

Da Vinci Schools
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 17, 2011

In attendance: Chet Pipkin, Donald Brann, Cheryl Cooke, Tom Cox, Stefanie Fujinami, Matt Wunder, Steve Wallis, Nicole Tempel, Tom Johnstone, Yolanda Saldana

- I. Call to Order: Chet called to order the Board Meeting of Da Vinci Schools at 7:35am on March 17, 2011 at the Wiseburn School District Office.

Cheryl – so proud of our students, seeing how they are behaving – well, supportive of each other at talent show, even those who were talent challenge, enjoy doing exhibition

Don - #1 reason to be pleased about because that is why we are here, amazing board, Chet brings so much to us, so impressed on what we have done over the past two years, all the supports, no wonder we are successful, plan ahead and think things through, great to be a part of Da Vinci team

Chet – 99% of focus is on our students and the rest is easy

- II. Tom – 2nd Interim Budget Report
- a. Not actual budget for '11-12 and '12-13 (show that we are going)
 - b. Mid-year cuts = 10%, next year less \$350/student.
 - c. Based on Prop 38.
 - d. 2010-11 = last \$150,000 of grant – brings us to a 1.2 million at the end of this year.
 - e. We receive \$400/student = \$258,000.
 - f. We receive SPED = only get it if we spend it – we should get at least 100,000.
 - g. Lottery – we are now getting lottery dollars that we hadn't gotten last year. Looked at our prior ADA and receiving now.
 - h. Money from EIA –\$ 40,000 – categorical block grant – free and reduced.
 - i. \$13,000 = mandated cost for ADA (probably one time).
 - j. \$82,000 = not getting tier 3 money so give schools something – ½ money in April and half in June/July. (probably one time) The one time monies are creating a reserve for us.
 - k. Project lead the way, \$ 60,000 from chevron (don't expect to have same next year, but do expect to have expense cost for equipment)
 - l. This year we should end up \$500,000 to the good. We were very conservative and Yolanda and staff doing a great job staying on budget. A little shifting here and there but overall doing a great job. If we had the mid-year state cuts, that would have wiped that out. It's better for us to be conservative than not.
 - m. Cash is okay for this year. Going to have to continue to watch cash.
 - n. Start up programs for next year – developing next year's budget. 5% cash reserve =reserve \$1.5 million at end of this year. Catch 22 – charters that only run high schools

are in good financial state. Make sure we are offering full service – lot of things that are full service that are not costly and lot of things are full service that are costly. We're in a old building were costs are low. Building reserves, strengthening.

- o. Enrollment projections – P1 we were at 651. Basing on ADA at about 648.
- p. Teacher salaries – this year dropped average to \$49,000 (new teachers). Next year it might raise – looking to hire teachers with more experience.
- q. Looking pretty good in materials/supplies. We will need more technology.
- r. Next step, Matt and Tom will sign budget and then it goes to the county.
- s. Questions?
 - i. Chet – really grateful that Tom is here and really pleased with leadership and experience that Tom brings to us. Doing a terrific job. Very efficient and thorough job – solid agreement with everything Tom said. Continuing fiscally managing this organization. Enhance. Keep even bottom line and prudently amount put away.
 - ii. Tom – if state can balance its budget, make planning easier on us.
 - iii. Chet – never dip into what we built, add more, build at 5%.
 - iv. Don – extraordinary environment, depending on income from state (not very stable to work with), we continue to find grants and other sources to supplement.
 - v. Tom – not having to worry about money, when no money creates moral issues (uncertainty), allows teachers to teach.
 - vi. Don – adding significantly to our ADA, and then after we are done adding, we will not have those significant jumps. Any concerns in the future where we will not be receiving these big chunks of money.
 - vii. Tom – right now we are in this model of growth and eventually it will stabilize. Increasing reserves because we are adding students. Will not have those marginal costs when we flatten out. That's when negotiations get tough, less flexibility.
- t. **Motion to approve Budget = Cheryl moved to approve, Don seconds the motion**

III. Motion to approve minutes = Don moved to approve, Cheryl seconds the motion

Matt – Would like to bring up counseling.

Don – What is happening in Redondo – seriously situation.

- IV. Teacher evaluation system – Steve
 - a. Teachers being evaluated formally – evaluate if they are going to be returning next year. They are given expectations of what we expect of them. Example teacher observation forms, where the teacher writes comments on growth and development were reviewed. This is done 2/3 times a year, so they are able to take one step at a time. Teachers are asked to pick a goal to work on and over course of year, improve on it.
 - b. Board Feedback

- i. Chet = to get such quality feedback, world class best practice, it does not get any better than this. Steve = teachers want to see copies of notes, comments are want to learn and grow posture. Chet = create folder with few observations and expectations to use on yours. Steve = expectations – some are clear on and expected by teachers and some are not as clear, require knowledge. Content knowledge rubric , making it measurable. Today professional development day – majority of time – classroom environment – by end of today, classrooms will reflect the classroom rubric.
- ii. Don- time for collaboration, allows are staff to be engaged and fired up. Outstanding that our schedule allows for this.
- iii. Chet – doesn't get any better than this. Everything cascades down and flows up. Well done.

V. School Facilities – Tom, Matt, Don

a. Sepulveda school –

- i. lot of work to do starting June 1st
- ii. AYSO will be out by May 31st; they are working hard to move out
- iii. John has been over a number of times; if anyone wants to go look at the site, they are welcome to
- iv. Some rooms don't need as much work as others
- v. Bringing over 3 classes, following year, we will need some portables - Design grades 9, 10, 11 grades
- vi. We'll see how it works with neighbors and cars. Don – what do you mean by that? Tom – will students be able to drive to school. AYSO has about 40 employees, we have about 25 employees. May have to create some policies on that.
- vii. Matt – What in terms of % risk of them not moving out? Tom – Low. They want to move out; their goal is to get out early May. I think they will move out even if they have to on June 1st. To make it the way we perfectly want it, its going to take time to modify, but it's a good site now.
- viii. Don – good site for project based school, workplace. Tom – Now Imperial School is there. Matt – Exceptional learning opportunity for our students to do some service learning.
- ix. Tom – Option to have new 9th graders there. Then only 256 kids there. Don't have to worry about John remodeling, where as 400-450 kids going to make it challenging. But from educational point of view, not choice of student leadership, as there will not be older grades on campus. Again, may not be perfect August 15th, but will be able to start school. Nicole – Da Vinci created a great culture from older students to 9th graders; we would lose leadership and mentoring. Steve – example – First month of school, we dealt with tagging in bathrooms and after first month, that problem has gone away. When freshman come, they have a sense of what things they can get away with and things they

cannot. After the first month, it just stops because everyone else is not interested. Cheryl = Upper classmen give them good mentoring and influence. There appears to be a smooth transition from an outside perspective. Matt – People know what they are choosing more and more when they choose Da Vinci. Steve – Leadership: 9th graders to lead 9th graders. Cheryl – We have a small environment, more family, more personalized.

- b. Matt – Nicole going to talk about OCF site, Don has been doing a lot of work behind the scenes with the City of El Segundo.
- i. Don = Spoke to Greg Carpenter and City of El Segundo because of the concern with OCF being so generous but not being aware of what requirements by the city. We need to get a copy of Permit of Use and ask questions about innovation operations. OCF works well because of the days of week that the facility is used. C.U.P has many restrictions in it - is this going to be possible? We do not need a lot of parking. Church provides off-site parking and shuttles for Sundays. Greg thinks C.U.P needs to be modified, which takes between 2-4 months. He turned it over to head of planning, Kim Christenson, and Don turned it over to Matt. We are anxious to be there but do not want to hurt anything they are trying to do. We should find out who OCF used to get the C.U.P. in the first place. We can get it done in April, May, and June. Matt – showed up on Kim’s doorstep, sent email, no response. Option is to have elective classrooms and independent study – 4/5 of operation at current site. And still linking closely with OCF with other 1/5. Tom – If the Academy is here, there is room for it next year, but the following year, when we bring in another 9th grade, the academy will have to go somewhere else. We do not want to jeopardize their conditional use permit, but they do have nice classrooms. In back of my mind, what about ‘12-13 – we will have to find another building to pay rent. Don – Tom, you not concerned about opening school, but in ‘12-13, will not have the space for it. Tom – For example, the restrooms and parking. Space wise, there are enough classrooms. We would definitely have to have a plan for ‘12-13. Don – I am for pursuing this. If we can get the C.U.P. done in 4-6 months. Only concern about it is limited in size it can be. That is a temporary place for it before it gets to be a better place. Tom – Matt, looking for direction? Matt – Next step talk to Wiseburn Board. Work with OCF to do electives and independent study. Pursue site for year one, here. Then if things do not work out with other site. Chet – What are the concerns? Matt – covering religious things on the wall; it makes me nervous that I cannot get feedback and been able to meet with the City. Don – Met with council head, turned it over to division head. I sit on board. I’m optimistic. Chet – Thinks the same. We’ll get things through the city. Pros and cons here, pros and cons there, clarity to that would be helpful.

- VI. Innovation Academy – Nicole
 - a. Different Models: Two day model, ½ day model and independent study.
 - i. Two day = ages 5-14
 - 1. Multi-age grouping approach
 - 2. Have capacity to serve 176 students, 172 families expressed it might be an option for them
 - ii. Information meetings – 200 families attend, average 50 enrollment forms
 - iii. Enrollment wise, is this something families want? – We looked at total addressable market, engaging families, and interviewing families. Where are the people who are coming to us? Where are they coming from? In middle of compiling that information, there were a lot of preschool and Kindergarten families at our 1st information meeting and almost exclusively middle school families at our 2nd information meeting.
 - iv. Five classrooms is ideal space.
 - v. Need about 5 teachers, 2 academic coaches, 1 SPED teacher. At this point, we have not collected SPED information because we thought families might perceive it as exclusion.
 - vi. Lottery set for April 1st. After that, we can find out needs for special needs, and then find staff to serve those needs.
 - vii. Style will be Project-based
 - viii. Social/Emotional education – non violent communication program.
 - ix. All students have access to GATE program – arts, creative writing, holistic, outside of box talents
 - x. Looking at family facilitated learning vs. homeschooling.
 - 1. Through online work, through learning facility, or through traditional homeschool
 - 2. We will be supporting families –8:00-9:00am and 3:00-4:00pm for interventions and families will have access to independent study teacher throughout with week.
 - 3. CCSA convention
 - a. Found out that other schools are doing this model
 - b. Probably 50 other people doing same thing
 - c. Thank for opportunity to go there
 - 4. Teacher hours are 8:00am-4:00pm. Student hours 9:00am-3:00pm
 - 5. Other schools that are doing this model are offering resources to elective classes/educational material \$150. Families can donate it by not using up all voucher money. It is another way to support the school. \$150 can go to elective class vendors on Wednesday (Teachers do not see students on Wednesday). Students can do improv, art, music with Haven Academy on Wednesdays.
 - 6. Comments/Questions

- a. Don – Amazed at turn out for information meetings, speaks to my initial concerns of who wants this product. How do you let people know about information meetings? Nicole – Word of mouth, homeschool communities and networks, park days. It's been really exciting and families are really excited. Families are thankful for creating this opportunity. Don – Really fascinating. Use of term "voucher" because it reinstates the issue of No Child Left Behind; instead substitute word "allotment" or "family support". Thanks for very good over view.
 - b. Matt – What we learned from high school is we had a lot of student interest after the Lottery.
 - c. Chet – Once again, impressed with depth and thoughtfulness that is going into this. Heard back from friends and associates, being at the charter school conference and about Nicole – the leadership and energy that has taken place. Da Vinci brand is really growing and flourishing. A lot of buzz, just generally speaking. Make sure we have everything to take action so you can get what you want.
- b. Things Nicole needs from Board: Go or no go with academy, approval of Budget, where it would be held, start conversations with 2 potential teachers.
- c. Budget
- i. ADA \$5000 to \$4650 – \$350 cut that LACO is expecting from us. Tom -- gave Nicole this model. This is the potential Academy budget. Everyone of these dollars is Independent Study from the States point of view. Every student will have independent study contract. Included in budget - block grant, SPED money if we get SPED students, expenditures, average cost/teacher, administrative cost, supplies/materials, insurance, professional services, cost where we thought we might be short is start up costs.
 - 1. Start up costs: Furniture/equipment \$50,000
 - 2. Technology \$55,000
 - 3. Content management system, example Compass Learning \$67,000
(These costs are not reflected in this budget.)
 - ii. Planning grant \$600,000 – using some for K-8 piece not just high school. It's sitting in reserves. These numbers are based on very small classes at OCF and very generously funded expenses.
 - iii. Where are risks and gaps in budget? Overall, upside needs to be more than downside. We do not have to have teachers until July and can give them a 3-month contract. As far as facility, we can offer one class at 18 and another at 22. If program does not go at all, we have to reassign the administrator. Tom J. - Our board would want to see facility plans for high school and how many rooms be allocated to this program. Restrooms will have to get plumbing improvements. We can see where C.U.P. is going to work between two sites.

Can we get OCF's conditional use permit? We do not have to hire teachers tomorrow, but we can start putting things in place. Even with ½ the enrollment, we can say this is how we are going to do it. We did not expect to do whole K-8 piece in one year, but there has been advantages to do it in one year. We will have to make sure plumbing and parking works. Matt – greatest risk to budget will be student enrollment. If families don't like innovation academy, they will just go back to homeschool. We need to run top quality program and make sure their voices are heard. Engagement is key and of course quality. Don – We are good at that. When the high school opened, we hit the number right on the nose. Matt – Upside is greater than downside. If we start here, upside gets higher. Nicole – Fear/risk of more \$350. Like Matt, worry about retention factor. Are families going to want to go back home? We need to have a strong Independent Study model. Tom – All Independent Study contracts have to be done correctly to get money from the State. Oceanside School at 750 kids sets up contracts. Chet – To early to motion but we can check in. When it is time to motion, we are going to launch this according to the subject guards. We cannot make any commitments to hire or pay, but we can have interview discussions. When we do contracts, we will build in risk factors and make everything transparent. Cheryl – Feeling somewhat comfortable. What could derail SPED piece? Why are kids being homeschooled? Is it because high SPED? If we share site here, how would they share with high school kids? How many are really Wiseburn residents? How many are really homeschooled? Food services between high school and elementary? Don – Won over. Good job at confronting fears and answering questions. Going along with assumption of 10% SPED. We need to give this a try, or we will never know. May be we are getting into something that is on the leading edge of what's happening in our country. Conceptually, looking at the big picture, it looks good. All about meeting people's needs and customer service. Let's go for it. Tom J. – Going into Year 3 and we have option of start K-8. If we do not start it, someone else will start it. We have the possibility to have hybrid – some kids here and some over at OCF. Logistically, no concern, we'll pull it off. Getting phone calls from all over South Bay that they are really interested in this. Chet – Entertain a motion at about 10:20am.

d. Special Ed – Nicole

- i. Until April 1st, we will not have numbers for Special Ed. With different options SELPAS has, they will work with us; feel comfortable having SELPAS as our partner. Tom J. - What is Oceanside's SPED? Tom C. – Might be more attractive for students ½ day model; may be there is a model we can reference. Matt – Our risk is going to be greater. What is the number we should insert into our budget. Don – Use CCSA conference resources. Nicole – entrance exam, to make sure we can serve the students; build budget for SPED. Chet – Looks like financial SPED model is not going to work, then we will stop. Cheryl – Feeling

better about SPED. How any years do we have to do K-8 piece? 5 years Tom J. – that's what is in the Charter. Cheryl – Do not want to dilute anything that we have been doing. Matt – Also, evaluating students who are not good candidates for independent study. Nicole – 50% homeschool, 50% not homeschool. Facilities options are OCF, WLAC, and our current site. OCF is a beautiful facility, low cost, great in neighborhood, but their program is growing, which has impacted the number of classrooms we need. They are on site on Mondays during the day and Wednesday mornings. The staff we spoke to are anxious about moving furniture in and out for Wednesdays and Sundays. At our current site, in doing a preliminary walk-through with John, he suggested putting up some gates. Need to work with Steve to ensure high school has adequate space.

- e. **Chet – Motion to approve . Don approves motion to open Da Vinci Innovation Academy in Summer of 2011 with those budget, facility, personnel guards. Cheryl seconds the motion.**
- f. Comments: Tom J. – Are Art and Gary on board? Chet – Guess is we have good consensus on this. Cheryl – Nicole has done a great job. Come a long ways from the beginning.

(Reworking the agenda scheduling: schools facilities/Innovation 8:25am – 10:25am.)

- VII. Matt - Family engagement and retention from agenda will move to April meeting. As of last week, we had 395 kids on waiting list, and we are enrolling 256 spaces.
- VIII. Counseling
 - a. Matt - Yet to create the budget.
 - b. Don - Daily Breeze article
 - i. Percentage of students that have met requirements and ready for CA University.
 - ii. 42% of Redondo beach
 - iii. 84% of Mira Costa
 - iv. Redondo uses intern counselors. To meet budget, cut back on counselors. Do not have the money that Manhattan Beach has to hire private counselors.
 - v. Our Learned Lesson - Really support our seniors. Redondo did not take enough required classes – ex. Foreign language. We can have school based counselor and college counselor at each high school campus. Cap academic dean salary at \$75k and hire 3 Counselors
 - vi. Cheryl – Wiseburn District is waiting for first class to graduate to see how they do before they evaluate Da Vinci. Matt- Confident to get best, supreme and bright counselors.

IX. Closed Session 10:45-11:30am

(Notes: Don - Idea of setting meeting dates – meet quarterly; have 2 day retreat with 5 person board and some staff; Chet – Owes board feedback for metrics; April Meeting - Enrollment Data/Family Retention/Summer School)

X. Action Items

1. Contract with School Wise Press
2. Consultant Agreement with Andrew McGregor for the teaching of Pre-Calculus seminar class second semester- cost of \$4,500.
3. School Facilities (OCF, Sepulveda, Current DV Site and New High School) Approve DV Design move to Sepulveda
4. Approve revised Independent Study board policy
5. Ability to move from current BTSA provider Hawthorne High to High Tech High
6. **Cheryl motioned to approve, Don seconds the motion**

XI. Enrollment Data – Yolanda

- a. This Saturday is registration for High School
- b. 256 students will be coming for the 9th grade
- c. 10th grade applicants are still wait listed
- d. Making sure student courses and academic standing is good
- e. We did not have to do lottery for 11th and 12th because there were enough spaces
- f. Mentorship program with current students and new students
- g. How many residents do we have? $\frac{1}{2}$ of graduating class from Dana; more kids from Dana every year. In Freshman class, 147 Wiseburn residents.

XII. Chet - Meeting adjourned 12:02pm