

VIII. Approval of the Five Year Strategic Plan.

Motion: Jeremiah Fenske
Second: Brad Thompson
Vote: 5-0 Vote Passes

IX. Discussion around fines for traffic violations on school property.

- A. Discussion around recent events that are safety concerns and traffic violations such as driving up the wrong side of the road almost causing head on collisions.
- B. The board would like additional signage posted and painted arrows on the roads to indicate which directions cars should be driving. Additionally send out an email to the school population addressing the concerns and provide friendly reminders about traffic law.

- C. Brad and Sherry encouraged Lisa to consider hiring a third party company to establish and maintain traffic flow.

X. Discussion around rental property improvements and lease options.

- A. IACS has a potential SLP who has requested a place to live as part of the relocating terms Lisa Gonsalves inquired about whether or not the board would be open to updating the rental property and renting it to her as an incentive to get her to relocate from California.
- B. The board discussed walking through the property during an upcoming board meeting to evaluate its current conditions as well as gauge an approximation of the cost to update the home.
- C. The board said they are open to entertaining an idea of making the rental property available to staff that are relocating as long as there were term limited usage written into the lease agreement and that the lease agreement and the employment contract remain separate and that Dustin Sparks draw up the contract.
- D. The board agreed to revisit this idea at the next meeting.

XI. Update on CDE meeting regarding withheld ESSER III funds from District 51.

- A. Lisa Gonsalves contacted CDE and requested them to initiate a meeting with District 51, but the district has yet to respond.
- B. Since then Lisa has followed up twice with CDE and no emails have been returned.
- C. The board would like Lisa to engage Dustin Sparks in the rights and responsibilities our Charter has and the District has with these funds. The board would like Lisa to continue to communicate with CDE and move forward the conversation.

XII. Preliminary discussion regarding potential changes to next year's calendar.

- A. Lisa Gonsalves explained to the board that in order to meet contact hours for middle school students we are over servicing our elementary students. To ease pick-up issues we may consider releasing elementary earlier or creating a first dismissal and second dismissal for elementary students.

XIII. Update of Benefits changes.

- A. After discussions with the District 51 HR it was communicated that there is no room for modifications or differences IACS has decided to move forward with finding additional options for insurance as well as still moving forward with the Appleton plan.
- B. After discussion from the board they think it would be best to move forward with the Appleton/ BCBS Gold option and provide the employees with a raise and they can decide which plan they would like to go with.
- C. The board is also interested in finding an HR representative that could provide sound guidance and advice without having to refer to a lawyer each time.
- D. Hadassa requested that Lisa also look into a HSA account.

XIV. Executive Director's Report.

A. Operations

1. COVID numbers are increasing like everywhere else but the quarantines are so short that we have missed the 2% universal masking mandate so far. Currently we have Pre-K, first grade, and fifth grade masked. Staffing has been exceptionally difficult but we are managing.
2. There is an anticipated 5.8% increase in PPR for the next school year. This money has not been designated anywhere yet. Lisa anticipates a minimum in spending especially with the rest of the ESSER III fund needing to be allocated.
3. Lisa announced that she is a finalist for the League of Charter Schools Board and hopes to be elected to the spot to help serve the charter schools in our community and in Colorado. Kati and Lisa will come up with a strategic plan to ensure the school will not be impacted negatively.
4. Lisa Gonsalves is meeting with the newly elected D51 school board president on February 3rd. Lisa reached out to her after she announced that she wanted to visit all of the District schools and formally invited her to IACS. Her hope is to give her a tour of our new facility and have some time to talk with her about IACS's future with D51 and some issues we are having.
5. Lisa had a meeting with Paul Cain the District 51 Athletic Director about IACS's exclusion in Middle School sports the last few years. Paul states that he is confident that we can come up with a plan of inclusion moving forward. Tina Snover is spearheading a parent movement for student athletes as this greatly impacts the playing time our kids are offered. Lisa expressed to Paul that we need a solution no later than the end of this school year so next year it can be put into practice prior to the sports season.
6. Lisa Gonsalves had a meeting with District 51 special education department supervisor Patto Verdon because she was concerned with the professionalism of the district special education department sharing information with unauthorized family members and being aggressive towards IACS assuming we will make decisions that put us out of compliance or questioning why we would consult our legal representation about compliance.
7. A survey will be sent out to families about interest levels in continuing Lunch Lizard even if free lunch goes away.
8. Two 14 passenger Vans are secured and in the process of being purchased for future transportation with IACS.

B. Instruction/Assessment

1. IACS is gearing up for CMAS in April- Our goal is to maintain 95% testing participation. SO far it looks like all tests will be administered. The IACS administration is working on plans with CMAS engagement.

C. Community Outreach

1. Open House will be hosted on March 4th.
2. The lottery will be held after Spring Break.
3. IACS will begin accepting Intent to Enroll Forms on February 1st.
4. On average IACS retains 90% or more of the student population each year. There are anticipated 20 slots available.

5. There has been interest shown about starting a Student Work program and Lisa reached out to the board members about their knowledge of these programs or places they may know facilitating a similar program. The board encouraged her to reach out to Dustin Sparks to get legal information about starting such a program.
6. IACS will be initiating a reading program again this summer and students will receive a backpack filled with books and summer activities.

D. Culture

1. IACS has started planning monthly events for the staff to get together outside of work in order to increase morale and team building.

E. Facilities Report

1. IACS really appreciates our new cleaning crew- we have received really positive feedback which tells us that they are a good fit for IACS. We are using the facilities intern to fill in when facilities are out with sickness and that has been working out well.

XV. Family Council Updates

- A. Family council had a successful Christmas Store. They made approximately \$1,000 per day they were open.

XVI. Discussion around future plans for traffic flow patterns and parking plans beginning in the summer of 2022.

- A. The board signed the RCE engagement to get the preliminary work done on the parking lot plans.
- B. Brad Thompson stated that an approximate price was quoted for the completion of the parking lot at \$400,000.00

XVII. Executive Session CRS Section 24-6-402 (4)(f)

C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4) The members of a local public body subject to this part 4, upon the announcement by the local public body to the public of the topic for discussion in the executive session, including specific citation to the provision of this subsection (4) authorizing the body to meet in an executive session and identification of the particular matter to be discussed in as much detail as possible without compromising the purpose for which the executive session is authorized, and the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the quorum present, after such announcement, may hold an executive session only at a regular or special meeting and for the sole purpose of considering any of the following matters; except that no adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action, except the review, approval, and amendment of the minutes of an executive session recorded pursuant to subparagraph (II) of paragraph (d.5) of subsection (2) of this section, shall occur at any executive session that is not open to the public.

Adjourned: 7:43 pm