



THE EARLY COLLEGE OF
ARVADA

Board Meeting Minutes

Date: November 20, 2019

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Location: The Early College of Arvada

4905 W 60th Ave, Arvada CO 80003

Board members present: Katy Warrick, Todd Cordrey, Jen Bilger, Anthony Fontana, TO Owens, Kelly Hupfeld, Absolom Herrera, Steve Berg, Brenda Snyder on the phone

Guests: Janice Anderson, Theresa Veltree, Mat Winter, Amanda Winter, Danielle Ladd, Caroline Fink, Aislinn Walsh, Amanda Karger, Julie Ramsey, Marlene Fuentes

I. Call to order and introductions

- a. The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm.

II. Approval of agenda

- a. Mrs. Hupfeld made a motion to approve the agenda, Mr. Fontana seconded, and it passed unanimously.

III. Public comment (5 mins)

- a. None

IV. Board education session (40 mins) – Aislinn Walsh and Amanda Karger - CARS Report

- a. The CARS report is put out by CSI and evaluates academic and organizational performance. The objectives are to add to the body of evidence provided by the state, such as comparing to geographical area schools, determining accreditation ratings, and identifying the level of support and intervention needed at each school.
- b. Ms. Walsh addressed the academic side of the CARS report saying that ECA's ratings have gone from Improvement in 2013-14 to Priority Improvement for the past two years due to financial noncompliance. This year we would have been Performance rating based solely on academics. Middle school would have a rating of improvement based on academics and high school would have a rating of performance with an overall rating of performance – based solely on academics. ECA did have an improvement in the middle school performance last year. English language arts in middle school showed major growth. Percentile of growth in that area jumped 20 points which is very positive. She commends the work that was done last year. ECA is compared to the Westminster public school district and we are mirroring achievement and growth levels of our surrounding areas. When looking at at-risk subgroups our students don't have noticeable gaps which is a good thing. CSI has a lot of resources around this data, there is a dashboard on their website that allows you to research and compare the data more



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- deeply. There is also an annotated CARS report that has guidance bubbles to help walk through the report.
- c. Ms. Karger is attending the meeting because ECA is in significant financial noncompliance. The school is in this place because we have not met TABOR two years in a row. The financial synopsis on shows decline of cash on hand, coverage of debts and liabilities, and reserves. ECA has been placed on the highest level of financial monitoring (Intensive) by CSI. Only two other schools are monitored at this level.
 - d. In the school accountability packet there is a rubric of the financial category ratings. Reserves are particularly important because they support the school when unexpected things happen such as unforeseen expenditures or delayed per pupil revenue. Ms. Karger pointed out that since the school's reserves are down to \$13,000 we could miss payroll if there is a delay in revenue. When schools are not in compliance with TABOR, all of the CSI schools in their portfolio are downgraded. This report is based on data collected through June 30, 2019.
 - e. For the previous two years the school has written letters promising to be in compliance by the following year. And both years we have failed to do so. CSI has very low confidence that we will be able to achieve compliance this year, particularly since it is November and we still don't have a budget that meets compliance for this year. This will have a major impact on renewal by CSI this year. Additional cuts need to be made in order to create a compliant budget. Ms. Karger warned that if we are not compliant in FY20 the school may be closed, and the charter revoked.
 - f. In the summer when we missed TABOR by a large amount, we blamed not receiving revenue we expected. So for the budget due Dec 31 we cannot include any unsecured revenue. CSI is requiring that we have a \$90,000 contingency and half of the SPED reserve requirement. Another option is to submit a budget with a letter explaining why we don't need so many reserves.
 - g. Ms. Karger encouraged all Board members to go through the budget line by line each month and question high line items because we need to be effectively meeting our budget. In the monthly financial reports we need to look at the profit and loss, and also the variance between the columns of the year to date vs forecasted expenses. If in October an expense is higher than approx. 30%, then we need to question the validity of the forecast, particularly in categories like payroll. Are we counting on any revenue predictions that may not come in? Are we missing any expenditure categories that may throw us off? Also we need to look at the cash asset and see that the number is more than 2-3% of our monthly expenditures – that we can at least meet one month of payroll at all times. In the cashflow forecast we are looking for if those predictions look realistic. IF we have more than 5% in reserve, than the Board doesn't need to look as carefully at the cashflow forecast. Mrs. Karger offers a Board training about how to look at the financial reports – we can request for her to come back and do this.
 - h. One of the other statutory violations is overspending the budget. We are entrusted to spend public funds, and the spending has been higher than what is authorized. The



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school also continues to depend on donations and revenue that do not show up. At this point we can't fundraise our way out, we need to cut expenditures. The fixed costs for facilities is 18% of PPR and that does not, on its own, raise concerns. In addition, we waited too long to make reductions in expenditures after knowing we didn't have enough revenue. She encourages us to look hard at what additional cuts can be made.

Future education sessions: Brenda

V. Board work session (60 mins)

- a. Standing reports (60 mins)
 - i. Executive Director and team – Todd (20 minutes) See Board Report and Dashboard
 1. Follow up item – creating a new enrollment model – will address in December
 - ii. Strategic plan/scorecard review - Defer to December
 - iii. Committee reports (40 minutes)
 1. Fundraising - Brenda – Update (5 minutes) -see fundraising report
 - a. Preparations are underway for end of year campaign. Board members need to finish making and soliciting donations by end of year
 2. Finance – TO (25 minutes)
 - a. Follow up item – January budget recision numbers from Lori – defer to December
 - b. Upcoming – December - Proposed Budget amendments
 - c. We have a draft budget we will be approving and Todd is happy to meet with anyone and go through line by line. Last February we were \$410,000 in the hole, and we made a lot of that up last year, and this year we have an additional \$205,000 to make up. Our budget this year will meet TABOR and have \$109,000 in reserves. The finance committee meets every Monday and all are invited to those meetings.
 - d. Possible follow up – Should we get clarification on Ms. Karger's comment that we have not taken some advice from CSI and/or Lori? Should we also get clarification on which categories we are overspending in (because it seems we are only over 35% of annual projections in books and supplies)?
 3. Governance/Board Development – Katy & Brenda (5 minutes)
 - a. Two candidates are in process are moving forward through the process to join the Board
 - b. Policies are continuing to be developed and brought to the Board for votes



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4. SAC – Todd and Audyn (5 minutes) – next meeting is in February or March

5. Stakeholder

- a. Student – Todd – *Plan to be presented in December*
- b. Neighborhood – Todd – *Plan to be presented in December*
- c. Parent – Todd – *Plan to be presented in December*
- d. UCD/FRCC – Todd – *Plan to be presented in December*
- e. CSI – No update
- f. Legislative – Kelly – *Plan to be presented in December*
- g. Local business – TO – *Plan to be presented in January*
- h. Community Influence – TO - *Plan to be presented in February*
- i. Bondholder – Brenda – *Plan will be revisited*
- j. Board Policy development – Kelly – *Plan in process*

iv. PTCO report – PTCO representative – planning a Winter dance and planning to help finance Prom.

b. Discussion of Board action items (if needed)

VI. Board action items (10 mins)

- a. Mr. Fontana moved to approve the previous meeting minutes and Ms. Bilger seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. Mrs. Hupfeld moved to approve the I.3 Assessments Policy and Mr. Fontana seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Other business (10 mins)

- a. Discussion about Board fee policy for the next academic year – Kelly and Todd
 - i. Per state statute we are required to have a fee policy and the fee schedule has to be approved by the Board. State statute says we can only charge fees for certain things such as science supplies, summer school, and voluntary events like a dance or club. FRL students cannot be charged fees for anything that allows them to access the basic academic program. One example of this is the chromebook fee because it does provide access to the basic academic program. For voluntary fees we can either waive, reduce, or charge the full fee for Free and Reduced Lunch status students. The draft policy shows the proposed fee schedule. In Jeffco the average high school student pays almost \$700 in annual fees. We have prided ourselves for a long time being a school that does not charge many fees, but this is no longer realistic. Kelly recommends turning this policy over to the financial committee to revise the policy for a vote next month so that we can charge fees starting next semester. We cannot hold transcripts or graduation diploma based on fees.
- b. Follow up item – Creation of Long-Range Planning committee (see October minutes) -TO – first meeting is Dec 18.
- c. Calendar review/upcoming events
 - i. Nov 25-29 Fall Break - No School



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- ii. Dec 11 Winter Festival and Concert
- iii. Dec 17, 18, 19 Fall Semester Finals
- iv. Dec 20-Jan 6 Winter Break
- d. Other announcements/information items
 - i. New weather balloon club sponsored by Arvada Rotary – Middle and High school students will create a device that goes up to collect data and analyze it. The first meeting is scheduled for December with the first launch in March. This is a great opportunity for students, and also for making contacts and getting publicity.
 - ii. Food Basket Project - Collecting non-perishable food items and monetary donations to make food baskets for families in need at ECA. Donations due to the school by Nov 20.
 - iii. Holiday Gift Drive for ECA families – volunteers provide gifts for ECA families who submit holiday wish lists.
 - iv. Holiday party December 19

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Fontana moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Owens seconded and it passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

Board members calling in by telephone should call 605-475-4094, access code 518724.

Board meetings are open to the public, including ECA staff, students, and families. Schedule of future Board meetings: 11/20/19, 12/18/19, 1/22/20, 2/26/20, 3/18/20, 4/22/20, 5/27/20, annual retreat 6/23 and 6/24.

Critical dates: 2019/20 Graduation 5/15/20, Awards 5/20/20, Continuation 5/21/20, Senior Dinner 5/14/20

To request that an item be placed on a future agenda, please contact Board Secretary Katy Warrick at kwarrick@ecarvada.org.