

Inspire School of Arts & Sciences Board of Directors

February 10, 2020

Regular Session – 7:00 PM

Held at Inspire Classroom IC-6

335 W. Sacramento Avenue Chico, CA

The mission of the Inspire School of Arts and Sciences is to provide high levels of learning and support within a personalized environment that allows students to explore their interests and develop their talents.

Minutes

1. Call to Order: 7:30pm
In attendance: Evan Tuchinsky, Shelby Chase, David Zeicheck, Cam Bull, Scott Gunderson, Becky Brown, Doris Luther, Ron Pope, Celeste Cramer, Mary Hartley, Catherine Sullivan, Carol Brown, Kate McCarthy, Jarrah Myles, Eric Nillson, Mike Weissenborn, Ken Hardy, Ariana Powell, Jay Shrestha
2. Roll call of members
3. Public Comment: Carol Brown and Celeste Cramer reported that the Neverland Ball ticket sales are going well. Dan La Bar reported the foundation is up and running.
4. Consent Calendar
 - a. Evan Tuchinsky sent in a few questions to Becky. Requests pulling 4.6, Evan Tuchinsky requests approval of the consent calendar with the exception of 4.6. Ron Pope seconded. Approved unanimously
 - b. A discussion ensued about the choir trip to San Francisco. Evan Tuchinsky questioned some of the details to this field trip. Mary Lou Lim provided details about the choir trip which includes singing for an hour at Pier 39, dinner at Bubba Gump's, stay at the Hotel Zephyr, and will sing at Grace Cathedral at 1:00. Mary Lou answered questions about the details of the forms for the field trip. Inspire Support Team is providing financial support, and fundraising is ongoing. Evan Tuchinsky motions to approve, 4.6, the choir field trip, Kate McCarthy seconded.
5. Student Report
 - a. Ariana Powell reported on the recent Dance. Jay Shrestha talked about the upcoming 8th grade visitation day. Ariana Powell reported on the spirit dress up days and student games. She also talked about the attention on the 10th day. Jay Shrestha talked about the Flowertines on sale. Seniors are selling chocolates to help raise funds for their senior trip to /Disneyland. Other fundraising ideas are in the works.
6. Teacher Report
 - a. Scott Gunderson and Jarrah Myles reported on Oklahoma update. Jarrah Myles invited all board members to the performance. Oklahoma has the largest cast and crew of any Inspire production. Children's performance is well-booked. Please help get the word out via social media; radio ads are out there now. The performance will be dedicated to Marylyn Warrens who was a theater booster and supporter recently deceased. A scholarship in her name is in the works.
7. Principal's report
 - a. School made 2 new hires to replace Jana Gosselin's position; an outreach person and an accountant tech. We are providing Erin Horst CTIEG funds to be coordinate CTE activities. Lee Holcomb is replacing Lisa Higbee in the office. We are searching a Resource teacher and a Vocal teacher for the fall.

- b. Student applications are decent; looking forward to working with the outreach team to improve
 - c. Dan La Bar provided an update on the Inspire Foundation. Just getting started on the positions, by-laws etc. Goal setting is one of the processes to help the school in its move to a new site. Foundation will present at tomorrow's staff meeting. Dan La Bar explained the Foundation's association with the North Valley Community Foundation.
 - d. Kate McCarthy asked for clarification on the new hires, item 4.9.
 - e. Erin Hall's digital media arts teams did well at Skills USA; Mr. Hopkins' Academic Decathlon team place third in recent competition; Mr. Gunderson's Robotics team also did well at recent competition. Ron Pope commended Ariana Powell on her achievements with the Skills USA team.
8. Discussion/Action Items
- a. Becky requests we discuss 8.4 before discussion commences on the other items
 - b. 8.4 Consider approval of new courses
 - i. Scott Gunderson explained the differences in the new course name. It will hopefully pull more students by broadening the scope of the Engineering courses. Scott answered questions about the course and its connection to PLTW (project lead the way) a national curriculum which has pre K through 12th grade. Scott talked about the articulation of classes from 9th to 12th grades. Wants to provide students with 3d modeling practice. Ron Pope said that getting kids interested in the program is a great way to go.
 - ii. Kate McCarthy inquired about the course name Journalism; Doris Luther provided some of the history to the course name change. Discussion ensued about using Advanced in the title of the yearbook course. Evan proposes splitting the voting on the two different courses. Doris suggests the board approve both courses as students will be signing up for courses in the next few weeks. KM moves to approve; Shelby seconds; discussion took place. Evan Tuchinsky asked if the board wants to see the course list next month meeting. Passed by all except Catherine Sullivan who opposed.
 - c. 8.1 consider approval of Development Director Position.
 - i. Becky Brown expressed the need for a position to be approved so that money could be raised as soon as possible to facilitate the move to Canyon View property. The approval is for a short term hire (6 months) until the Inspire Foundation could take over the management of the position which would be expressed in an MOU. Mike Weissenborn took the board through a budget model including target dates and critical path schedule. 26 February is an important first date for a total project approval of \$16.3 million of which Inspire must make a 50% match. Doris Luther provided additional information about monies that will and will not change. Mike Weissenborn suggests the board get to a position where they are comfortable with a "right person" doing the "right ask." Evan Tuchinsky asked when the school has to provide money to anybody. Mike Weissenborn responded with the school would have to pay a contractor once the work begins which is the step that follows the current phase--planning the new campus. Mike Weissenborn suggested that 2023 is the likely date for move in to new campus. Evan Tuchinsky asked if the school pays or if the state pays initially, Mike Weissenborn suggested that question is best suited for King Consultants. Dan La Bar said that the

number the foundation is working with is \$5 million, but that number could go up. Doris said if the foundation got up to \$5 million she hopes to get to \$2 million in loans which could be paid out of operating expenses. Evan Tuchinsky asked if the architect had given the school a final number on the cost; Mike Weissenborn said they have not as the final configuration has not been reached. Some community based meetings et al are still to come. Architects are comfortable that the school can “get over there.” Mike Weissenborn explained that the moving of the campus would take place before the CTIEP grant monies can be actualized. Discussion then began over the decision to hire the Development Director Position. Evan Tuchinsky said he has met with Becky about the position and that he was opposed to the hiring. He raised concerns about the impact the move will have on the school’s programs. He believes we will need to raise \$15 million in order to have the “state of the art things we’ve been talking about.” He doesn’t believe “we have people here who can raise \$15 million.” Those who can raise that money would require a higher salary than the principal’s salary. Evan Tuchinsky recommends the school hire consultants to help raise the money which he believes would cost \$150,000 over five years. Evan Tuchinsky’s other concern is that we didn’t want the 501 c 3 be in the position of raising money. There could be liability issues down the road. Evan Tuchinsky believes we could be better off with a consultant versus a development director. Shelby Chase asked Dan La Bar if the development director position seems viable to him. Dan La Bar said yes, and that he has had some difficulty building interest in a consultant. David Zeichek asked to whom would the consultant report. More discussion. Evan Tuchinsky didn’t think it should be the principal superintendent’s job to be a fundraiser. Ron Pope expressed concern about the position, that we have to do something or the school won’t exist. Dan La Bar expressed a sense of urgency. Becky Brown said she is not opposed to hiring a consultant; she has the capacity to find the “right person.” She also expressed concern about making the wrong ask to the right people. Evan Tuchinsky reiterated his concern about finding someone who could raise \$15 million as it is a very different ballgame. Carol Brown suggested that an outside consultant would not be as passionate about someone whose own students attend the school which is what sells the school to people. Kate McCarthy asked why the school can’t hire its own development director and doesn’t understand if the director is a fundraiser or a grant writer. Evan Tuchinsky said the board separated fundraising and delivering education into two separate roles. He expressed that if we want the school to be fundraising then we didn’t need the unnecessary step of establishing the foundation. Ron Pope suggested that the lawyers responded to those issues. Evan Tuchinsky reiterated his concern about liability including tax liabilities. Having a fundraiser on staff may affect future grant applications. Kate McCarthy asked if the school can have a grant writer position and a fundraiser. Eric Nilsson offered the historical context of the school’s efforts in the past to build a new school and that the way things are lining up there is a new sense of urgency. He also added that a local person to develop long term relationships is important as this is a long term proposition, the long game is to be played. The board set up monies in the past for this purpose and it

would be a mistake not to take the next steps and act on this opportunity to be assertive, not aggressive. Becky Brown's plan is a reasonable one. We can't wait around any longer. Evan Tuchinsky said he met with the same person Eric Nilsson did and got a different story. Mary Lou Lim spoke about some history that some may not know about. She has a family connection who sits on the Kennedy Center schools commission which helps to raise money for new campuses. She is confident they will help support the Inspire cause. She supports the hiring of a development director. Catherine Sullivan supported the hiring of the development director but wonders where the \$8 thousand number came from. Becky Brown and Doris Luther explained the number, but Catherine Sullivan felt it was low considering the duties a development director required. She suggests revisiting that amount. Jarrah Myles expressed her passion about the school and the need for a "go-to" person to make phone calls and follow through on the good ideas. She spends a lot of time fundraising for her own programs and supports the position of a development director. "We need someone who can get the job done." Kate McCarthy seeks clarification from Becky Brown about the roles of the development directory and grant writing. Becky Brown suggests we might need to hire a consultant to raise grant monies. Dan La Bar referenced the Denver School of Arts data in the board packet. He stressed that arts and sciences schools are the most expensive schools to run. Some schools have full-time staff to help the school funds. Becky Brown stressed the need for a development director to meet the needs and sense of urgency that has been discussed. Discussion about the amount be raised. Shelby Chase motioned that the development director be approved up to \$14,000 of monthly costs upon the approval of an MOU that would be valid for 6 months, and the money would be drawn down on \$100,000 set aside for the capital campaign. Ron Pope seconded. Kate McCarthy asked what happens if the foundation is in no position to reimburse the money after 6 months. Doris Luther suggested the MOU include reimbursement terms. All were in favor with the exception of Evan Tuchinsky who opposed.

- d. Evan Tuchinsky motions to defer 8.2 and 8.5; David Zeichek seconded; unanimous approval
- e. 8.2 Discussion/Action consider approval of privacy wall construction (deferred)
- f. 8.3 Discussion/Action Consider approval of 2019-20 SARC Report.
 - i. Kate McCarthy asked about the drop-out rate increase and wondered if it is a concern. Kate McCarthy noted the difference in pay compared to comparable schools as well as discrepancies in AP course offerings reported on the SARC and current AP offerings at the school. Discussion continued. Kate McCarthy recommended approval pending corrections. Evan Tuchinsky seconded. Unanimous approval.
- g. Evan Tuchinsky motioned to move "8.2 Discussion/Action consider approval of privacy wall construction" back on the agenda, Kam Bull seconded. Evan recommended to revise the proposal to up to \$5500. Evan Tuchinsky motions to approve privacy wall up to \$5500, Ron Pope seconded, unanimous approval.

- h. 8.5 Discussion/Action Consider approval of employee handbook revisions (deferred)
 - i. 8.6 Discussion Discuss Implementation of ASU 2016-14. Board discussed awareness of this required change in accounting.
- 9. 9:38 PM meeting adjourned.