

Advocates for Academic Excellence in Education, Inc.
(Benjamin Franklin High School) Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 16, 2024, 4:30 PM Library Gallery

1. Call to Order: 4:40 p.m.

2. Roll Call: Sean Blondell, Jill Condon, Alea Cot, Tim Duncan, Charmaine Cooper Hussain, Jenny Kottler '79, Jon Levy '03, Dolly Malik, Alexis Parent-Ferrouillet '96, Mark Rubin '86, Jeffrey Seymour, Mitchell Turnbough.

Absent: Shaneika Dabney-Henderson '96, Todd Ragusa.

3. Announcements

a. Meet a Franklin student: Akshita Sridhar '25 and Audrey Orzech '25 founded Krewe du Cypress to feel more proactive about climate change. Their goals are education, awareness, and action. They had great success with the Aspen Challenge and have kept their momentum going with retreats, panel discussions, and tree-planting events.

b. Reminder – **Thursday, June 20** is the Annual Meeting date. It will be on the UNO campus.

c. Graduation on **Tuesday, May 21**, at 4 p.m. in the UNO Lakefront Arena

d. Budget Public Hearing on **Thursday, May 30** at 3:30 p.m. in the Cafeteria

e. Resignation of Anu Varadharajan: Ms. Cot says Ms. Varadharajan unfortunately had to step down due to increased work-related travel. Ms. Cot thanked her for her work.

4. Approval of Agenda –Motion. Second. Approved unanimously with no comment.

5. Approval of Minutes of April 18–Motion. Second. Approved unanimously with no comment.

6. Information/Reports

- a. CEO Report (Mr. Jarrell): Dr. Kendall McManus-Thomas will start June 4. We exceeded our Give NOLA Day goal of \$75,000 with \$78,500 from 367 donors. For the LEAP exam, 100% of our English III students achieved Mastery or Advanced. We had two Gates Scholars and are sending our 266 Class of 2024 graduates to a number of prestigious colleges and universities. Mr. Jarrell will focus on facility challenges. He thanks Mr. Turnbough and Mr. Jackson for their work on our

Facility Committee. One of his top three priorities for next year will be facility improvements. He discussed the impact of having a quality facility on student performance and faculty morale. He presented the 2017 facilities master plan. The increase in our student body is both exciting and challenging. We have a number of summer projects planned to make short-term improvements. The building will close this summer while these projects are completed.

District grants have been applied for; thanks to Natalie Beck for her work on this. The scope and content of each grant were detailed.

Hiring an architect to assess expansion options is also in discussion. Summer instruction and testing will take place at UNO. Board members shared immediate advantages and concerns about each option. Building an additional floor onto the current building brings about concerns about where to locate students during construction and the structural integrity of the building to hold another floor. Mr. Turnbough noted prior engineering findings that determined the building may be able to support an additional floor. Concerns align about not disturbing the student experience, as well as the financial concerns of building onto a building that we do not own. Out of district funding revenues from NOLA PS would need to be addressed, as well as our future needs in addition to current needs. Further discussion of population changes city wide that will impact us in the future. Mr. Jarrell emphasized that the goal is to have a single meeting space for all students as well as enough classrooms for all teachers to have a single room without floating. Additional ideas about how to grow if using a UNO space were also discussed. Clarity on funding sources and opportunities was noted.

Upcoming Facilities dates, including the building closure and meetings were shared.

b. Committee Reports and Discussion

- i. Finance Committee (Ms. Condon): Strong cash position and balance sheet show we are in a good position overall. We have a surplus, but only because of federal ESSR funding. Ms. Perkins noted comparisons between the current year and FY25. We will budget more conservatively. Expect 9% pickup on revenue and development; 6% pickup on salaries and benefits. Net surplus of \$110,000 with ESSR funding (a budget deficit without ESSR.). On the bright side, fundraising and development pickups are anticipated to meet budget needs without ESSR funding. Security grant funding discrepancies were noted.
- ii. Governance Committee (Ms. Cot):
 1. Board retreat and strategic planning with K. Allen Consulting. Saturday, Jun 8, 2024 is the board retreat, but which UNO venue has not yet been determined. It will be held 9am until 3pm, and include a CEO/Principal presentation and K. Allen Consulting workshop.

7. Discussion

- a. Memorandum of Understanding for changes to section XVI. LEAVE PROVISIONS of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the United Teachers of New Orleans on behalf of the AAEE Board of Directors (Ms. Cot)-- Background about the language used in the CBA regarding PTO and how TRSL categorizes leave was shared, including discrepancies in the employee handbook with this language. Correcting this reporting with TRSL has been underway for a few years and there have been numerous discussions with the union in the Labor Management Committee meetings. An MOU to the CBA between AAEE and UTNO is needed to allow for accurate TRSL reporting. The proposal is to change 10 month employees from 10 PTO Days to 8 Sick Leave Days and 3 PTO Days. This would net an extra day off, and the PTO days can be banked up to a maximum of 10. Used sick days are not banked, but are reported to TRSL annually, allowing unused sick days to be converted by TRSL to service credit upon retirement.

8. Action Items--

- a. Authorize Alea M. Cot, as President of the Board, to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for changes to the section XVI. LEAVE PROVISIONS of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the United Teachers of New Orleans on behalf of the AAEE Board of Directors (Ms. Cot) Motion. Second. Approved unanimously with no further comment.

9. Adjourn. Motion. Second. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.