

Minutes
Arkansas Virtual Academy
Regular Meeting Board of Directors
May 21, 2013

Board Members Present

Lepaine Sharp-McHenry
Angela Driskill
Cary Hiatt
John Riggs IV
Kevin Smith

Staff Present

Scott Sides
Lisa Williams
Cheli Stafford

Media Present

None

Guests Present

Chad Gallagher
Jess Askew III
Gary McHenry

Call to Order

Chair, Ms. Lepaine Sharp-McHenry, called the board meeting to order at 4:18 p.m. Ms. Sharp-McHenry then asked for a roll call and declared a quorum.

MOTION: by Dr. Angela Driskill to approve the minutes from the 02/26/13 meeting as written. Mr. John Riggs seconded the motion. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Dr. Angela Driskill to approve the minutes from the 05/02/13 meeting as written. Mr. John Riggs seconded the motion, with one spelling correction noted. Motion carried.

Board Chair's Report:

Meeting with Dr. Tom Kimbrell, ADE Commissioner

- Mr. Riggs described his recent meeting with the Commissioner and Board of Education member, Ms. Vicki Saviers. He provided some history to incoming members of the Board regarding current changes in law and its effect on ARVA's growth.
- Mr. Riggs stated that the ADE does support ARVA and would like to see a presentation from the administration in the future to share more about the school.

Introduction of Board Candidates

- Three new Board member candidates were introduced to the Board. Their biographies were shared previously and available during the meeting.
- The new Board candidates were Mr. Jess Askew III, Mr. Chad Gallagher, and Mr. Gary McHenry.

Board Member Retreat and Training

- Ms. Sharp-McHenry discussed the proposal of working with Brian Carpenter to facilitate training of the ARVA Board. The training is planned as a full Friday and half Saturday event. The training will potentially be held in September, to be determined by Mr. Carpenter's schedule.

- Incoming members of the Board were informed of the training requirements of new Board members as well as the annual update required for each.
- The retreat would include time allocated to discuss and plan the school's K-8 and high school expansions. There will be various topics for discussion, such as, financial analysis, waiver requests, etc.
- Note: The Board will meet quarterly during the 2013-2014 school year and will hold additional meetings as needed to conduct school business related to ARVA's growth.

Action Agenda Items:

Uniform Grading Scale

- Mr. Scott Sides, Head of School, described for the Board the new Uniform Grading Scale policy set forth through discussion with the ADE Standards Unit. He explained how students show progress and master curriculum in the Online School and how this will now be described to coincide with the law.
- There was discussion between members of the Board, particularly those who are ARVA parents. The general consensus was that it would be good to introduce a grading system to middle school age students to get them ready for high school courses for credit.
- There was also concern regarding how some parents may feel about this new grading system. Ms. Lisa Williams, Academic Administrator, helped to further explain the grading scale by describing scenarios outside of the norm that could be expected and explained should the need arise.

MOTION: by Mr. Riggs to accept the Uniform Grading Scale as presented. Mr. Kevin Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Expansion of K-8

- Mr. Sides reported that K¹² is conducting marketing efforts on behalf of the school to ensure growth. Marketing is targeting a leads list of 22,000 interested individuals. The ARVA administration team has scheduled and will conduct public information sessions in strategic locations around the state.
- Mr. Sides shared the breakdown of expected students per grade based on marketing projections. At the time of the meeting, 92% of ARVA's students were scheduled to return. All 8th grade families were called to explain why the school would not be moving to 9th grade during the 2013-2014 school year.
- There was some discussion on how student applications will be processed in order to adhere to the special language requiring the 2,500 new slots to be filled with students who have attended an Arkansas public school during the first three quarters of the prior school year.
- Due to the expected student growth, ARVA will need to hire teachers. The administration team has attended the ADE's educator career fair and advertisements are underway in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. Mr. Sides stated that the search would include local colleges and universities to target new graduates.
- Mr. Smith shared his concern about the hiring of teachers who can communicate and engage students in a virtual setting. He stated that this concept is not something being taught during the education process for teachers but is very important.
- Mr. Sides and Ms. Williams both agreed with Mr. Smith and stated that every effort was being made to find the right people for the positions the school will fill.

MOTION: by Mr. Smith to adopt the K-8 Expansion Plan as presented. Mr. Riggs seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Members of ARVA Board

- Mr. Sides reviewed the candidates present for Board membership.

MOTION: by Dr. Driskill to accept Jess Askew III, Chad Gallagher and Gary McHenry as members of the ARVA Board. Mr. Riggs seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- Members took the oath as described in the law regarding board membership.

Head of School's Report:

Kindergarten and 8th Grade Graduation

- Mr. Sides commented on the activities around the Graduation and Award Ceremony held the previous week. Senator Johnny Key was the guest speaker.
- He explained to the Board the gift of student work that was presented to Senator Key at the conclusion of his speech.

Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Review

- Mr. Sides reviewed for the Board the revenue and expenditures year-to-date for the school.
- There was no discussion needed or questions.

On-Site Standards for Accreditation

- With the policy work wrapped up, ARVA is fully accredited.
- There will be no on-site audit for three years.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) – Process

- The process of creating an IEP for a student is very lengthy and requires a great deal of paperwork. Multiple meetings must be held and various signatures are to be captured. This is a particularly difficult burden for the special education department to conduct in a virtual setting.
- Several people have been involved in trying to get ADE approval on an electronic signature to ease this process for our staff and students, who are the benefactors of the IEP.
- The school has received approval that we may begin to collect IEP signatures via electronic means.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting is adjourned at 6:12 PM.