Democracy Prep Baton Rouge

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday April 16, 2018 at 5:00 PM

Location
4055 Prescott Road, Baton Rouge, LA

Directors Present
A. d’Aquin, C. Lamond, E. Martin, J. Richey, M. Walters

Directors Absent
L. Grover

Guests Present
Corrie Manieri, Greg Spreeman, Hector Zapata, Michelle Gieg

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order
   E. Martin called a meeting of the board of directors of Democracy Prep Baton Rouge to order on Monday Apr 16, 2018 @ 5:00 PM at 4055 Prescott Road, Baton Rouge, LA.

C. Public Comments

D. Approve Minutes
   E. Martin made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board’s January 9, 2018 meeting.
   A. d’Aquin seconded the motion.
   The board VOTED unanimously to approve the motion.
II. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Committee Update
Greg Spreeman, Chief Financial Officer at Democracy Prep Public Schools (DPPS), shared the current FY17 budget vs. actual with board members. Mr. Spreeman stated that the numbers are as expected and things are in line with where they should be at this time of year. Teams are beginning to develop next year’s budget, which will be available for review by the next board meeting.

III. Consent Agenda

A. Election of New Board Chair
Ms. Michelle Gieg, Executive Director of DPBR, announced to the board that Dr. Leslie Grover has decided to resign as board chair, referring to the email that Dr. Grover sent the board. While Dr. Grover’s term as board chair has ended, she will remain a board member. The Democracy Prep board and the school team are very thankful for her service and the time and efforts she has dedicated to Democracy Prep.
Ms. Walters then nominated Mr. Eddrick Martin as board chair, effective immediately. She stated that Mr. Martin has been a dedicated member of the board who has worked hard to support Democracy Prep scholars and staff. M. Walters made a motion to nominate Mr. Eddrick Martin as board chair, effective immediately.
C. Lamond seconded the motion.
The board VOTED unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Material Amendment Vote to Add Grade 4
Ms. Gieg informed the board that a material amendment vote was needed to add grade four for the 2018-19 school year. Because of our strong performance in our first year, this grade change does not require a BESE vote and simply needs state approval, which Ms. Gieg has requested.
E. Martin made a motion to approve the addition of grade four in school year 2018-19.
A. d’Aquin seconded the motion.
The board VOTED unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Option to Convert to Local District Authorization
Ms. Gieg next discussed the option for Democracy Prep to convert to East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (EBR) authorization. In the Recovery School District (RSD), schools that are a C and above have the option to return to local district authorization. For the first time in the parish, charter schools such as DPBR are eligible to return to EBR as 3b charter schools, which would make them part of the school district while allowing them to maintain levels of autonomy.

Mr. Martin led a brief discussion with the board regarding the option to convert to a type 3B under East Baton Rouge Parish authorization. Ms. Walters and Ms. Richey stated that they didn’t see any benefit to seeking that option now, and Ms. d’Aquin did not think it wise to go outside of the purview of the Recovery School District without clear parameters from the local school district, which are not available at this time. All members agreed to evaluate the option as more information becomes available.

IV. School Update
A. School Update
Ms. Gieg shared that there have been two resignations in 2018; positions that have been replaced with part time staff and support from current team members in an effort to be creative and save money where possible.

In a facilities update, Ms. Gieg notified the board that a meeting has been scheduled later this week with CSRS, the company working with EBR in their flood recovery efforts. The meeting is to determine exactly what parts of the Prescott facility will be covered by FEMA in an effort to determine the remaining work the school will need to do in order to be operational next school year.

Democracy Prep does not yet have a plan for these additional building costs, but Ms. Gieg shared that once we have a scope of work and a dollar amount, we will be able to determine funding sources.

Ms. Gieg shared that current enrollment is at 399 with 112 new applications for next year. The school is working to fill three grades completely next year, grades 4, 5, and kindergarten, and the enrollment team is prioritizing 4th and 5th grade applications. The team reports that families seem very excited that Democracy Prep will offer all elementary grades next year.

With staff retention projected at 90% for next year, Ms. Gieg feels that the school will be able to start strong, with experienced teachers in almost every grade level. The school plans to hire approximately 10 additional teachers, however, the pool of talented candidates is low this year compared to other years.

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Ms. Gieg reminded the board that scholars started LEAP testing today. The first day was strong and smooth with evidence of scholars working hard in a calm and organized environment.

Ms. Gieg shared details and invitations to various spring school events, including the Spring Showcase on May9th atManshipTheaterandthe8thgraderecognitionbreakfastonMay11th. Shealso shared some information about upcoming end of year trips for our middle school scholars: 5th grade will travel to New Orleans, 6th grade to Birmingham, 7th grade to Washington, DC, and 8th grade to Colorado Springs.

V. Network Update

A. Netowrk Update
Democracy Prep Public Schools is excited about the opening of a single site elementary school in San Antonio, the first district-run charter for DPPS. Ms. Gieg also shared that every single scholar in the graduating class at Freedom Prep in Camden, New Jersey was accepted to the college of their choice. Ms. Walters shared her congratulations, and wanted to be sure that Freedom Prep knew that the DPBR board was cheering for them.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting
E. Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
A. d’Aquino seconded the motion.
The board VOTED unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:11 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Richey