

TWIN CITIES ACADEMY

Board Meeting

Tuesday November 29, 2018

5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board Meeting was called to order by Board Member Elizabeth Neilson in absentia of Holst at 5:15 p.m. Board member Holst took over upon his arrival at 5:24 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Elizabeth Neilson, Tamika Rhodes, Shannon Hady, Rich Holst, Phil Jemielita (via phone) and Krista Varley (via phone).

Others in attendance: Betsy Lueth, Executive Director; Brenda Reedy, Recording Secretary

Public members: Jose Gabino Meza-Ortiz, current TCA student; William and Yolanda Davis, parents of a TCA student, Selina Gant and Clifford Dodd, aunt and uncle of TCA student; Kamisha Titus, parent of TCA student, Andrew Ng, TCA staff member, other unnamed public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the October board minutes was made by Hady, second by Rhodes. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Add Parent Involvement Partnership (PIP) bullet to reports. Motion to approve agenda with changes by Rhodes, second by Hady. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were several members present regarding a discipline issue, 3 chose to speak. They were given 5 minutes to state their case.

Selina Cant—spoke on behalf of her niece and nephew who both attend TCA. She discussed the importance of having a discipline policy for all students to adhere to. She voiced concern about an altercation that occurred in a classroom of her niece and perhaps she felt that the correct steps weren't followed during the altercation and wanted to know how social media bullying and physical altercations were being handled at TCA.

Clifford Dodd—he also spoke on behalf of the physical altercation in a classroom of his niece. He spoke about feeling safe at school and how the situation may have been mishandled. He said it's a bad situation all around and he doesn't feel good about it.

Kamisha Titus—parent of the student involved in altercation. Her concerns were the ability of the teacher to break up altercations, the time frame and manner in which communication got to her and the lack of follow up to see how the student is fairing following the altercation. She made a claim that due to the concussion from this incident student can't play basketball. She was concerned why it took a week to get the story from all involved or witnesses. Ms. Titus also mentioned that she has taught her children to fight back if they are being attacked.

NEW BUSINESS

Discipline Policy Change

Administration is looking over data from a 5 year span to see how they can best address the issue of our Discipline Policy. More data will be available at the December meeting. Several facets are being considered; peer conflict/social media exchange, handling those that film altercations, how to discern who “started it” and handling it if the victim physically fights back. More discussion ensued but there were several options TCA provides such as imbedding social/emotional learning into content areas, new outside therapy services we have a contract with, Dreamline coaches, Youth Frontiers program for 7th and 9th graders and possibility of inviting Nancy Riestenberg from MDE in for assistance. Final discussion was finding a bridge between what we currently have and what TCA had in the past. It was also asked about looking at the office referrals to see what the infractions are.

OLD BUSINESS

Bylaws Update

Discussion ensued regarding a time deadline for changes of the bylaws to be brought to the Board by the February meeting which will allow processing and turn around time for the June meeting goal. Howes and Varley along with Lueth will meet to work on this with a TCA lawyer having the final drafting rights due to state requirements.

Marketing and Retention Plan

Lueth reported that while TCA offers a variety of clubs, the timing and type of clubs vary and are often hard to staff. TCA is looking at whether compensation would improve accountability. The question of whether transportation would be viable for after school clubs; with our bussing it would be difficult for bus transportation, however, public transportation might be possible.

High School Showcase

This is taking place, Thursday, December 6th for the first time. There will be students and staff present with all 8th grade students invited personally by TCA postcard sent by Ancel.

Increased Signage

Several ideas were given such as long term marquee, mission and vision statement posted around the school and uplifting quotes to brighten things up.

ACTION ITEMS

Treasurer’s Report

Phil reported things are on track for this year. Motion to accept October Financials by Jemielita, second by Neilson. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Committee Reports

Governance

No report.

Finance

More to come next year.

Policy

Committee didn’t get a chance to meet, more at the next meeting.

PIP

They are actively working on equity events.

January and February—Bridging Cultures Through Dance

March—Talks About Race-panel of a variety of racial perspectives

Ongoing—still collecting Box Tops—for funding for PIP events

Executive Director

TCA is currently ahead of last year's 6th and 9th grade enrollment numbers. UST visit happened and was overall positive. Communication was an area of concern but the equity work is being noticed.

Teachers Report

Neilson reported lots of project based learning is happening, staff are going above and beyond by staying late and tutoring and such. It's a good feeling this year.

Hady commented it feels good, different feel than last year.

There was a good reminder to keep in mind the bulk of our school is the amazing students and staff who are doing great things!

Motion to adjourn at 6:18 p.m. by Rhodes, second by Neilson. Motion carried unanimously.

Next meeting is December 13th at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Brenda Reedy.