Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting

EDUPRIZE SCHOOLS
580 W Melody Lane
Gilbert, AZ 85233

December 12, 2024

Members in attendance:	Carrie Larson (virtual) Monika Calamita
Member absent:	Seth Klempner
Non-Members present:	Todd Noel Michael Gordon-Smith Jennifer Murphy Robin Yeargain Bryce Solberg Maria Rosetti Amanda Kirkland Christine Hansen Dixie Marshall Clint Ambos Heather Vehon

The meeting was held per posted agenda on our webpage and as posted in the foyer at 4567 W. Roberts Road, Queen Creek, AZ and 580 W. Melody Lane, Gilbert, AZ.

1. **Call to Order**
   The meeting was called to order by Board Secretary Monika at 1:04 pm.

2. **Approval of Minutes**
   The minutes from the prior two Board of Directors meetings held on 11/7/24 and 11/12/24 were reviewed. A motion was made by Monika Calamita to approve the minutes as presented, and Carrie Larson seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved with Monika Calamita in favor, and Carrie Larson in favor. None opposed.

3. **Consideration of Principals' Reports**
   a. J. Murphy reported that Eagle Expo was a big success, and the Quarter 2 Pep Assembly kicked off the winter sports, including the State Championship basketball and cornhole teams. The Open/National basketball team is undefeated, and Senior AJ Thomas is #1 in the state and #6 in the country for scoring points.

AVID training with the staff will continue in January, the focus will be defining rigor. Registrations for next year will begin in January, and the course catalog is currently being reorganized, there will be one for JH and one for HS.

b. R. Yeargain shared that they just held a successful Holiday Fundraiser & Scholastic book fair. PTO is looking for a new treasurer. The annual Holiday drive is going on, this will benefit multiple EDUPRIZE families. 99 students have been through the CST process so far this year. Benchmark testing is taking place, and they will be using that data in January. They hosted a community event for PreK-3rd children called Books before Bedtime - 148 kids participated, including 3 non-Eduprize families. Cottage fairs will be taking place next week, as well as the Quarter 2 Assembly. Gifted students have been studying, and have adopted, black footed ferrets, and gave a presentation about it. She is completing evaluations, and the teachers are incredible.

c. B. Solberg shared that the school raised $64, 000 through the boosterthon fundraiser and purchased 68 additional chromebooks. The remaining money will fund other school events. The Thanksgiving turkey drive was successful. They are hosting their Penguin Patch Holiday Shop for kids to shop for Christmas gifts, as well as the Angel Giving Tree to bless EDUPRIZE families. Attendance is going well, the weekly attendance average is over 90%. Last year chronic absenteeism was much higher, they had 48 families on attendance contracts, this year it is only 15 families.

4. **Consideration of SPED Reports**
    a. M. Rosetti shared that they have made some changes in programming for students who need more support. There is one student on each campus with SPED all day long. They are still currently under CAP, and will be meeting with ADE next week. They are close to closing the CAP, very minor things need to be tweaked.

    b. A. Kirkland shared that they are currently evaluating students. Last year there was an 80% qualification rate for SPED services. Their interventionists are doing a great job working with students. There are 501 SPED students across both campuses. About 18% (national is 10-12%). This number is going up every year, in numbers and needs.
        i. MGS shared that one goal is to help families understand that we have significantly more things to offer than SPED. There has been unsustainable growth in SPED in the last 4-5 years.

5. **Consideration of Superintendent Report**
    Michael Gordon-Smith shared:
    a. Enrollment numbers are steady, with 1305 at Gilbert, 1745 at QC, and 53 in EOI. Intent to Return forms started going out in November, and so far 647 students have committed to return to Gilbert, 1078 students at QC, and 28 in EOI. The percentage saying yes is higher than those saying no. He is tracking the data for those who said no or unsure. It reaffirms what we know about 7-12 families: they want to get their kids into school with more electives, more friends, etc. It’s not a reflection of teachers or the school, we just don’t offer. Important data.

b. Operations: We are doing some hiring. One faculty member in HS passed away. We played an active role with family, and did things on campus to build community. We also need to hire an academic advisor, and an ELA teacher.

c. In the process of interviewing for a Marketing Director, there are fantastic candidates. This is a new position and the money is coming from the salary from the previous IT director. Marketing funds are coming from the savings from change in health insurance. Candidates have lots of expertise in copy and data tracking. They will be working on new branding, which will be kicked off in the fall for the 30 year anniversary. Eventually we will grow into a marketing team.

d. In the process of revising faculty, student, and parent handbooks. We will tighten up discipline, and make sure policies are in place that protect us from a liability perspective, and that families understand expectations.

e. Looking to make a schedule change for middle and high school. They are currently on two different bell schedules, and we are working on a proposed alignment for the schedules. This will be presented to the board when finalized. Currently looking at a 70 minute block schedule for both. This will simplify the scheduling process and open up elective opportunities.

f. Addendums and contract alignments: We will be meeting to discuss this as a team. When finalized, it will be presented to the board. Expectations are not quite fully aligned with addendums. We need to set expectations that are a challenge, but reasonable. He thinks teachers will be happy with changes being made. There is also a need to realign some contracts, and achieve better alignment between QC and Gilbert.

g. There are plans for some Admin PD on Jan 3rd which will be focused on a data-centric approach.

h. Insurance: great plans are coming out. Brokers will be on the Gilbert campus on Monday, and the QC campus on Tuesday. Basic conclusion is that they are offering cheaper plans, and a free employee-only plan. This will make it more difficult for teachers to move somewhere else. There will also no longer be a 90-day waiting period, insurance starts immediately for new employees.

i. Signed a new contract with Kyocera, our current copiers are dying. We will be receiving 20 new copiers/rizo machines across both campuses. The old copiers last purchased were already used, and are costing a lot of money on repairs. Installation of new copiers begins this month. The monthly cost is a little more, but we are meeting the increased cost by eliminating costs from smaller copy machines. Every 2-4 classrooms share a small printer. Toner & maintenance on these little printers are high. They can be kept in the classrooms, but we are no longer supporting them.

j. Finance: A fractional CFO, Orbital, was hired. They will go through the budgets and expenses and be able to tell us what we are spending on operations, salary, benefits, etc, with a comprehensive breakdown. They will provide this every month. The spreadsheets and visuals they produce will make it easier to visualize and understand where all the money is going. The principals and SPED can then be given their own budgets to work with.

6. **Review of Financial Reports**
   A motion was made by Monika Calamita to approve the financial reports as presented to the board, and Carrie Larson seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved with Monika Calamita in favor, and Carrie Larson in favor. None opposed.

7. **Approval of Expenditures and Disbursements**
   A motion was made by Monika Calamita to approve the expenditures and disbursements as presented to the board, and Carrie Larson seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved with Monika Calamita in favor, and Carrie Larson in favor. None opposed.

Call to Public: None

Michael Gordon-Smith would like to propose that the principals no longer have to attend board meetings anymore. They hold an admin meeting before each board meeting where the principals share what they would like presented. Michael can present any important information the board needs to know. In the case of SPED, due to FERPA, there isn't much information that can be presented to the board. It would be a better use of everyone's time for the principals and SPED directors to continue in their roles during this time. He also encouraged principals to invite board members to big events, so they can attend if able. Monica Calamita asked to have this item added to the next board meeting agenda.

A motion was made by Carrie Larson to adjourn the meeting, and Monica Calamita seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved with Monika Calamita in favor, and Carrie Larson in favor. None opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 pm by Monika Calamita.