

YLA Board Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2023

Board Members Present (highlighted): Betsy Anthony, Nick McClellan, Cathy Moore, Tenley Murphy, Cynthia Deaton, Chris Elrod, Matthew Kutilek, Craig Trainer, Rebecca Willis, Kenna Dillard, Christie Dunson

Others Present: Sandee Blankenship, Principal; Melissa Kennedy, Assistant Principal; Nathan Swords, Special Projects Coordinator for YLA

Call to Order: The YLA board held its monthly meeting on Monday, January 9, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. in Mrs. Kutilek's classroom. Betsy Anthony called the meeting to order.

Public Input: NA

Previous Month Minutes Approved: A motion was made to approve the December 2022 minutes by Cathy Moore, Craig Trainer seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Statement: A motion was made to approve the December 2022 financials by Cathy Moore, Nick McClellan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

- New Charter: Update – due February 1. Since we met last time, we have had several phone conversations with ASU. It is still the same premise, and they have taught Sandee a lot. Initially, she was completely against boxed curriculum, but after talking to them, she learned the benefits of boxed curriculum. At ASU, they offer a boxed curriculum to teachers for a foundation; teachers are able to adapt it. Teachers are also able to do their own thing, but the boxed lessons are available if teachers get overwhelmed and need support. It is \$200 / student to contract with ASU, which is less than our power bill at YLA. ASU also offers tech support, learning coaches, teachers, and others are also available to receive support. ASU is very successful with both enrollment and test scores. The Board's position in this – the Board hires the Principal, the Principal and Director hire the staff. In the first year, which is year 0, 23-24 school year, the employees of the school will be Sandee (Director) Susan Finley (Inst. Coach) Principal (?) and Special Projects Coordinator (?). Employees will be paid for with P&I Grant. In year 24-25, we will hire teaching staff.
- The Principal position will be posted before our next Board meeting. Hopefully, it will be opened in February; contingent hire in March, dependent on April announcement.
- If you are interested in being on the Principal selection committee, reach out to Betsy Anthony.
- As of right now, the name is still Zenith Academy.
- The source of funding for students and teachers for the Charter School is still the State. We contract with Clemson University for HR, but no funding is received from CU.

- Question: Parental involvement impacts student success in an online learning environment. How will we hold students accountable when its virtual? In our Charter, we will include a system for accountability.
- Question: Would it be a good idea to hire a Principal with virtual experience? Sandee asked ASU, and they told her proficient in technology, comfortable having hard conversations, and someone who has administrative experience, but everyone has to start somewhere. The Principal does not have to be a certified administrator, but they do have to be a certified teacher.
- What makes this virtual school unique: lifetime fitness, hybrid in-person meeting times, community service, job shadowing, field trips, etc. Many aspects of YLA.
- Is there a projected budget? The state will give us X amount of money per student. The first year is make it or break it. Fortunately, because of our relationship with Clemson, we have cushion. The major expense is people. Fortunately, we know that our model works because we've done it at YLA and at Tall Pines. We also now know how to better use the P&I money. So far, the first year, we may only need \$25,000 fronted by Clemson, which includes travel to ASU.

New Business: N/A

Principal's Report: Things are going well. High school registration is about to start. A group of students will be going to beta club convention Wednesday – Friday. Hiring for YLA next year is complete. If you have any ideas you want to incorporate into the Charter, send those ideas to Sandee. Two schools have recently contacted Sandee to consult with them for school success.

Questions, Comments, Concerns: February meeting will stay in place; March will also stay in place. If you cannot attend a meeting, let Betsy know.

Executive Session: N/A

Adjournment: Chris Elrod made motion for meeting to adjourn; Kenna Dillard seconded. The Board approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by

Catherine R. Moore, Secretary