



**Da Vinci Schools Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2010**

Meeting called to order at 8:01 a.m.

Board Members Present:

Chet Pipkin, President
Don Brann, Vice President
Cheryl Cook, Secretary
Gary Wayland, Treasurer

Staff Present:

Matt Wunder, Executive Director
Nicole Temple, Principal
Steve Wallis, Assistant Principal
Colleen O'Boyle, Academic Dean
Tom Johnstone, Wiseburn Superintendent
Tom Cox, Wiseburn Chief Business Official

Visitors Present:

Yolanda Saldana-Bautista, Stand-in Secretary
Marshall Vallelunga, Da Vinci Parent
Melanie Franko, Da Vinci Parent

Action Item: October 18, 2010 minutes unanimously approved.

First: Brann; Second: Cook; Motion carries.

From the public

Da Vinci parent, Marshall Vallelunga, stated that Exhibition went very well last night.

Information from the Board

- Cheryl – Very impressed by the students' professionalism at Exhibition Night. Expressed thanks to Nicole for all her hard work at Da Vinci.
- Don – Reflecting on movie *Waiting for Superman*, would like to see a documentary in a couple of years that showcases Da Vinci students. Director Davis Guggenheim came to the city of El Segundo and Don is working on making a connection with him.
 - Otis College of Design released a report on Creative Academy of Los Angeles region which speaks of the impact it is making across Los Angeles- employment trends, etc. Document was passed out to the Board.
 - DV should consider marketing to Hermosa, Manhattan and Redondo Beach areas. Redondo Beach has opened a new Christian High School, "Ambassador High School," showing that families are looking outside the traditional public schools of the area.

Discussion Items

1. Financial Report (Tom Cox)

- To stay sound, the budget is not being adjusted to reflect new monies that have come in
- Budget will overall stay the same. We are changing account strings (internal tweaks) that don't affect overall budget totals.
- Yolanda is tracking expenditures internally for Da Vinci
- Financial update will be ready for the December Board Meeting



- Attendance of 97% shows students want to be in school
 - Budget was created conservatively at 95%
 - After Flu season, Tom will review budget and decide if it should be adjusted
- Chet- Thankful to Tom C for a fantastic job. Depth and richness Tom brings validates that we made the right choice in partnering with him. Also thanked Matt and Nicole for running the schools well.
- Cheryl - New website was money well spent. Content is rich and informative.

2. Charter Schools Revolving Loan Program (Don)

- Don came across loans that are available for new charter schools at low interest. He feels it is something Da Vinci should look into.
- Tom C- These types of loan programs often have requisites, such as needing to be a start up school. Is willing to take a look at it.
- Chet- There are various opportunities available to charters and public schools. We should use the relationship we have with Wiseburn School District to look into funding sources, possibly helping each other out in the future.

3. Update on Math Rigor (Nicole)

- Math rigor is still a challenge. Other schools as well are struggling in this area.
- Things we have done:
 - Pre-assessment through UCLA
 - Changed the sequence of classes– We start with Geometry in 9th grade since some of the students have already taken Algebra in 8th grade. Algebra is not a requirement for Geometry. Don raised the following concern: We are drawing from so many different schools, are we sure most students have taken Algebra? Nicole will gather the numbers and provide it to the Board.
 - Seminar classes have changed. DV Design has it first in the day, Science at the end of the day.
 - Increased the number of support classes. Next year every core teacher will have 2 seminars: 1 “fun” seminar and the other a support seminar for their core students.
 - Working with Study Island- A curriculum that helps teachers with support skills to teach and reach all students.
 - Attended iNACOL Conference- Learned School of One Program where students are in a heterogeneous classroom setting and assessed to figure out what tasks the student needs to work on. The program gives them specific tasks to work on based on their individual needs.
 - Calculus prep class is also available.
 - Steve- Offering a college level class afterschool with other non-Da Vinci teachers. It is more of a club since students do not get college credit. Some students are struggling in it but enjoy the class so much they have stayed on. Students are organizing a Math-a-thon to help with the cost of a scientific calculator they can take with them in the future.
- Chet- Key questions to answer over time: *How do we know what the needs of the students are? We know it feels right, but how do we know that we are delivering for them?*

4. Update on Metrics (Matt)

- Has begun the process of looking into what other schools have done as far as metrics. Through discussion will look at what we feel is most important for DV.

- Visited Envision Schools and Brian Greenberg. Agreed with Brian that test scores are necessary but insufficient.
- Chet and Matt have worked on rough draft of Metrics. Draft was read-a-loud and emailed to the Board. Also discussed document on Measuring Student Achievement that will serve as a “dashboard” for what and how we measure.
 - What do we measure?
 - How do we measure?
 - How much weighting do we give each?
 - These are the results?

Focus: *What do we promise each student who attends a Da Vinci School?*

4 elements of Strat Planning (Chet)

1. Strategic in Nature: What are we really trying to achieve?
 2. Fact based: Honest about what we want to accomplish. Strip out opinion and emotion.
 3. Measure everything that we do: How will we measure?
 4. Share the belief
- Gary- We need to assure that everything we draw up is definable, measureable and quantifiable. It is important to also measure success after students graduate. How many actually went to college and beyond? Look at student 1yr, 6yrs, etc. after graduation- Where are they then?
 - Tom J- Agrees it is important to begin collecting data now or we won't have it 6 – 7 years out to make an analysis. Used the study on Head Start as an example. It began in the 1960's and has followed all participating students.

Next Steps: Matt is in charge of getting student, teacher and admin input and collecting data. Board- will review information and determine whether or not we are headed in the right direction.

Steve shared the Net Promoter Score for a survey Da Vinci students took last week.

- 629 students participated
- Lower numbers for School of Science than Design, a contradiction from last year.
- More disconcerting is the drop in rating from 9th grade to 10th grade
- Chet- strongly encourages looking at *how* we measure and to not make any conclusions on the results yet. We must begin by taking snapshots over time then we can look at that data and set up benchmarks. There are many factors that can contribute to the results. Key is to not manipulate the data to get higher numbers, but to compare the data over time.
- Teachers, parents, Board members will be given the survey as well.

5. Enrollment Strategy Decisions (Matt & Steve)

- Key questions are: *How many students are the right number for us? Who are we targeting?*
- First informational meeting was at Dana in conjunction with their High School Night.
- Da Vinci Road Show has visited Westside Neighborhood School, Bud Carson, The Willows, Wilders Prep, Prairie Vista, New West Charter, and Rogers Middle. Da Vinci students have been presenting at the meetings and receiving a large amount of applause.
- Erin Davis will be in charge of contacting all residents that come out of Dana and invite them to come visit Da Vinci. Will also be asking Dana families if they will not be coming to DV. Erin will work to engage with the registered students and assure they “stick”.

- Presentation of recruitment video.
- Gary- One of our Metrics should be to measure our loss.
- Chet- Are we to be what the community wants us to be or are we something else?

Discussion on enrollment options- How many seats are we going to have open next year?

- One option is to take in more 9th graders and lower class sizes.
 - This will hopefully help alleviate the attrition rate- Design had a high attrition rate last year.
 - If we have attrition rate of 18%, then we can have students held back and not feel urged to backfill.
 - Envision schools (Impact Academy) has a model of 415 schools. We have a model of 536 kids. More money for us and don't need to fundraise for money. They do.
- Gary- From our inception we were going to expect no fundraising.
 - A UC study on students that transferred in to school found a difference in student participation in the community-> less alumni participation and lower student participation in school clubs, etc., compared to students that were there all 4 years.
 - Likes the idea of front loading and maintaining these students throughout the 4 years.
- Tom C- From financial perspective we need to make sure we stay financially sound with the numbers we choose to go with.
- Don- we need to take a balanced approach and handle the economic side and look towards Wiseburn history to help us set up our schools as they have been fairly successful.
- Cheryl-Interested in seeing the data on why students are leaving.
- Chet- as our schools definition is refined, families will make the appropriate choice for them. We do not need to select as they will select what is best for them.

Next Steps: The board wants to have more input- see the economic impact on the various scenarios. Tom C and Matt will work on the numbers, present to the board. Time sensitive because the lottery is approaching and families are asking.

6. Design or Science Moves to Old Sepulveda School? (Matt)

- Enrollment decisions will domino which school moves location.
 - How long will we be there?
 - Are we doing the K-8?
 - Which model are we going with?
 - Will we have the Imperial School bungalows?

Next Steps: Matt will continue to work on the transition plan.

7. Joint Board Meeting, Acquisition of New School Site (Matt)

- Agreed to present Wiseburn School Board with the possible dates of December 7th or 10th for the joint meeting.
- Tom J. will let the DV Board know on Monday the 29th of November.

8. Update on Da Vinci Innovation Academy (Nicole, Melanie and Matt)

Key question: *Why do we want to do this? Are there students that want this? If so, what are the mechanics of what it looks like? Governing Board? Administered by? Expense? Economic implications?*



- We do not want to create a competition with WSD but tap into a population that hasn't been targeted.

To have a good and broad education we are looking at adding intervention and extension

Two types of work:

- Head down work and Collaborative work-
Head down work can be done outside of school where collaborative work must be done in school. The core of our program would be to focus on the collaborative time.
- Focus is on a special population: Military, Peace Officers, Firemen, etc.
 - A 3 day at school model- 2 days a week full day. Intervention students stay an extra hour. An optional day (Monday) would be for extension activities.

Two schools- 1 design and 1 science

- Same teacher would teach both in the same classroom
- 4 staff members 1 K, 1 1-2 grades, 1 3-4 grades, 1 5-6 grades.
- Teachers teach in dual-level combo classes- multi-age classes based on developmental level.
- Teachers would spend 2 yrs with them to really get to know them.

Educational Principles:

1. Social Emotional Learning
2. Project based learning
3. Personalized, gifted and talented education

Measuring student success:

- Placement, entrance and growth exams

What do kids do when not in school:

- Teacher would define essential skills
- Create choice menus with parents to master skills
- Collaboratively work with parents to create the plan and work that must be completed.
- Parent works with students and at end of designated time frame shows that work to the teacher
- Off site activities: fieldtrips, online programs, projects, experiments, etc.- parent network to help each other out

Parent support- Monthly units where:

- teacher presents curriculum
- monthly parent tutoring sessions for specific subjects
- parent library with resources
- book club to explore parenting an pedagogy
- cyber supply portal to download resources
- resource board for parents to help parents work collaboratively with other parents
- UCLA is interested in helping us with giving parents pedagogy classes and credit for the classes

We would like to explore whether we can create a 3rd school holding the K-8 and satisfy the need of the charters to have a K-8. Matt is requesting to have an attorney(s) look into that possibility. Costs would be part of that \$10,000 that was approved from last meeting.



What attorney to use? Would like to work with Wiseburn to select the right attorney. Tom C. recommends using Andelson and have them connect with other attorneys.

5 focus groups will be held at Belkin User Experience Labs: Scheduled for 13th-18th of December

Next Steps: Matt will give the results based on enough data by December 31st as a tentative deadline so Board can provide permission to go to WSD with recommendation to move forward.

9. Update on Internships for 11th grade (Colleen O'Boyle)

- Internships are slotted for second semester. Only juniors will participate.
- Considering only having 3 week internship
- There are various models out there:
 - High Tech High program- 3 weeks of full time immersion at the job site.
 - Ender sessions leave for last 3 weeks of junior year and work in the industry.
 - Envision Schools program in San Francisco will also be looked at.
- Do we give the students a choice, much like the real world? They research, apply, and potentially get fired. Or do we provide more guardrails, setting up the internship and monitoring it.
- Chet recommends looking into Verbum Dei High School's model

10. Scientific Research Data Collection/Polling (Don & Matt)

Moved to next meeting

Action Items:

First: Wayland; Second: Cook; Motion carries.

The following were unanimously approved:

1. Data consultancy contract—Nick Valbuena--\$2400 @ \$30/hr up to 80 hours
2. Studio Roja- Graphic Design work @ \$50/hr up to \$2,500
3. Leadership consultancy contract—Donna Elder \$4,000

Closed session (11:30am-12:00pm)

Items approved in closed session:

1. Erin Davis—Full-time school counselor
2. Natasha Bayus – Counseling Consultant

Not approved:

3. IT separation from Wiseburn and

Upcoming Events

Next Board meeting will be in December 2010, schedule tba.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.