

T.R. Paul Academy of Arts and Knowledge

aka Northern Colorado Academy of Arts and Knowledge

June 21, 2012 7:30 AM

4512 McMurry, Fort Collins, CO 80525

Board Meeting Minutes

OPENING SECTION (20 minutes)

1. Call to Order

Board President

Time Started: 7:37 AM

Pride through Performance

The mission of TPAAK (NCAAK) is to teach students the joy of learning and the importance of expressing individual talent artistically and academically while enhancing community & culture.

2. Roll Call

Board President

Board Members present in attendance:

(x) Bennett (x) Clark () Crough (x) Gorski (x) Wager - Robertson

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Board President

4. Approval of Agenda

Recommended Motion: Move to adopt agenda as presented (or amended)

Motion made by: Gorski

Seconded: Clark

Roll Call: All aye

5. Consent Agenda

No consent agenda.

SCHOOL & STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT (60 minutes)

This meeting is being captured in more detail than usual to show the depth of the discussion surrounding this issue.

1. Free All Day Kindergarten

Discussion about considering re-instating free all day Kindergarten in the 2012-13 year and from now on as a means to get attention to the school, create a community buzz and improve our enrollment numbers. The intent of this change is to create more awareness in the community and get attention for the excellence of our curriculum. We need to get more families in the door and differentiate ourselves from the rest of the schools in our area. We have a lot of public school of choice and charter school competition, last year's precipitous drop in enrollment was substantially due to losing the Loveland area to a new Charter school. Fort Collins seemed not to be very aware of us. We need to give parents in our area a more compelling reason to choose us over the competition.

Where we are now, and what would change if we decide yes

To reach our minimum fundable school budget, we need to have a FTE of 265 students K-8, with Kindergarten funded at 0.58 from the state this means that, based upon typical classroom mix, we need approximately 285 students enrolled to equal that 265 FTE number. Obviously this will vary depending upon the number of Kindergarteners enrolled. Based upon the current enrollment (at this moment in June), removing the extra tuition parents pay for Full Time Kindergarten will require the following:

Currently we have 42 K students enrolled, 8 of them 1/2 day only. Our calculations follow:

Current Per-Pupil state rate is \$6474. A K student is "worth" 0.58 of that, which is \$3754. Currently we charge \$230 per month, for 10 months, which comes to \$2300 income for a full-day K student. Therefore, if we stop charging for full-day K, this first year this is the accounting:

34 full-day student fees (34 x \$2300) = \$78,200 (from 2012-13 budget)

If we get a 50% increase in enrollment from advertising our full-day K, this means adding 21 students, which is (21 x \$3754) = \$78,834. OK, but this means we need to add another Kindergarten teacher, at about \$40,000. This still leaves us with a \$39,366 deficit. If we use our 2012-13 marketing budget of \$35,000, this deficit drops to \$4,366. If even one of those new K students brings along a child in another grade, we have a surplus. To sum up:

-\$78,200	loss of fees for the currently enrolled 34 full-day K
+\$78,834	IF we get 21 new full-day or half-day K students
-\$40,000	Need another K teacher for 3rd classroom
+\$35,000	Offset by using 2012-13 marketing budget

-\$ 4,366	overall budget deficit with above scenario

This is if we get a 50% Kindergarten enrollment boost from AGGRESSIVELY marketing our differentiation. For every one more K student, that deficit falls by \$3,754. If we get 23 more kids (for a total of 65 full and half-day students) then we're completely funded. And, for every other grade student pulled in as a sibling we take off another \$6,474. Kids like our school and our grades are good and improving, retention should be good going forward in years to come.

We have \$19,000 marketing budget to spend from the 2011-12 budget in the 2012-13 school calendar to keep Toolbox working for us, so we're not abandoning marketing going forward into the 2012-13 school year.

This assumes we lose no currently enrolled students projected into the next year. Currently, we do not have the enrollment to make our minimum budget to fund the school yet; we're close, but not there yet.

Arguments against the change

1. We are currently not making budget. Making this change will further jeopardize the budget problem.
2. It will look like we can't make up our minds, first we take away free full day Kindergarten, then we bring it back a few years later.
3. Many parents will use free full day Kindergarten as day care in the afternoon and not keep their kids in our school for future grades. So this won't help future enrollment anyway.
4. Is there time to get our message out to the community with only the end of June, July and August timeframe?

Arguments for the change

1. This will create a more inviting argument for looking at TPAAK over the competing schools in the area. Otherwise we are just one of many with good grade reports.
2. We know that some parents will use TPAAK as free daycare for the afternoons, but we need to get people in the door to see how good we are, a percentage will stay with the school, a percentage that we would otherwise never get.
3. We are returning to the Mosaica model by re-instating free full day Kindergarten.
4. We are demonstrating to our bond holder that we are actively working on strategic changes to the school that will enhance the enrollment of the school not only now, but in

- the years to come.
5. True, aren't making our budget now, however, not doing this change will not change that fact, and by making this change, we can potentially get a large enrollment boost, and pull in siblings in other grades, further improving our budget bottom-line.
 6. An increase in Kindergarten enrollment will almost certainly lead to larger upstream class sizes as families stay for future grades.
 7. Making this change now tells our families that we can make positive changes to improve school conditions proactively, not just negative changes in response to unfortunate changes in school fortunes.
 8. Doing the same thing that we have done in the past and expecting different outcomes makes no sense. This is one change that we can make that could positively affect the school's financial and public bottom-line and allow us to make school enhancements that we have talked about, but have never been able to afford.
 9. Using Toolbox marketing, we have a partner with expertise in this kind of promotion; this is the ideal time to make such a move.

Related commentary

The board is working on finding other monetary streams now, and not waiting for the fall or spring. We will now get Toolbox active immediately on getting this message out to the community. We will be talking to a community outreach person, late of the PSD board, to help us with our message and communications.

We will craft a message for our parents, notifying them of the change we are making to the school. We want to notify our families, faculty and PTLO right away and release Dragon Mail messages before this message goes out to the community at large.

We will not immediately hire a third Kindergarten teacher, we will fill our current two classrooms, then waitlist the rest that are interested until we have a critical number and hire a third teacher to take up the new class. This way we do not, ever again, lay off a teacher and disturb classes that are in session. All future budgets will reflect this change, from this point onward.

2. Audience Comments

Board President

An active, concerned parent commented:

She feels that we are on the right path. This change will not have the drama so noted in our past because we're acting ahead of the problem this time. She feels this is a good direction to move as a positive action for the school that parents will appreciate.

Ms. Griffin commented:

She talked with Ethan, head of CSI (Colorado Charter School Institute, our authorizing body), who is concerned about our school, and feels we need to act ahead of the crisis. He thought this was a great enrollment strategy. Many schools in the district are considering doing this change as well. We will be the first to try it.

3. Board Action

a. Recommend Motion: Approve reinstatement of free all day Kindergarten beginning 2012-2013 school year.

Motion made by: Clark

Seconded by: Gorski

Roll Call: Aye: Gorski, Clark, Wager-Robertson; Nay: Bennett

CLOSING SECTION (10 minutes)

1. Executive Session – None requested

2. Adjournment 8:24 AM

Adjournment motion made by: General consent.