

**WILLIAM M. DAVIES, JR. CAREER AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL**  
50 Jenckes Hill Road, Lincoln, RI 02865

Board of Trustees

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting**  
January 11, 2016

*Minutes approved at the March 14, 2016 Board meeting.*

**I. Routine**

**A. Call Meeting to Order**

At 8:09 a.m., Mrs. Carolyn Kyle, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

**B. Attendance**

Davies' Executive Assistant called the roll of the Board.

*Members Present:* Harold Burns; Raymond Chartier; Larry Gemma; Carolyn Kyle, *Chairperson*;  
David Marquis; Paul Ouellette; Robin Smith

*Members Absent:* James Bone; Robert Halkyard; George Nee; John Quinn, *Vice-Chairperson*;  
James Segovis, Ph.D.

*Others Present:* Victoria Gailliard-Garrick; Joanne Andrews; Chery Carroll; A. Flynn;  
Gerry Manning; Susan Paquin; Fred Slemmon; Susan Tierney; Fallon Masterson

Chairperson Kyle began the meeting by greeting everyone and wished them a Happy New Year. She hopes it is a very prosperous year for Davies, the students, and all the families.

She also welcomed Ms. Fallon Masterson, Davies new marketing and communications specialist. The Board spent a lot of time talking about our brand equity and the lack thereof in the community and some of the issues around the stigma as it relates to career and technical education. To have someone on board who has the excellent skill set that Ms. Masterson has, we are delighted to have her join us today.

**C. Approval of Minutes**

*Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to accept the November 9, 2015 minutes; Mr. Burns made the motion; Mr. Ouellette seconded the motion, all were in favor.*

*Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to accept the December 14, 2015 minutes; Mr. Burns made the motion; Mr. Ouellette seconded the motion; all were in favor.*

**D. Recess to Executive Session Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to Discuss Pending Litigation and Personnel Issues**

Recess into Executive Session was postponed to the end of the agenda.

**E. Return to Regular Session**

N/A at this point on the agenda.

**F. Opportunity for Audience to Comment**

There was no audience.

## II. Business Agenda

### A. **Finance Report** – *C. Carroll, Business Office Coordinator*

At Mrs. Kyle's request, Ms. Carroll wrote up a list of talking points on next year's budget so that the Board is all on the same page should they find themselves discussing it with legislators, politicians, partners, etc. The handout is broad-level targeted to next year's Funding Formula deficit only. It is not meant to be the entire caboodle discussion on what is happening with us with the Funding Formula.

### B. **Human Resources Report** – *J. Andrews, Human Resources Coordinator*

Report given in Executive Session.

## III. Informational Time/Program Update

### A. Director's Report

#### 1) **Davies Teachers' Association**

No representation present.

#### 2) **Davies Teacher Assistants' Association**

No representation present.

#### 3) **Recommendations for Davies' Website** – *Fallon Masterson, Marketing & Communications Specialist*

*See Supplemental Material: "Web Performance" PowerPoint Handout*

Ms. Masterson's background:

- 4 ½ years at Parkland Higher Education in their Interactive Marketing Dept.
- Kaplan for Test Prep in their Higher Education Division supporting their marketing efforts on the website and on building their social media presence.
- Tier Newswire distributing and counseling with agencies and corporations on hitting the correct media points for their news items.
- Corporate Communications at Lifespan

#### **First Step:**

With the assistance of Google Analytics, Ms. Masterson wanted to see who is using the website; how is it being used; and how is it currently performing. 54% of our visitors are returning visitors which is understandable because students/parents use it to access grades and classroom assignments, for example, and 46% are first-time visitors of which 20% is traffic from search engines which tells us that they are in a research or investigative state of mind. With that being said, 50% of all users leave the site within 10 seconds. This indicates an opportunity to use the website more effectively.

She then looked at how the website is being accessed, via a desktop vs. a mobile device (cellphone/tablet.) The bounce rate is the same, they are looking up one page and then leaving the site. This could be their intended behavior; this could be educators who are going to the website to click on the Quick Links. They are going to the site for a function and using it for a purpose, but they are not necessarily interested in seeing more of the Davies story and what is going on at our school.

Even though the bounce rate is comparable, desktop visitors are spending nearly double the time on the site than the mobile visitors. One explanation could be because they are looking at the site for a more serious investigation and rather use their computer than on their phone. The other factor is because the way the site loads on a phone is not great so that leaves us with a 1/3 of our users are in need of a responsive design.

Currently, when you load our website on a phone, everything shrinks to scale so you are looking at the full website loading at about 10% of what it would look like on a computer. If you want to dig deeper and investigate, you have to manually scroll it on your screen, and if your design is not appealing, no one is going to take the time to try to search out the content that we may have on there. A responsive design loads in columns and everything will snap to one linear column which means they are looking at it with a readable resolution.

What will guide her in the content process as she moves forward with a redesign and thinking about how things should be laid out, is knowing what the highest-viewed pages are. The top ten are homepage, calendar, math dept, math dept. files, Library, athletic teams overviews, admissions process, guidance personnel, “About Davies”, and transportation.

Ms. Masterson will continue to monitor this data to see if the numbers are affected by the time of year. She suspects it is used more during the time period when 8<sup>th</sup> graders need to start thinking about Davies for 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Because we are seeing the majority of the website content isn't being utilized, it does give us the opportunity to break from that current website without having to worry about, “well this is what is working now,” and think about how we are going to use the homepage. If, for example, is what we are currently doing the best way to do it? Should it be broken down more into parents/community/business partners/teachers? There are different structures to think about and the door is open for us to do that and not feel, necessarily, that the way we are doing it now with everything having its own page is what works. We do have to make it a useful tool for our teachers, students and parents and not just for marketing and outreach.

## **Step Two**

What are the technical goals?

- An optimized homepage that enhances the capability to share Davie's story and need-to-know information
- Greater control over the look and feel of our website and its layout (flexibility)
- A responsive site that results in better user experience for nearly 1/3 of our users.

We currently use a system called SchoolFusion, a third party solution from a vendor called Blackboard. Blackboard now has an upgraded version called SchoolWires. If we decide to stay the course with Blackboard but upgrade to their solution, SchoolWires offers 12 different templates so if next year or two years down the line when we decide to completely rebrand the school (name change, colors are different, site needs to be re-fragmented) by having access to these 12 templates, we can change the entire look and feel of the site without having to spend more money. We will have access to those templates and change it at will. One of SchoolWires' features is a newsletter functionality where whenever we publish new content we can push out that content through text messaging or email. This is what appeals to Ms. Masterson, a tool to strengthen school-to-home relationships/communication without having to go a different route.

Ms. Masterson then continued to show three examples of the 12 templates that are all customizable. An important reason to stick with this vendor is we have the tech support and the hosting support that we don't have the infrastructure for in the school. This above anything else is the biggest reason to stay with the vendor. This website can be built out and exist concurrently with the existing website for up to three months. The vendor said it will take us about a month just to get the website looking and feeling correctly, but then that would also give us a buffer window to think about the most effective way to use the content. When the website was first redesigned and decided to go with SchoolFusion, we have a pretty great legacy pricing deal so to upgrade to SchoolWires will only cost us \$200 more a year. Mr. Ouellette asked if they charge per text message because a lot of vendors do. Ms. Masterson asked them that question and they said it is included in our product suite that is wrapped into our contract. She will look into this further especially to make sure they are compliant with FCC regulations. Mrs. Tierney, Davies

IT Coordinator, mentioned that the school already has texting capabilities through our One Call Now provider that we use to do broadcast messaging. We can do voice mail, we can do email, and we can also do texting. From a simplistic point of view for our parents, it is nice to have a single platform for messaging.

**Next Step:**

Mrs. Kyle ended this presentation with, if we are thinking of rebranding the school, and if we are going to invest anything in the redesign of the website, it will probably take us a couple of months with the board, teachers, staff, and students. She can bring in a contractor to facilitate the process. We should talk about the color palette now and integrate the name change when we have the permission. We can still do focus groups with the people who are excited about it. In terms of how we transition it, we will look at the color palette now; take a look at how we want the brand to look and feel knowing that once we have approval all we have to do is drop the changes in later.

Is there history to the current colors? Just that it is has been in place since the school started. A student designed the logo. Mr. Flynn is in agreement that it all needs to be modernized. As far as the layout, Ms. Masterson selected those three templates because we were looking at moving forward with one. The Board agreed to go with the Canopy style template, (*see handout for the look of the design*). Mrs. Kyle will certainly be a resource to Ms. Masterson but in terms of next steps we certainly need to sit down and talk about it, but she knows we are in good hands and not at all worried.

**4) RIDE's Program Review Reports – Gerry Manning, Supervisor of Technical Instruction**

Three of our programs went through RIDE's CTE program review and approval process: Cosmetology, Electrical/Telecommunications, and Bio-manufacturing. Mr. Manning feels strongly that the practice exercise we did last year having each of the programs go through a program approval process was very instrumental in helping all of the programs prepare for RIDE's process. They did extremely well. The following is a listing of all the recommendations and findings by shop area.

**Electrical/Telecommunications**

Recommendations:

- *Formalize through district policy, the regular review of data and information for program improvement.* This is one of the pieces in looking at the last program review and approval process for Electronics/Pre-Engineering it was identified that this was a key piece for them that the continuous improvement process is one that all of our programs has to be aware of, not just these three. We were well aware of this recommendation and it was actually presented to all of the programs to begin the year off making sure we look at continuous improvement and looking at the data to better align our programs to what the opportunities are for our students.
- *Document a protocol for regular review of disaggregated data.* This recommendation is closely related to the first recommendation. This is a process that we go through every year, especially at the end of the year when we look at not only the certification report that is presented to the board, but the Graduate Placement report as well and student enrollment. All of our programs are looking at this data for continuous improvement to determine what changes need to be made.
- *If program continues to grow, larger space should be considered.* This has been known for most of the programs. Those that are growing we need to add space. We look at this on a regular basis.
- *Ensure installation of up to date technology in second area.* One of the things we did do just recently with this 2015-2016 budget is that we added 30 chromebooks to that area

with a charge cart so that the computers could be moved from Area 1 to Area 2 so all Electrical students could have access to that technology.

- *Investigate the possibility of including additional work-site experiences prior to senior year co-op and that all students are placed in senior year co-op experiences.* This has been an on-going dialogue with Electrical in that our students cannot go out and do live electrical work in Rhode Island so we are always looking to go outside to Massachusetts. One of the things they have done to increase work-based learning for our students is to have them working in supply houses. We are always looking at how to expand work-based learning opportunities for our students.

### **Bio-manufacturing**

RIDE threw us a little bit of a curve ball because what they had written in the report and what they had on the score sheet were two different things so Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick did call them for some clarification. What they ended up giving us was six recommendations and two findings which we are in the process of responding to at this time.

#### Recommendations:

- *The program should consider including as part of its mission statement “designing and implementing continuous program improvement” in the published Student Handbook/Programs of Study information.* (same explanation as with Electrical)
- *School/program is strongly encouraged to create and publish a written policy to ensure the review and evaluation of student outcome data, including student achievement gaps.* (same explanation as with Electrical)
- *This program should consider requiring Advisory Board members to sign in on sign-in sheets for each meeting.* Mr. Manning was under the impression that they do sign in. This can easily be addressed.
- *The school needs to provide additional space for this program’s expansion in order to accommodate program equipment and supply storage needs.* We continually assess the need based on student enrollment. It is also a part of the Building Committee work that we are doing right now.
- *A replacement schedule for supplies would be desirable.* We are in the process of doing this right now. Biomanufacturing has a lot of equipment that was donated by businesses in the past. It created a strong foundation but there is a need to review the life expectancy of that equipment and make recommendations.
- *Since Ms. Befumo’s emergency certification expires 8/31/2016, her successful progression toward full certification should be monitored.* We will keep abreast of this and ensure she is moving forward with a full certification.

#### Findings:

- *The program must determine the availability of health and safety inspections and maintenance schedules specific to the chemicals and materials used in the program.* We are moving from a paper-based MSDS tracking system to an electronic one that Bio-manufacturing has taken the lead on. Very shortly that whole system will be up to date and fully implemented. This will take care of a piece of this finding. The other component is that many of the programs have been utilizing the advisory boards to do a walk-through at least once a year to do safety inspections making sure everything is in compliance with what it needs to be.
- *There are no plans or efforts to provide student opportunities to earn an embedded credit (s).* There are some CTE schools that provide opportunities for the students in their technical area to be able to receive academic credits at the same time. If there are math standards and ELA standards embedded in what they are doing and they can show that the students are meeting those standards, they can earn some credits. There have been conversations with RIDE relative to that Davies students more than meet the

academic needs that are required for graduation so it isn't a necessity for us to embed those credits into what our students are gaining in the technical areas.

### **Cosmetology**

Recommendations:

- *Investigate opportunities to obtain embedded academic credit for students.* There were different RIDE staff who did the reviews for each area so you will see some inconsistencies in the reports. This recommendation is one of them because it was a finding for Bio-manufacturing. The key takeaway for Mr. Manning with Cosmetology is when they did their internal audit, they had the most recommendations in terms of what was needed to improve their program, and the teachers did a phenomenal job implementing the feedback they received and ended up with only this one recommendation.

All in all, our programs did very well. There are two more programs scheduled for RIDE's approval process: Culinary and Pastry Arts and Health Careers on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

The difference between a recommendation and a finding is recommendations are either components or pieces that they see related to the standards that we can act on, but we don't have to. A finding is something that we have to respond to and that we have to provide an action plan for within 30 days. If they are not pleased with our response, what is their recourse? The next step would be that the lead person who conducted the review will get back to the teacher, Gerry and Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick. If they don't approve of the action plan, then we will not get any funding. Once you are RIDE provisionally approved or approved, you are eligible for Perkins funding. There are two different types of reviews. Culinary and Health Careers will be going through a traditional review and those programs that are accredited by the industry such as Auto is with NATEF, they go through an accredited process. The review will be based on what came out of the industry report and will review the outcomes and interview students.

Wouldn't it be beneficial to the students to get those academic credits? Yes, but that came about because of the other CTE centers unlike Davies or Providence CT Academy that have a full academic program. Students now need 4 credits vs 3 in Math and the only way the students at the centers can get that 4<sup>th</sup> credit is if it is embedded into the technical curriculum; otherwise, it took up CTE time. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick's issue is it is not a regulation/mandate so why did RIDE make it a finding and not a recommendation in the program approval reports? That is how we are going to respond to them. Our students can get up to 7 credits in math.

#### **5) Revised Admissions Policy – Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Director**

Based on our last Board meeting, we had a discussion regarding the Admissions Policy and some of the concerns that RIDE had with it. At the end of the discussion, the Board decided to remove the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier of the admissions process and move forward with the changes we made to the policy regarding the grade level requirements for reading comprehension and mathematics, the sibling policy, and based on the information that we receive on those students who met the eligibility (grade level requirements), through the final transcripts for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, we could look at their attendance, comments from their teachers to decide what their discipline is and of course whether or not have the ability of the grades as well as the grade equivalents. The only thing we will be missing is the motivation because we can't do the interviewing process. There are other measures that we can look at to determine whether or not this process is working. Is there consideration for sibling as far as requirements when they are right on the cusp? Yes, we use to look at the NECAP scores. Say for Reading it is a 6.0 grade level and they were at a 5.7 which means there is one or two questions that they missed, then we would go back and look at the NECAP scores. We will do the same thing once we get some valid PARCC scores. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick asked the Board to vote on accepting this revised admissions policy because then it has to go to the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education and then to the Board of Education. She would like the policy in place for the next school year's admissions process.

*Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to accept the Admissions Policy; Mr. Ouellette made the motion; Mrs. Smith seconded the motion; and all were in favor. The motion carried to accept the revised Davies Admissions Policy.*

**6) Other**

Mrs. Kyle will be looking for a vice-chair. We are out of compliance and a chair relies on a vice-chair to partner and move things along. She will be calling all the trustees sometime this week. She will send an email in advance to set up a phone call conversation for a thoughtful discussion. She will be asking for a recommendation on a vice-chair. She is always thinking about Davies and a succession plan. It is important for so many reasons to have a vice-chair. Mr. Quinn will stay on as a board member.

The Commissioner's visit is on January 28<sup>th</sup> at 12:30. Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick is also in the process of scheduling another tour with George Nee and DLT Director Scott Jensen. Mr. Gemma would like to know when that tour is scheduled.

**Recess to Executive Session Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to Discuss Pending Litigation and Personnel Issues**

*At 9:11 a.m., Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to recess into Executive Session. Mr. Ouellette made the motion to recess into Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to discuss pending litigation and personnel issues. Mr. Gemma seconded the motion and all were in favor.*

**Return to Regular Session**

*At 9:48 a.m., Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to recess back into Regular Session. Mr. Ouellette made the motion; Mr. Gemma seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

*Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session; Mr. Ouellette made the motion, Mr. Gemma seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

**IV. Adjournment -**

*At 9:48 a.m., Mrs. Kyle asked for a motion to adjourn; all were in favor.*