

Ascend Leadership Academy Board Meeting Agenda

2/28/18

Members Present: J. Smith, L. Malone, E. Arrington, A. Fonke, D. Draughon

Non-Members Present: Jennifer Lewis, Cory Draughon

Members Absent: S. Gatlin, K. Mellette

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by J. Smith at 6:30pm.

- 1. Approval of January Meeting minutes:** J. Smith sent the board members a copy of the January minutes prior to the meeting for their review. L. Malone made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes, Seconded by A. Fonke -- Motion carried unanimously.
- 2. Facility Update**
 - a. Current Property and Site Plan: J. Smith explained the recent developments in the property development for ALA's facility. Original property we targeted is under contract with a different buyer after we could not meet the required contingencies. Schoolhouse Development has helped us identify another land site in close proximity. We are under contract for this site and currently in due diligence period. The facility plan has not changed as we will plan to be in modular classrooms for the initial years of operation. This property contract does not require any contingencies to close.
 - b. Lease Review: Schoolhouse Development has sent their facility lease contract for the Board's review. J. Smith will send a copy of the lease to the Board for their review. Goal is to have the contract signed and back to Schoolhouse within a week. Board members should review and send any questions. D. Draughon recommended that we send the document to our lawyer for review. C. Draughon commented that he plans to send the lease for our lawyer to review.
- 3. ALA Student Application Update**
 - a. Current Numbers: Today is the last day of the open application period. J. Smith shared the up to date application numbers. He notified the board that we have more applications than spots available and hence a public lottery will be necessary. In Seventh grade we currently do not have more than the projected enrollment number and will accept all student applicants if it remains at that number of applications. L. Malone asked if we would accept more 6th grade applicants to accommodate numbers in the 7th grade. J. Smith answered that more than likely based on the number of 6th grade applicants and the average acceptance rate we would need to consider overenrolling the 6th grade.
 - b. Next Steps: We will continue to monitor applications. J. Smith will email all student applicants on March 1st to let them know what our process will be.

- c. Lottery Saturday March 10th: Lottery is scheduled for Saturday, March 10th at 2pm. It will be located in Classroom 103 at the Dennis Wicker Civic Center.

4. Employee Retirement Benefits Discussion

- a. State Retirement System v. Other Options: J. Smith shared with Board members prior to meeting a document that projected the potential cost. J. Smith explained that we needed to decide on benefits in order to start offering teacher positions to candidates. The information in the document outlined the projected cost per employee if we paid into the State Retirement system. He compared this to cost per employee if we did a 6% match with a private company. The averages were based on an employee salary of \$38,000. J. Smith shared the pros and cons of paying into the State Retirement system. He recommended that we don't pay into the State retirement system in year 1 and use the extra income to increase teacher salary. L. Malone stated that she agreed with the recommendation and did not believe it was cost effective to pay into the state retirement system. Other board members agreed.
- b. Decision on State Retirement System or Private: L. Malone made a motion to accept a policy that states ALA will not pay into the State Retirement system and will instead employ a private retirement benefit company and match employee contribution up to 6%. J. Smith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Employee Health Benefits Discussion

- a. State Health Plan v. Other options: J. Smith shared with Board members prior to meeting a document that projected the potential cost of the State Health Plan and health plans from two private health benefit providers.. J. Smith explained that we needed to decide on health benefits in order to start offering teacher positions to candidates. Our goal should be to provide employees with comparable health benefits to the state health plan. Quotes from the private organization were competitive in terms of cost but we would not know actual rates until we had specific information about employees. C. Draughon recommended that we inform prospective employees that we will provide health benefits comparable or better than the State health plan.
- b. Supplemental Benefits: The Board plans to provide supplemental benefits also including eye and dental insurance. School will pay 50% and employee will contribute 50%. More information necessary for board policy to be adopted.
- c. Decision on State Health Plan or Private: The Board decided that they need more information in regards to rates before making a decision and will inform any potential teacher candidate that they will have benefits comparable or better than the State Health plan.

6. Chamber of Commerce Membership

- a. Benefits: J. Smith met with the director of the Sanford Chamber of Commerce earlier this week. She explained the networking benefits of becoming a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Members were able to attend a monthly meeting with Sanford area policy makers and business owners.

- b. Membership levels: J. Smith recommended that we join the Chamber of Commerce at the Corporate level. He explained how this level included the inclusion of our logo on all of the Chamber of Commerce email communications. L. Malone made a motion to join the Chamber of Commerce at the corporate level. Seconded by E. Arrington. Motion carried unanimously.

L. Malone made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Seconded by A. Fonke. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.