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Board of Directors of Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op
Meeting Minutes: June 13, 2007
Approved by the Board: July 11, 2007

Board Members Present: Charles Johnson, Carol O'Dowd.

Other Attendees: Heather O'Mara (Executive Director), John Snow (Hackstaff Gessler LLC), attorney for Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op.

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. by John Snow.
2. **Posting of Meeting Notice:**
 - A. Mr. Snow advises that he confirmed that the meeting notice was posted at Vilas by Mary Holcomb in accordance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law.
3. **Quorum:**
 - A. Mr. Snow notes that quorum is present because over half members of Board are present.
4. **Meeting Purpose:** This regular meeting of the Board of Directors will focus on certain items relating to the organization's operations and will provide an opportunity for Board to act (through approval) or voice concerns (through disapproval).
5. **Approval of Minutes from 5/9/07 Board Meeting:**
 - A. Carol O'Dowd: Change on page 5 – Question by Bill Eaton should state “per pupil” not “per people”.
 - B. Motion for resolution to approve the 5/9/07 minutes with changes suggested by Carol O'Dowd is made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Carol O'Dowd.
 - i. Roll call vote:
 1. Charles Johnson: YES
 2. Carol O'Dowd: YES
 - ii. Resolution passed.
6. **Approval of Minutes from 5/18/07 Board Meeting:**
 - A. Change suggested by Carol O'Dowd: On page 4 the statement by Carol O'Dowd should read: “rather than focusing on excellence” not “excellent.”
 - B. Motion for resolution to table vote the 5/18/07 minutes with edits by Carol O'Dowd is made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Carol O'Dowd.
 - i. Roll call vote:
 1. Charles Johnson: YES
 2. Carol O'Dowd: YES
 - ii. Resolution passed.

7. Consideration of Administrative Policy and Procedure HA-004:

A. Heather O'Mara provided the Board with the information requested at the last Board Meeting. The policy is typical and consistent with Vilas' practices, and other big school districts' like Jefferson County and Colorado Springs.

H. O'Mara agrees with the comment of Carol O'Dowd from last Board Meeting that Hope should focus on excellence. H. O'Mara continued that Hope has additional accountability with respect to grading because, even if a D is incorporated in GPA, Hope students are still required to have a minimum score on the ACT or Accuplacer as a requirement for graduation. Hope has fielded questions from certain members of the community suggesting Hope should consider handing different diplomas (or different types of diplomas) to students that meet the credit requirements at the certain age, even if they don't score the minimum on the ACT or Accuplacer. One solution is that the students could be given GED's, but the students want a regular diploma if they attend the school for requested time period, Hope desires to prevent students from dropping out and issuing GED's may frustrate that objective.

B. Discussion:

Question by Carol O'Dowd: Would an individualized learning program be a solution?

Answer by Heather O'Mara: "There are multiple components of academics that Hope has to review in order to make sure Hope stays dedicated to its mission of serving the students. The Board may review the policy and procedure that requires a minimum score on ACT and Accuplacer."

C. Motion for resolution to approve Administrative Policy and Procedure HA-004 is made by Carol O'Dowd, seconded by Charles Johnson

i. Roll call vote:

1. Carol O'Dowd: YES

2. Charles Johnson: YES

ii. Resolution passed.

8. Discussion of Hope Calendars for 2007-2008:

A. Presentation by Heather O'Mara: Hope has prepared two calendars for the Board's review. The first one is a continuous calendar, because there are several learning centers that work on a year-around bases and will use this calendar. The second calendar is a traditional school calendar that runs from August 2007 to early June 2008. The learning centers will adopt the appropriate calendar; however the learning centers are given some flexibility, especially regarding the observance of holidays and based on the practices of a particular school district. Finally, the calendars will be re-approved by Hope. H. O'Mara pointed out that the required attendance is 190 days/per school year in the year-around calendar, (90 days in each semester); 183 days/per school year in the traditional calendar. The way the calendars are structured leaves plenty of snow days.

B. Motion for resolution to approve the 2007-2008 calendars is made by Charles Johnson, seconded by Carol O'Dowd

i. Roll call vote:

1. Charles Johnson: YES
2. Carol O'Dowd: YES

ii. Resolution passed.

9. New Board Members: (Presented by H. O'Mara, Executive Director)

1. Heather O'Mara provided a brief overview of the following candidates to the Board:

A. Phil Fox is the former deputy executive director of the CASE (Colorado Association of School Executives). He has a long-standing commitment to education specifically with at-risk students. Mr. Fox has also a very good relationship with Colorado Department of Education, and he would be a good addition to the Board because of his experience with education policies on the legislative level, department level and state board level.

B. Motion for resolution to invite Phil Fox to join the Board is made by Charles Johnson, seconded by Carol O'Dowd

i. Roll call vote:

3. Charles Johnson: YES
4. Carol O'Dowd: YES

ii. Resolution passed.

A. Press Montoya is a Latino community and business leader from northern Colorado interested in joining the Board and representing Latino students. Mr. Montoya spent two terms on Greeley-Evans School Board and has a lot of knowledge about the high-risk students. Mr. Montoya worked on the Colorado Commission of Higher Education, Community College Board, and he is especially interested in how to offer different educational opportunities, to lower the drop-off rate can be achieved.

B. Charles Johnson has worked with Pres Montoya in past.

C. Motion for resolution to invite Pres Montoya to join the Board is made by Charles Johnson, seconded by Carol O'Dowd.

i. Roll call vote:

1. Charles Johnson: YES
2. Carol O'Dowd: YES

ii. Resolution passed.

A. Stephannie Finley is a member of Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Finley has a great experience in the legislative work and has been involved in the Colorado Children Campaign for some time. Ms. Finley is also working with the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs to expand into the community and increasing the enrollment. It might be good for Hope to bring a Member on Board from the southern part of Colorado, since Hope has about eight learning centers in this part of the state. Ms.

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Finley will also bring higher education insights and this will help the Hope students as far as college perspectives and opportunities.

B. Motion for resolution to invite Stephannie Finley to join the Board is made by Charles Johnson, seconded by Carol O'Dowd

i. Roll call vote:

1. Charles Johnson: YES

2. Carol O'Dowd: YES

ii. Resolution passed.

2. John Snow was designated to draft an invitation letter to Phil Fox, Pres Montoya and Stephannie Finley.

3. Heather O'Mara expressed a need to have the face-to-face Board Meetings more regularly.

4. The Board decided on having the next Board Meeting at the offices of Hackstaff Gessler on July 11, 2007 at 1:00 PM.

10. Executive Director's Report: (Presented by H. O'Mara, Executive Director)

A. 2007-2008 budget was presented to the Board by Heather O'Mara. The school district requires that Hope provides the preliminary budget by June 16, 2007. This is basically a first draft – Hope has no enrollment information right now and the enrollment drives the budget is in fact the enrollment. H. O'Mara pointed out additional funds have been assigned to be used in the compliance office fund. This needs to be done in order to protect the existence of Hope. Hope is waiting for a final proposal from the Douglas County and is hoping that the Douglas County will continue to provide compliance and oversight services and assistance in developing Hope's accreditation plan.

At the next meeting H. O'Mara will present a detailed budget, this one is just preliminary. Hope is required to have a balanced budget. H. O'Mara expects to present a new budget on July 11, 2007 Board meeting with more information on enrollment. At the next meeting a full-year budget review will be provided as well.

Motion for resolution to approve preliminary budget for the school year 2007-2008 is made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Carol O'Dowd.

i. Roll Call Vote:

a. Charles Johnson: YES

b. Carol O'Dowd: YES

ii. Resolution passed.

B. Heather O'Mara introduced un-audited financial statements for Hope dated May 31, 2007. The un-audited financial statements will be presented to the Board on regular basis, so that Board is given a chance to review them on regular basis. H. O'Mara explained that most of the expenses have been just as expected, except for the legal expenses due to extensive scrutiny that Hope has been under, and the compliance requirements. Also, there have been some additional contractor expenses related to the audit preparation.

Motion for resolution to accept un-audited financial statements dated May 31, 2007 is made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Carol O'Dowd.

- i. Roll Call Vote:
 - a. Charles Johnson: YES
 - b. Carol O'Dowd: YES
- ii. Resolution passed.

C. Hope has extended an offer to a Sherida Peterson (former assistant superintendent at Jefferson County) to be Hope's Chief Academic Officer. Ms. Peterson has curriculum and assessment experience and was highly recommended to Hope by the Gery Difford, current assistant commissioner of the Department of Education. Hope has to make a decision regarding how much curriculum support will be conducted in-house, and how much will be done by the Douglas County. Ms. Peterson's experience will be useful as Hope prepares for the accreditation review with Colorado Department of Education, SB 215 requirements, and potential changes of districts.

D. Hope has conducted series of meetings with existing and potential learning centers to review the new learning center contracts for 2007-2008 school year, and the detailed policies and procedures that were adopted by the Board on the last meeting. The general feedback has been very positive. The meetings have been somewhat extensive (1-3 hours), and the most questions are regarding the contract. The new learning center contract is due this week, although H. O'Mara has already received a requests for extension of time in which to deliver the contract and the associated materials. Some learning centers are concerned about the amount of the information that it will be required to provide. Hope requires the information according SB 215. Some learning centers pulled out, because of not being comfortable with the polices and procedures, specifically as it relates to the number of hours of instruction in the Hope curriculum or as it relates to separation of church and state issue.

E. Ten learning centers will not renew the Hope contract. Hope is waiting for a formal notice. These are usually small schools for example: Christian Fellowship School, Golden Indepent School, Institute of Global Scholarship, Belleview Christian, Fellowship School, Denver Lutheran High School, Rural Academy, Shiver's Academy, etc. Hope has tightened up a lot of its policies and procedures and there are some learning centers that just don't want to be involved. There are also a few learning centers that Hope requested not to apply due to compliance challenges. Hope will be holding a meeting on Friday 10:00 A.M. at the LAESPERANZA Learning Center for all new learning centers and others interested in becoming a Hope learning center.

F. Hope had a meeting yesterday with about 25 learning centers regarding SB215 implementation. This meeting addressed the budget documentation that Hope has to provide to school districts before Sept. 1 of this year. The MOU process was also explained at the meetings. It is important that Hope has a personal meetings with all learning centers to explain why some of documents requested by Hope are so important and are part of the new learning center contract.

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G. Moira Cullen (Lobbyist for Hope) and Sheila MacDonald have been working on a grassroots project. Heather O'Mara would like to thank them for their work in this legislative session and the ideas for 2007-2008 school year. Without their support and 300 kids at the capitol, Hope would not be here today.

H. On May 29, 2007 the 05-06 Pupil Count Audit Appeal has been filed with the Commissioner of the Department of Education. This appeal was done in conjunction with Vilas School District relating to 611 students Colorado Department of Education is challenging. This challenge concerns \$3.9 million in funding. Hope has prepared 13 binders of documentation to prove that only 89.5 students were properly challenged. With the new commissioner coming on board Hope needs to make sure this issue will be resolved. According to H. O'Mara's information the Colorado Online Virtual Academy Audit is going right now through its third appeal that started at \$8 million, and now is down to \$700,000-800,000 and remains in negotiations.

I. Many thanks to Charles Johnson for coming to May 31, 2007, Hope graduation and for being the keynote speaker. There were 14 students graduating and about 260 people in the audience. About 77 graduates are expected at the Front Range Academy graduation on June 22, 2007.

11. Executive Session:

- a. None

12. Announcements:

- a. None

13. Next Meeting:

- a. July 11, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. at the Offices of Hackstaff Gessler.

14. Adjourn:

- i. Motion for resolution to adjourn the meeting made by Charles Johnson and seconded by Carol O'Dowd.
 - i. Roll Call Vote:
 - a. Charles Johnson: YES
 - b. Carol O'Dowd: YES
 - ii. Resolution passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.