

**Freedom Academy
Governing Board Meeting
June 24, 2011
Draft**

Meeting called to order by Ken Parkinson at 8:45 AM.

Pledge:

Prayer:

Those in Attendance: Cary McConnell, Jennifer Young, Ken Parkinson, Nancy Ashby, Trent Schoonmaker, LynneHerring, Chris Helvey, Jennifer Doud, and Joseph Panchuck.

Approval of Minutes: Ken Parkinson

Lynne had name spelling changes. Trent said George Ahlman's name is Joseph.

Trent moved to approve minutes Seconded by Nancy. Unanimous vote.

Public comments

Joseph Panchuck introduced himself as the new Latin teacher.

Lynne Herring gave a report of the conference she attended.

2011-2012 Goals: Ken Parkinson

There was a discussion of how to know if children were able to use what they know. Ideas were to track children to see if they graduated from High School and/or college, look at their ACT and SAT scores and use writing skills as an indication of how they are doing.

There was a question whether there exists an imbalance between Title1 children and non-Title1 children. The answer was "no".

Ken asks that goals be thrown out and listed.

- Create better situation for 7, 8 advisory time. Let's make sure that time used wisely.
- Improve extra-curricular program. Teams and classes quality can be improved. Make them worth the money.
- Test scores need to be in the high 90's. They have been in 80's, low 90's. I would like to see above 95%. CRT's, dibble's, and Direct writing assessments.
- Communication with parents needs to be improved. Use technology to improve communication.
- Clear and frequent.
- School loyalty and pride.
- Student 5th grade camp. Other schools have 1 week of camp in summer for 5th graders
- Have every 8th grader go to DC.
- Increase family donations. Currently have only 18%.
- Would like to see specific information on which families contributing.
- Uniform Uniform enforcement
- -Draft agenda two weeks before meeting and fully published 5 days before.
- -Need an address from a board member regularly- board communication to increase community

PR.

- Bonus structure/merit pay
- Teachers need to know what they are being recognized for
- Long range planning,
- Administration evaluation
- Need succession plan

Change goals from 95% to mid 90% on testing.

Keep Most Important Goals:

- Continue to focus on student achievement with new emphasis on not only what students learn, but how they use what they learn to progress and achieve(Lynne). Including standardized test scores in mid 90's(CRT's, Dibbles, DWA). Begin personal profile for each student.
- Increase parent volunteer hours Ken increase in family donations to above 51% (currently 18% for donations and 30 % hours).
- Examine Bonus/merit structure Recognize, Reward, (RRR)
- Using technology at a board and admin level for for improved clear, frequent communication-transparency, keep parent community updated(Jennifer).

Freedom Academy Expansion Jennifer

We have proposal to open in 2012, this includes our 2 year window.

Board asked Lynne for info on expansion.

Lynne ready for answer- we are planned and prepared with personnel to begin 12 month count down to finalize all the planse to open a year from this fall. We can share man power and administration. And implement 9th grade the first year successfully, with 10th grade being added the year after that.

We are having teacher leaders implemented. Ashly Schoessow has been asked to help and she is willing. 4-8 hours a week of my time can be used just for expansion business. I am aware of accreditation planing going on.

Jennifer- As chairman of high school committee. We had a meeting. We have a functioning committee.

Time line:

1st week in Aug be ready to explain what extra curricular sports, classes, fees curriculum, brochures, ect.

2nd deadline is meet the teacher night. Want to be able to answer parent questions.

In Jan need to be ready for lottery. Registration and hiring after lottery. Facility ready after this.

Government week/camp to teach children about government. Children need to be educated with hands on experiences to teach about our government.

Lynne had evening for parents. Need something for all freshmen to get to know them and them to know us each summer before school year.

Jennifer explained survey results. Parents want e-mail information. Quick and precise.

Need to discuss uniform add-ons for middle school children. We want to add pink and light blue shirts, fitted shirts not be tucked, and black slacks to dress code for middle school children. High school students need distinction that they are growing up. Can't be gender specific. Friday tie day, blazer and tie, dress up day.

Nancy and Trent did not want to vote on dress policy changes without time to think about it and involve parents.

Cary- moves to go to executive session to discuss location. Nancy seconded. Unanimous vote.

Executive Session reconvined 11:10 AM

Present: Nancy, Cary, Lynne, Chris, Jennifer Young, Ken, Trent.

Charter Board University –Jennifer

Accountability – governing boards should follow the law and support the director

#1 reason schools fail is because of governing board issues.

Dr. John Carver said, “We represent the tax payers.” The governing board answers to the parents and should make sure that everything happening at the school is lawful/legal.

Lynne runs the school the governing board runs the charter.

The boards' job is to ask how *well* are the policies being upheld. The director's job is how the policies *will* be upheld.

Ken suggested that the discussions that are held regarding a motion that has been made are the most useful and deal less with the "how will" and more to do with the "how well".

The board would like to have more information about agenda items ahead of time.

If the board begins micro-managing, they become responsible for the outcomes.

Board needs to have specific assignments and a governing board calendar that includes this information. (This would need to be assigned to a board member.)

Finances—board should be reasonably aware of what is happening with the finances.

Board members should be loyal to the school.

80% of what a board discusses should not be discussed.

Board should be focused on finances and student achievement.

Time limits should be in place at each board meeting.

Individual board members cannot advise or instruct the school administration without prior approval from the board.

Chapter 19 in the notes should be changed to characteristics of school director.

Governing board is not a complaint processing center.

Parent complaint dealing with student—should talk to teacher first, then administration.

Only the CAO should respond to a parent complaint when necessary.

Governing board needs to ask the hard questions regarding budget, charter etc.

Ken said that board members need to be cautious about speaking with the legislature because if board members are lobbying it can endanger the 501c-3 status of the school.

Trent suggested that the school have a complaint form for parents to fill out.

Food Budget—Cary

Refer to pelorus accounting appendix for definition of object function.

3 elements needed to evaluate numbers – object, function and program

Cary explained how to better understand the budget, and handed out a booklet that better explains the program that we use to manage the school budget. He used the food budget as an example.

The state charter board wants schools to simplify the budget hand-outs given to the board so it's less confusing.

The budget updates will be cut to one page updates, except for an annual review.

Jennifer asked if Pelorus is easier to track than Quick Books, Chris and Cary replied that it is a much better program.

Cary said Pelorus also gives us the ability to be more efficient with our money and holds us more accountable for the use of the state monies.

Cary motioned to move \$42,000 out of interest/fees into property/purchases for the purpose of moving the money to the proper category.

Trent seconded the motion—it was approved pending ratification at next meeting.

Cary motioned to approve food budget, Trent seconded. Ken asked about the \$2000 in misc. Chris told him that it was based on employee purchases. –Motion passed pending ratification.

Board Assignments—Trent

Trent wants clarification on policy of board members sitting in on school meetings (i.e. interviews, parental issues etc.)

Jennifer would like to have committees and schedule board members to go to specific activities.

Ken said that officially the CAO can make those assignments. He approved of the idea of having a board calendar and handing out assignments.

Committees

Uniform: Nancy

Attendance: Nancy

Hiring: Jennifer

Expansion: Jennifer

Website/Communication: Trent

PR: Trent

Fundraising/Parental Involvement: Ken

Finance: Cary

Ed Team/Land Trust: Cary

Maturation: Kyle

Activities/Calendar (making sure board members attend school activities): Jennifer

CAO: Ken

Property: Kyle

Charter Review: Nancy & Jennifer

Lynne suggested that a governing board member be assigned to the school ed. Team. There also needs to be an election for parents for land trust committee, and a board member on the committee to review

the maturation program.

Trent would like to use updated website to encourage parental involvement.

The board will have a calendar with assignments, and if Lynne needs board assistance she'll call a board member.

Lynne has the final decision in suspension issues—board members can sit in the meeting, if needed, but the decision is up to Lynne.

Charter/Bylaws Alignment—Ken

What is a charter? An authorization from the sovereign to do certain things. The bylaws are how the charter is carried out.

The charter and bylaws both go over similar things.

In 2007 the bylaws were changed, but we failed to update the charter to accommodate the changes.

Biggest change is in the election procedure.

Refer to Ken's notes for details

The charter says that the CAO and CFO are chosen by the school body. The bylaws state that the CAO and CFO are chosen by the board. Ken suggested that sections 2.3-2.6 be removed from the charter because they are the same in the bylaws.

Ken thinks the CFO should be elected by the board since that person needs a certain skill set.

Section 2.8 is only in the charter, and Ken recommends it should be put in the bylaws.

If changes are made we're required to have parent approval (by majority) and governing board approval before taking the changes before the state.

2.9-2.16 are in both the charter and bylaws and should be consolidated to one.

Charter requires board members meet once a month—the board hasn't been doing that and the charter needs to be changed—possibly to “the board meets regularly”

Our charter does not meet all of the following requirements

Utah Code 53A-1a-508 The charter shall include:

*the age or grade levels to be served

*the projected maximum number of students to be enrolled in the school and the projected enrollment in each of the first three years of operations;

*the governance structure of the school;

*the financial plan for the school and the provisions which will be made for auditing the school under subsection

*the mission and education goals of the school, the curriculum offered, and the methods of

assessing whether students are meeting educational goals, to include at a minimum participation in the Utah Performance Assessment System for Students under Chapter 1, Part 6, Achievement Tests;

Ken would like to add a charter review board, which will have these necessary changes in place for the November board election, so they can be voted on by the parent body.

Ken would like the charter review board to include Nancy, Jennifer, a couple of parents and a teacher.

The board all agrees that a charter revision/consolidation needs to be done.

Ken would like some of the issues to be addressed in the August board meeting.

We need to have parent education on changes—suggestions for this include starting at meet the teacher night and curriculum night.

August Board Meeting:

Uniform Add-ons

Location

Charter/Bylaws alignment/changes

Fundraising—Trent

The fundraising committee will work with the PTO to run the carnival as a fundraiser. It will be in September.

The money raised from the fundraising will be voted on by parents.

The fundress day will be once a month.

Discussing of setting up an endowment for the school so the money would be split between school and endowment. Percentage of donations to be split 25% to the endowment and 75% to the projects chosen.

Utah Open and Public Meetings Act—Cary

Refer to the Open Meetings Act hand out

The act is meant to ensure deliberations for public process.

Public bodies are required to follow this law. (that's us)

Meeting = a convening of a public body, with a quorum present.

What isn't a meeting? A chance meeting, a social meeting – no public funds are appropriated

The CAO must ensure that the board has an annual training.

Open meetings include: regular meetings, special meetings, workshops, executive sessions, site visits,

traveling tours

Cary suggested that the charter/bylaws be amended so there can be an electronic meeting. If it is an electronic meeting, specify it on the agenda.

Notice Requirements: agenda posted, sent to one local general circulation newspaper or local media correspondent, post notice to the Utah Public Notice Website.

Possibly post on ksl.com to meet the local requirement, or send an email to the daily herald.

If it is not on the agenda, the board can't vote on it in that meeting.

Emergency Meeting: minutes need to include a statement about why an emergency meeting was needed.

Minutes must include: date, time, place, members present/absent, all matters proposed, discussed or decided, all names and substance of information from individuals giving testimony, individual votes on each matter, any additional info. requested by a member.

Written minutes shall be available to the public before final approval when minutes are only awaiting formal approval. – Lynne suggested we need to post the minutes on the website.

Ken suggested that we have the audience sign-in at board meetings.

Minutes and recordings: minutes and recording of open meetings should be available to public, unless it is a closed meeting

Closed meeting: a quorum must be present, 2/3 of the body must vote to close the meeting, body must first hold a public meeting with proper notice before entering into the closed meeting

Information to be released publicly from closed meetings: the reason or reasons for holding the closed meeting, the locations where the closed meeting will be held, and the vote by name, of each member of the public body, either for or against the motion to hold the closed meeting.

A recording must be made of a closed meeting unless it's a discussion of the character, competence or health of an individual, and discussion of security.

Ken stated that a decision made in an illegal meeting is void from the outset of that decision/illegal meeting.

Common Violations: Closing meetings without members of the body voting first in an open meeting to close the meeting, conducting a closed meeting for reasons other than those allowed by OPMA, taking official or final action in a closed meeting, failing to properly provide notice of a public meeting,

1. Add a separate recorder for executive session.
2. Give notice to local media correspondent.
3. Put that the meeting may be electronic on the agenda.
4. Make a draft of minutes available on website before approved at the next meeting.
5. Vote by name to move to a closed meeting.

At 4:30 we took a break—reconvened at 4:35.

Nancy returned which made a quorum so the board could ratify prior votes.

Policy #1, #2 Revisions—Lynne

Mostly clarifications to parent/student handbook.

Unexcused absences – not allowed to participate in after school activities on that day.

Excessive absence policy—see attachments. Trent wants to clarify who has the power to make the decision of suspension in the meeting of parents with the governing board members in this situation.

Contacting Students

Extracurricular Classes/Sports –students may not participate in sports/classes unless they have a C or higher and good behavior.

Field Day—Ken is not sure about denying the kids access to field day for lunch money

Classroom Decorum—there were issues this year with students calling teachers nicknames.

Group Accountability—Lynne told story about Springville Jr. High- had to suspend 130 students because of an issue of students not reporting an incident.

Video Cameras—we have them and we use them

Dress Code Policy—more clarification

Jennifer motioned to accept changes to handbook as printed, Nancy seconded the motion. Jennifer, Cary, Trent, and Nancy voted for the motion, Ken voted no. The motion passed.

Ken reviewed the previous motions with Nancy.

Trent motioned to ratify the 2010/2011 budget, Cary seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
Trent motioned to ratify the lunch budget and Cary seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The board is renewing Lynne’s contract for 3 years.

Trent motioned to authorize Ken to renew Lynne’s contract for 3 years under the terms determined in the executive session. Ken seconded the motion. Motion was unanimous.

Ken motioned to close the meeting, and Cary seconded. Motion was unanimous.
Meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Freedom Academy Governing Board Meeting
January 26, 2011
DRAFT

Meeting called to order by Ken Parkinson
Pledge: Wendy Ahlman
Prayer: Jennifer Young

Those in attendance: Ken Parkinson, Wendy Ahlman, Nancy Ashby, Jennifer Young, Cary McConnell, Kyle bateman, Lynne Herring, Chris Helvey, LaMarr Nielson, Lisa LaFleur, Trent Schoonmaker, Robert Merrill, Jennifer Doud

Jennifer Doud introduced as new secretary. Jennifer given time to introduce herself.

Ken Parkinson: let's stick to time limits.

Approval of Minutes:

Ken: Motion to amend minutes of November 17, 2010 meeting. In September, after the Executive Session, we made two motions.

Monica made the 1st motion to cut administration costs by \$50,000 and eliminate the librarian position. It received no second.

Nancy made 2nd motion to cut costs by no less than \$30,000 at Lynn's discretion. It was seconded by Monica. That motion failed. The vote was divided by gender; males, Kyle, Ken, Cary, Ray were against, and females, Nancy, Andrea, Monica were for it.

Seconded by Kyle. Vote is unanimous in favor. More probably needs to be added here. Might need to listen to the recording.

Motion passes.

Approval of minutes motioned by Ken. Seconded by Wendy. Vote unanimous.

Public Comments:

Ray Hingson resigned. Previous candidates given time to speak in order to choose replacement. Trent Schoonmaker and Paul Baltes made comments. Robert Merrill and Andrea Perry decline offer to be considered for position.

Lisa LaFleur, in last 6 months parents have been disappointed by Board's disrespect for parents and administration. She started petition to get respect and it was signed by over 25% of parents. The administration stays involved in activities and care about the children. We need to celebrate the good instead of focusing on the bad at Freedom Academy.

Linda Golding: I am the Special Education Director and 504 Coordinator. Comment on Mr Nielson put on half time and jobs divided up among staff. She struggles with the extra responsibilities It makes me less efficient at what I was hired to do. I question this decision. Please reconsider this decision. I would like to resume doing the job I was hired to do.

Lynne clarified that the Board only recommended that decision about Mr Nielson. The decision was made by the Director of the school.

Audit report: Cary McConnell

Auditor Cindy, from Squire and Company, PC, read from The Freedom Academy Foundation Annual Financial Report – for Year Ended June 30, 2010 and answered questions about it. She indicated it was a clean audit compared to other charter schools in the state. See Attachment A. Vote to approve Audit report. Kyle moved to accept and Nancy seconded.

Uniform policy: Wendy Ahlman recommended changes to the Freedom Academy dress code(see Attachment B #1). She a few from the public discussed parent complaints (See attachment B #2-4). A few in favor of keeping the current uniform policy were allowed to speak. Motion by Wendy to amend dress code according to number 3 of suggested changes on Attachment B #1. Ken second. Vote failed (4-2). Ken and Wendy voted “Yea”. Nancy, Jennifer, Kyle and Cary voted “Nay”.

Internal Control Policy Review: Ken Parkinson

Ken motioned that the Governing Board of Freedom Academy requires that its Director develop, publish, maintain, and operate by a robust set of internal controls which ensures the separation of duties, fiscal accountability and reduces opportunity for fraud. Nancy seconds. Vote is unanimous.

Kyle motioned that the Governing Board of Freedom Academy directs the school administration to submit its written internal controls policy to the auditor each year as part of the standards operations policy. This internal controls policy will also be made available to the board. Ken Seconds. The vote is unanimous.

Sustainable Fund Raising: Robert Merrill

Had two fund raising free-dress days and averaged just under \$600 each time. It was successful. Lynne will ask staff if free dress day is disruptive to student learning. Trent Schoonmaker discussed the upcoming Etiquette Day on Valentine's Day. Mr. and Mrs. Newel, Ambassador of Sweden, will teach principle based etiquette. Will have special lunch for grades 6-8th. Assembly for 1st thru 3rd and 4th and 5th.

Has potential to earn \$2,000. Need 40 parent volunteers. Parents serving lunch.

Robert Merrill- Benavon model system to allow us to create an individual data base of individuals who can help us. Need someone professional with business back ground 15 to 20 hours a week to run this program.

Update of expansion: Jennifer Young

Looking at many sites for the new high school. Calculating number of class rooms and teachers for 75 ninth graders in 2012 and more students into the future. We are researching options for art, technology, communication, foreign languages, orchestra and choir. Researching options for textbooks and e-books. Erik Jacobson is looking into grants. Feb 8th Parent info meeting about concerns with grades K-12 . Calculating all aspects of the budget. Making sure numbers match or there will be no expansion. See attachment E.

Bubble class issues: Lynne Herring

Four six grade classes this year. This year 130 7th and 8th graders, next year could have 180. May need portable to house them. We see most 6th graders coming back because of the high school plans. We won't know for sure until end of summer. May need to apply with USOE for an additional 25 students for next year to keep all current Freedom students enrolled.

Saturday school still continues. Looked at effectiveness and looks good so will keep it. There is a team of eleven 7th and 8th graders to participate in a mock trail. The first competition is on March 1st. Any school can participate.

Questions on Director's Update

1st question by Nancy- What is 21st Grant?

Chris- The 21st Grant is more money for after school, weekend programs for low income, minorities. We would manage everything. It would need someone to direct it. Director would just oversee it. We provide building and director. Would take time for someone to do it.

Lynne- We have put it off because of this facility being a new building and it is heavily scheduled.

2nd Question by Wendy: With the cuts, I need to know that Core Knowledge will still be implemented?

Lynne, as know we will have cuts, looked at teachers, especially young ones. Many teachers musically talented, which is a double. We make cuts where the least impact will fall. Evaluations of teacher will be mid year.

Meeting Frequency and Next Meeting

Ken- Proposes that we meet every other month. Nancy and Wendy prefer frequency over duration.

Ken moves that we change the meeting frequency to every other month and once during the summer.

Wendy seconds. Unanimous vote.

Jennifer needs meeting to not be 4th Wednesday. Ken suggests Thursday, March 24th for next meeting.

Jennifer asks that the Executive Session be moved to before meeting. Ken asked what people think about moving public comments? Executive Session stays at end. Meeting time at 6:00 PM good for everyone.

Ken moves that the Board goes into the Executive Session to talk about items on the agenda. Wendy seconds. Unanimous vote.

Executive Session:

All present: Lynne Herring, Nancy Ashby, Kyle Bateman, Cary McConnell, Jennifer Young, Wendy Ahlman, Ken Parkinson, , Chris Helvey and Jennifer Doud. Meeting recorded.

Reconvened meeting

Ken advises to appoint Trent Schoonmaker as new board member.

Discussion:

Wendy wants Rob to be appointed because he had more votes than Trent in last election. Ken reminded Wendy that Rob declined and wants to continue with the fund raising committee, which is something the school very much needs.

No other discussion.

Vote called: Wendy voted nay. Ken, Cary Nancy, Kyle, and Jennifer voted yea.

Trent is new board member.