



**Minutes / 1-14-21**

**Location: PODER Academy**

- A. Attendance:** Marcos Martinez, Nick Avila, Robert Salazar, Carlos Reyes, Yara Kling, Kristina Moritz
- B. Approval of Agenda**
  - 1. Carlos motion to approve agenda (6:06pm); affirmed unanimous
- C. Approval of Minutes**
  - 1. Bob motion to approve minutes (6:07pm); affirmed unanimous
- D. Public Comment**
  - 1. No public comment at this time.
- E. New Board Members**
  - 1. Brief orientation for nominees - Marcos
    - a. PODER was a project that started 13 years ago
    - b. PODER's application was selected because it targeted low performing students
    - c. Started operating at Johnson during the 1st year
    - d. Have a good relationship with the landlord
    - e. Academics is the highest priority
    - f. No excuses school to get students to the next grade level & beyond
  - 2. Summary of Board duties - Avila
    - a. Board is a non-working board
      - i. Oversees big-picture items such as leases, large contracts, large expenditures, etc.
      - ii. Evaluates Marcos
      - iii. Approves annual budgets and monthly financial statements
      - iv. Resolves issues only after the grievance policy has been followed
    - b. Marcos – Must encourage parents to go through the grievance policy
    - c. Meetings are open to the public
  - 3. Nominee Introductions
    - a. Kristina Moritz
    - b. Yara Kling
  - 4. Questions from the Board
    - a. Bob – What are your thoughts on breaking down barriers between grade levels?

- i. Kristina – it is good to promote continuity from elementary, through high school, and into college
  - ii. Yara – Likes the mission to provide equal opportunities for students and to level the playing the field
  - iii. Bob – Many students face barriers related to attitude and cost. The Board is a powerful means to bridge the educational gap.
- 5. Questions from nominees
  - a. Kristina – what has the Board taken up over the years that has been difficult?
    - i. Bob & Carlos – Have not had any major issues come up so far.
    - ii. Carlos – Been on the board for 2 years. Likes that it is a non-working board. Day-to-day operations are handled by the staff. School runs a pretty tight ship so there’s not a lot of tension.
  - b. Yara – what access do teachers have to the Board?
    - i. Bob – Board members should request that parents adhere to the grievance policy before consulting with Board members
    - ii. Marcos – Board members need to separate their parental relationships from their Board roles. Parents should not bypass the grievance policy.
    - iii. Avila – all conversations held in executive session should be kept confidential, may involve preliminary contractual negotiations and personnel issues.
- 6. Board Discussion on nominees
  - a. Bob – nominees bring good experience to the board. Bob also knows Kristina’s husband, very good impression
  - b. Carlos concurs
- 7. Carlos motion to approve nomination for Yara Kling (6:41pm); affirmed unanimous
- 8. Bob motion to approve nomination for Kristina Moritz (6:41pm); affirmed unanimous

**F. School / COVID 19 updates**

- 1. COVID updates - Went into Winter Break with multiple staff out with COVID or related symptoms. Very difficult to navigate between health & safety and operational needs. So far, 2021 has been better with COVID.
- 2. Website update is complete
  - a. Wanted to create a separate identity for each school and make it easier for parents to navigate.
- 3. NWEA / WY-TOPPS
  - a. Schools may see a decline in scores due to remote learning & COVID
  - b. All schools will likely be seeing the same decline.
  - c. Wyoming Dept. of Education may change the state testing requirements based on COVID disruptions
- 4. Potential Budget cuts
  - a. Board should anticipate a potential budget cut at the state level. Another round of funding is coming down from Congress. This is restricted funding that can only be spent on a specific category of items.
- 5. Kristina – do student scores affect the school’s funding?
  - a. Marcos – Student scores are not tied to funding. However, it is a factor when evaluated by the LCSD#1 for contract renewal.

6. Marcos – School may use funding support to pay for some extra tutoring.
7. Bob – The new CARES Act money might be less restrictive.

**G. Financials Approval (December 20')**

1. New format for financials CSMC (PODER's financial mgmt. consultants)
  - a. CSMC works with charts around the country
  - b. New format is more user friendly
  - c. Financials are different from the budget; more of a snapshot
  - d. Board may need to approve multiple budgets this year
2. Kristina – Notice an increase in salary expenditures?
  - a. Marcos – this is due to hiring more substitutes
3. Bob – Is the budget projected to even out over the school year?
  - a. Marcos – School spends more up front (tutoring, substitutes). Also, some revenue has not been paid yet. Budget will even out
    - i. CARES ACT, SPED reimbursement still has not come in
4. Marcos – School had a small reserve earlier in the year,
  - a. Want to end the year close to \$750,000 in reserve
5. Kristina – What are Title I funds?
  - a. Marcos – funds earmarked to bridge educational gap between demographics
    - i. Districts retains the right to create formula to distribute funds
  - b. PODER was previously a Title I school. But demographics changed and the school did not qualify last year.
  - c. Bob – Some parents don't want to fill out the free and reduced lunch applications which affects the school eligibility.
6. Bob motion to approve financials for Dec. 20' (7:12pm); affirmed unanimous

**H. Executive Session**

1. Yara motion to enter Executive Session (7:15pm); affirmed unanimous
2. Yara motion to exit Executive Session (7:33pm); affirmed unanimous

**I. Next Board Meeting**

1. Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> (6:00pm) – PODER

**J. Adjourn** – Carlos motion to adjourn (7:36pm); affirmed unanimous