



Mission: Educating all students to highest levels of academic and social standards with a focus on Hmong language and culture.

HOPE Community Academy

January 23, 2025

Conference Room – 5:30 pm

Present: Shaw, Ahrens, D. Lorr, Xiong Vang, M. Lor, Wildebuer
Absent: None
Staff: Damon (Proxy for Vu)
Others: Danielle Miller, UST

- I. Call to Order 5:30 pm
- II. Rules of Engagement (1 minute)
 - Be here now
 - Be a leader and a team player
 - Be a good steward
- III. Approval of Agenda (1 minute)

Ahrens moved to approve the
Xiong Vang seconded.
No discussion.
Motion approved.
- IV. Approval of December 19, 2024 Minutes (1 minute)

Ahrens moved to approve.
Lorr seconded.
No discussion.
Motion approved.
- V. Community Comments (5 minutes)

None
- VI. Executive Director's Report (20 minutes)
 - 1) Principal's Report – Gifted and Talented Program
 - *see presentation attached and Principal Data Handout
 - Access Information update regarding growth and challenges
 - Intervention updates and successes/challenges regarding raising academic scores.

GT Program Highlight: Program is in the third year of implementation. Need was seen at HOPE regarding high ability students disengaging in school. Deborah Fonkert (GT Teacher) went to get certification at Hamline University and gained approval to implement the program.



COMMUNITY ACADEMY

- Deborah does screening, teaching, coordinating, all of the duties associated with GT.
- Screening happens in the spring with the CogAT test of abilities as a universal screening, FAST data, teacher/parent input. Reevaluate students with each FAST screening.
- Services begin in third grade:
 - Literacy happens at core literacy time. Blended curriculum this year, some of the grade level adopted curriculum and additional units (Side Quest), MLK, Poetry, Identity.
 - Math is accelerated in fourth (4-5 curriculum) and fifth grade (5-6 curriculum). With collaboration with the secondary teachers, all students are now successful in MS math. Third grade moves faster with projects to extend thinking skills in math. Observational data will help with ensuring success in an accelerated class in fourth.
- 5th grade math MCA data showed a lot of growth. Went from 13% meeting standards to 50% meeting and approaching with no kids in red. EL students were the ones who struggled. Reading MCA data moved from 73% not meeting standards to 93% meeting standards. Students in the program starting in third grade showed 2-4 years of growth each year.
- 55-60 students are currently in the program.
- Successes are cross curricular units and lessons with increased student engagement and community involved celebrations of learning, and 8 students exited EL services.
- Struggles, limited time to help staff, limited staff understanding of a successful student and gifted students, staff turn over, time for collaboration, SEL activities.

VII. Consent Agenda

None

VIII. Committee Reports (30 Minutes)

1) Executive Committee:

- Contract discussion
- Mid-year review logistics discussed
- Board trainings: Know what want but difficult to find sources
- Success criteria for absences plan: One document for short term (steps 1-8)/long term
- Approach to the end of the year review. Check to make sure it can be finalized (need updated job description) will check with ED in February.
- Requested spot at staff Feb. PD for a staff pitch for filling the staff position.

2) Board Operations Committee

- Jan. 7th scheduled and due to police activity moved, to Jan. 22
- Reviewed existing policies and plan to finish by May reviewing.
- 3 New policies reviewed: Student journalism, Library materials, Employee group health. See packet.
- Tabled a few items due to policy lengthy discussion.
- Public participation policy reviewed with Shaw and created a one pager explaining the rules and procedures. Chair could have a script that will help if someone from the community wants to speak. Maybe an FAQ that can help find information for visitors?



- Board recruitment and engagement checked in on. 3/15 nominations and ballots need to go out on the 16th and election 5/15. Half the board is open for spots.
 - i. Community connections. Wild. casually spoke to a parent asking to join.
 - ii. Wildebuer suggested family game night next week.
 - iii. Shaw attends a mostly Hmong church and asked for help reaching out to the pastor.
 - iv. Lorr has reached out to some contacts: Former board members reached out to Gao Nu, can't help now, but will reach out.
 - v. Wildebuer spoke to Dr. Vue about working with a school and planted seed, maybe someone can reach out regarding the board. Lor will reach out and speak to him (has spoken to a few times)
 - vi. Election information will be on the website soon. Egnyte has the information.
- Board Engagement: Family Game Night next week. Wildebuer will sit at a table to recruit. Project Paj Ntaub could also be an option for recruitment if someone can attend. Lorr will send out a list soon
- Ahrens suggested the following dates: Feb. 20th ensemble night, March 18th instrumental Music, May 10th Prom (tentative), May 14th Hmong Day/Annual Meeting, May 22nd Fine Arts Night.
- Discussion of process for nominations and election
- Feb 18th is next meeting

3) Finance Committee:

- ADM 792 (785 budgeted)
- Net income \$393k (\$385k from rent credit)
- Revenues on track; expenses under budget
- Healthy cash balance
- Due from building company getting high – Jenny requested some of that money
- Currently \$1.3 million under budget
- Working (still) to get our E-rate money (e-rate consultant not returning calls)
- Contacted transportation is low because they invoice for the previous month
- Building lease – this will start to go up since our rent credit money has been exhausted
- Controllable expenses are well within (and well below) the budgeted amount
- MDE Compensatory Revenue will increase next year – we'll get an extra \$700,000 from the state based on our low-income students
- Budget subject to audit the board filed and submitted
- Feb 25th is the next meeting

IX. New Business

1. ED out, wish to continue process of check in and review
 - Shaw will not be at February meeting
 - Floor opened to how the board can check in with ED. ED is asking, so what are the expectations, how often, when and how often do they check in, pre-scheduled, pop up, what format is wanted and what can be an exit ticket for the check in.



- Wildebuer concerned with the awkwardness of 1:1 and would like to have clarification on the number of participants. Prefers to have 2 or more members so that there is clarity to what is said. Efficient to meet in small groups.
 - Xiong Vang: Sees the value and prefers 1:1, but having clarity of preference and finds 1:1 more valuable where you can connect just the two on a personal level. More than just board connection, and more comfort in getting connected.
 - Lor- How much time does she have to meet with each member and all of the committees, so how often would be sufficient and meet the goal? Desire is there to connect with ED, but meetings don't always allow for questions to be answered aside from board issues. More day to day information/check in. Also prefers individual meetings.
 - Lorr: Expectations for the rest of the year and long term and expectations moving forward to for current and future ED/Leadership as a whole.
2. New Policy Review
- 3 policies that are new requirements due to state legislation.
- Looked at model from MACS and MSBA
 - Updated text and MSBA as model was used
 - Will upload to website
 - Adoption of these three policies were recommended by Lorr
- Policy 219- Group health coverage: Currently don't have a policy, it is in handbooks, just needs to be a policy.
 - Changes and statutes that needed to be made as requested by UST. Policy includes:
 - Means by which and how often we select providers
 - Procurement policy for insurance
 - Notification to staff of change and a two year cycle of review for bids
 - Lorr moved to adopt and approved the #219- Group Health Insurance Coverage Policy
 - Ahrens seconded.
 - No discussion.
 - Motion passed
 - Policy.320: Student Journalism: School Sponsored Student Publications
 - No current publication by students so anticipatory for any written or electronic student publications or school sponsored media
 - Includes procedure to monitor without impeding free speech of students
 - States when and how publications can be distributed
 - Where policy will be posted.
 - Lorr motioned to adopt and approve Policy #408- Library Materials Policy
 - Xiong Vang seconded.
 - Discussion:
 - Lor asked for clarification that the updated one was the final one with HOPE verbiage.
 - Wildebuer said discussion happened around posting of electronically and more of a future looking

- Shaw would suggest 320-3 Item D. There were three underscores/Underline instead of a space that need to be
 - Wildebuer saw on page 4 a section has a spacing issue that needs to be rectified.
 - Lorr motioned to adopt and approve Policy #320-School Sponsored Student Publications and Activities Policy with recommended adjustments
 - Motion Passed
 - Policy 408: 408-Library Materials: Request/process for materials removal, and approval process for materials to be selected to the media.
 - State required legislation on a process
 - Laying out definitions of library and how materials selected and who selects the materials
 - Details around what is included in a library with guidelines for Media Specialist
 - Opportunity for parents/guardians for material to be excluded for their child
 - Reconsideration to removal of material from all stakeholders: Formal and informal requests
 - Materials review committee comes up with a finding or suggestion
 - If wants to appeal then ED has guidelines for how to review and provide response
 - If still not happy then comes to board and they have final say
 - Reporting process for these challenges to the state
 - Rules round if a challenged item and regardless of decision it cannot be challenged for 3 years
 - Based off legislation changes to protect what is in the library and for parents to have a process of challenge
 - Sample form that can be used by the school for formal request for a reconsideration
 - Lorr motioned to adopt and approve Policy #408- Library Materials Policy
 - Wildebuer Seconded
 - Discussion
 - Ahrens asked if the watermark will be removed from the draft if approved. It was agreed upon that it will be removed.
 - Wildebuer asked for clarification that it is in response to a state mandate. Yes it was.
 - Lor asked if the sample would be removed from the title if approved. Yes, it would be when provided to the public.
 - Motion Passed
- X. UST Meeting Request
- Opened the floor for participant by Shaw due to open meeting law
 - Only asked for ED, Jenny Abbs, and Board chair, so no pressure to attend
 - Anything to discuss and or questions to ask should be passed to Shaw
 - Discussion was opened
 - i. Lor asked if it was scheduled?



- ii. Shaw was trying to initiate- Vu started to email, Shaw confused about when, so passed along to Vu to schedule. February 12th is most likely the day per Vu preference. Specific time will be in the AM.
 - iii. Wildebuer stated she will not be unavailable.
 - iv. Lor asked if items requested by UST were sent? Sent today
 - v. Lor asked if there was a plan to prepare to discuss and discuss what the board will be sharing.
 - 1. Shaw has a narrative he wants to bring, and will meet with Lor, Aherns, Shaw will meet to discuss before the meeting
 - 2. Patchia asked if Shaw was seeking suggestions/ideas? Shaw answered yes
 - 3. Lor asked when will Maychy return? 2/2 so there will be time to meet with Maychy too.
- XI. Adjournment 7:01 pm
- Lorr moved to adjourn.
 - Lor seconded.
 - No discussion.
 - Motion passed.