

Lerner Board of Directors  
September 13, 2016 Meeting

Present: Lauren Gindes, Sue Egnoto, David Goldman, Jeremy Browner, Jonathan Blitz, Allison Oakes, Tal Lewin-Wittle, Hollis Gauss, Maia Szulik, Sally Brown, Jonathan Dayan, Kathryn Wolf, Tali Wechsler, Andrew Janiak

Absent: Richard Goldberg, Norma Gindes, Grace Marion, Norah Goldman

Notes taken by Hollis Gauss and Tal Lewin-Wittle

Agenda

6:30 School tour with Allison

6:50 Consent Agenda

- Review and approve agenda
- Approve minutes from June 7, 2016 meeting (in Dropbox)
- June 22 and June 28 meetings were both executive sessions. We do not publish the minutes, only the decisions made. Decision to extend Allison's contract was announced on June 28, via email, to the entire community. Decision to create the Finance and Operations Director has had a "soft" roll-out but will be formally announced once the hire is completed, hopefully in the next few weeks.

6:55 Board Composition

- President Elect update - Grace has decided she is not able to be the next president, or to serve on the executive committee this year. We are working on identifying someone else and will keep you posted.
- Vacancies: per articles 3.10 and 4.9 in Lerner's by-laws, the board may elect members and/or officers if there is a vacancy for more than 60 days. Christy Brooks rolled off as secretary on June 30, 2016. Etan Gumerman rolled off as treasurer on June 30, 2016. The positions were not filled and have been vacant since then.
  - The Committee on Trustees recommends Richard Goldberg for the position of Secretary (discussion as necessary, and vote)
    - *Motion to consider Richard Goldberg for Secretary made by Jon B.; seconded by Tal Wittle. Passes Unanimously (12 votes)*
  - The Committee on Trustees recommends Sue Egnoto for the position of Treasurer (discussion as necessary, and vote)
    - *Motion to consider Sue Egnoto for Treasurer made by Andrew Janiak; seconded by Jeremy Browner. Passes unanimously (12 votes)*

7:10 HOS Report

- 143 students total, 57 preschool 85 elementary
- Cecilia's illness and retirement: we are in close touch with her and the plan in place to have two co-lead teachers (Samantha Jay and Emily Hayes) in kindergarten and hire Erica Nobles for Little Leners is working well
- Security update was part of tour at beginning; continue to be a closed campus, window film, standardized locks, all staff wear walkie talkies
- Improvements in reading curriculum
- IXL, previously used just for math, now being used as a supplement for language arts
- Added new staff person: Erica Nobles, learning coordinator for kids who need a little extra support, she splits her time between that and Little Leners. Background in special education.
- Paul Price will come in for reading stories.
- Parent social at Allison's home.
- Please check out new website. Work in progress but wicked awesome.
- Mosaic wall is under construction: committee includes staff and original wall builders.
- New electives and programs for kids.
- Our liability insurance covers everyone who comes into the school for any reason - someone had a question about that.

7:20 Development update – please put the evening of October 22 into your calendars

- Board is invited and included in all major donor initiatives, beginning with a Sukkah Under the Stars event. Bigger development committee report next time. Rachel will be contacting each of us to set up a solicitation for the annual fund.

7:25 Detailed Finance Report

- \$124K deficit for 15-16, but enrollment and income were up. Expenses were \$217K more than budgeted.
- Under budgeted? Were budget items missed? Unexpected one-time expenses? Overspending?
- Discussion of Summary Finance Report (will be uploaded to DropBox)
- Year End Notes:
  - Tuition and tuition discounts were up (over-budget)
  - On the expense side, several instances of mis-budgeting: salary under-budgeted by \$90K
  - Overspending in the Admin line
  - Mis-budgeted for TADS
  - One-time: accountants, benefits, etc.
  - Facility: We budgeted \$38K for PJC mortgage; did not budget for \$11K in interest; under-budgeted for JCC lease by \$30K
- Why it was bad, and what is being done:
  - Deficit fatigue: cannot run another deficit -- put pressure on everyone to be conservative about enrollment and best case thinking about expenses - Make budget realistic

- Make budget consistent- align it with our goals
- Be flexible - allow for adjustment
- Be measurable! Everything needs to line up with our accounting system. Historically, we have not had the correct systems and people in place.
  - Organizational processes cannot walk out the door with the person
  - Minimize manual processing - it is ripe for errors. For example TADS is helping a lot. Now Quickbooks will generate reports without additional manual entry.
  - Need multiple ways to validate numbers. For example, in the past we have not verified monthly payroll as compared to budget. Can do the same with TADS to get monthly income and project annual income.
  - We need deeper accounting skills and training. Our decision to hire Finance and Operations Director aims to correct this deficit. And on top of that the board will scrutinize and question.
- 2016-17 Budget Dashboard:
  - Built in flexibility in this budget. For example, the unscheduled maintenance; budgeted \$60K for JCC rent, though we will probably get \$30 back
  - Enrollment is well above forecast. Very little attrition. PS almost full.
  - We are \$28K over budget

#### 7:50 Security Committee Report - Kathryn

- We enacted structural and policy changes.
- Regular police department visits
- Locking classroom doors
- Glazed windows looking out to parking lot
- Guy Sapirstein gave an excellent training which changed the culture within the school so that the staff really understands school security.
- Do we want to hire a security guard. Min 6hrs/day. \$30-\$60K/yr. Committee was evenly divided on whether we should go this route.

#### 8:00 Executive Session on Benchmarks

Notes taken by Hollis Gauss, President, and Tal Lewin Wittle, Past President