

Minutes
Arkansas Virtual Academy
Board of Directors Meeting
December 2, 2009

Board Members Present

Lepaine Sharp-McHenry,
Vice-Chair
Susan Allerheiligen
Angela Driskill
Kevin Smith

Board Members Not Present

Jerry Jones
John Riggs

Staff Present

Karen Ghidotti
Lisa Williams
Susan Underwood
Monique Houston
Debbie Howard

Media Present

None

Call to Order

Board Vice-Chair, Lepaine Sharp-McHenry, called the board meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., then asked for a roll call and declared a quorum.

<p>MOTION: by Angela Driskill and seconded by Susan Allerheiligen to approve the September 28, 2009, ARVA Board Meeting minutes as written. Motion carried 4-0.</p>
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Chair's Report

Karen Ghidotti shared that there was not a Board Chair's report due to the absence of Jerry Jones.

Lepaine Sharp McHenry, Vice-Chair, shared with the Board that the search for additional members of the Board has continued. Ms. McHenry has received inquiries of interested individuals. She will be requesting resumes of those individuals to share with the Board during the next Board meeting.

School/Director's Report

Up Dates

Karen Ghidotti, Head of School, shared with the Board an update on the progress of filling the Head of School position.

Ms. Ghidotti requested Lisa Williams, Academic Administrator, to introduce Debbie Howard to provide a brief presentation for the Board.

Ms. Williams introduced Debbie Howard who is one of the five ARVA Math Coaches funded with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus funds. Ms. Howard briefly shared with the Board a typical daily schedule of a Math Coach and how they work with the ARVA regular education teachers.

Ms. Ghidotti reminded the Board about last year when ARVA went through the process of Standards of Accreditation with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to reach the status of Full Accreditation as reported to the Board. One of the requested documents was to do a curriculum mapping to align our K12 curriculum with the state frameworks for all four subjects of math, language arts, history and science. This was a major tool to demonstrate the quality of the K12 curriculum and to achieve the level of Full Accreditation. Ms. Howard is one of the five ARVA Math Coaches hired through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus funds as presented to the Board in the ARRA plan last March. These five positions allow students to receive one-on-one math instruction and strategy skills.

Policies

Ms. Ghidotti guided the Board through the policies identifying updates in current policies as well as new policies.

ACSIP Plan – ARVA did separate plans for the District, K-6 and 7-8. The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) views ARVA as three separate entities.

K-6 Plan – The plan is a detailed analysis of what the school will be doing. In order to utilize the Title I funds and a portion of the state professional funds, the school has to meet the core priorities of literacy improvement, student wellness, math improvement, and we added science improvement. The K-6 Plan along with a budget has been submitted to the ADE.

Assurances – Each year the Board must approve the Assurances in a board meeting. The Head of School will then sign the Assurances and submit to the ADE in order for ARVA to have the capability to draw down federal funds.

Comprehensive Improvement Plan – The most significant change this year is that ARVA went from being a Target Assisted Title I school with 41% of students being eligible for free and/or reduce lunch status to becoming eligible to be a Statewide Title I school with 50 % of students being eligible for free and/or reduce lunch status. ARVA can now utilize the funds to provide program access for all students. The only substantial change in the plan for 2009-10 is to remove the verbiage from targeted students to all students.

After a brief discussion, the Board made a motion.

<p>MOTION: by Angela Driskill and seconded by Kevin Smith to approve the Assurances as presented. Motion carried 4-0.</p>
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Education for Homeless Students – ARVA is required by federal law and guidelines to have this policy in place demonstrating how the school will work with any ARVA students who are in homeless situations. There are a few ARVA students that have qualified as homeless in the virtual environment. ARVA has provided these identified students with printer cartridges, paper and additional school supplies to assist them in becoming academically successful.

Board discussion about the amount of funds set aside for homeless students. Ms Ghidotti shared that ARVA sets aside \$500 which does not limit the possibility of amending the amount and moving additional funds to serve the educational needs of students in homeless situations. The \$500 has been an adequate amount up to this point.

Record Management Policy – This was suggested by Thomas & Thomas through the audit process to be put into place. The policy outlines how ARVA will deal with record management. The attached schedule outlines the timeframe of physically maintaining materials onsite and whether documents are to be destroyed, kept permanently, or digitized.

The Board discussed the options of maintaining student documents in hard copies and/or electronically. Ms. Ghidotti explained that currently student records are hard copies. When a student withdraws from the school, their documents are pulled from the main files and placed in withdraw files. ARVA does have a process in place to scan withdrawn files to create electronic files. The State of Arkansas does allow for electronic management of student files. When questioned if legal advice was given or just accounting advice, Ms. Ghidotti replied that the K12 attorney reviewed the schedule to verify that ARVA was in compliance with both the state and federal schedules. The K12 attorney signed off on the attached maintenance schedule.

Crisis Management Policy – This is new for schools to implement. The focus for ARVA is based around situations that might occur at our state testing sites, student outings and events. This provides a consistent method for teachers and staff to handle crisis situations.

The Board discussed the section about maintenance of record for sign-in sheets. Ms. Ghidotti explained that at each student outing, event, and testing there are sign-in sheets which are maintained to document who attended.

School Property Inventory – will be reviewed at the next Board meeting.

The Board made a motion.

<p>MOTION: by Kevin Smith and seconded by Angela Driskill to adopt the four propped policies as presented. Motion carried 4-0.</p>

Legislative Updates

Ms. Ghidotti shared with the Board that a meeting has been planned for December 3rd with the members on both the House and Senate Education Committees. We will have one hour to present the school, introduce the Board, give a brief history of ARVA, display student curriculum, and share in detail how ARVA benefits from the relationship with K12. Angela Driskill has volunteered to be our parent spokesperson to share what ARVA has done for her as a learning coach and why they chose ARVA for their children's education. Her son, Eli, will participate with one of our teachers in a live demo instructional session.

The Vice-Chair asked if there were any comments from the public or press. No response.

The Vice-Chair asked if there was any other business.

MOTION: by Susan Allerheiligen and seconded by Kevin Smith to adjourn. Motion carried 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.