Minutes, Kūlia Academy Board
Meeting October 03, 2023
4:30 pm Hawai‘i Standard Time, via Zoom

Present: Board members: Karen Awana, Robert Bley-Vroman (chair), Adnan Doyuran, Graham V. Crookes (secty.); Interim Executive Director Andy Gocke (ex officio). Murat Arabaci
Absent: Safa Berat Aktepe, Ben Cabreros

Meeting called to order, 4:33pm, Hawai‘i Standard Time.

1. Chair agenda overview
Chair Bley-Vroman prompted us to take note of the agenda. The main goal of today‘s meeting (like the last several) is to review and approve draft policies.

2. School update (Gokce, Awana)
Andy Gokce reported on his work since the last meeting. He had two members of the Charter School Commission visit the school site (since the last meeting). Karen Awana assisted with this report, and states that the Commission visitors were impressed by the good conditions of the classrooms and the site in general.

Andy continued with details of the time of initial arrival of school funds. Also issues with the handling of the teachers' salaries. There are two options, one of which does not require first months' pay to be delayed.

Karen explained that the Commission visitors advised us to aim high for initial enrollment, in case some applicants are using the charter school as a back-up plan.

There are a few details to be decided concerning the start day interacting with initial enrollment actions. (These are being considered by Andy.)

The Commission visitors told Andy and Karen that usually the first years' enrollment demographics is not representative of what it will settle down to be in subsequent years. It is certainly unlikely that Kūlia would be a Title 1 school in its first year.

We are informed that per pupil funding will be about 40% higher than we were originally told. (However, let it be noted that in general, charter school per pupil funding is considerably lower than DoE equivalent, because there is no "facilities funding".

The finalized version of the site lease has not yet been received. Bureaucratic holdups at the level of the Diocese financial advisors and attorneys are the likely cause.

Intensive student recruitment will begin in December, with some actions in November. There will be a booth at a student recruitment fair near Kalihi first, though also one at a big education event on the Leeward Side, late November.

3. Approval of Policies for Pre-Opening Assurances (Andy Gokce)
Andy continued (as from previous meeting) to orient the board to a number of policies which need approval, which we are discussing and approving steadily.

a- School Closure Policy
Policy #39: We have to have plans in place in case the school has to be closed completely, for financial or administrative reasons. There was already language in the original charter, and that will be copied closely as the basis for this policy that will be discussed and approved. (A statement within the existing draft, Section 5.2 on disposal of assets, was removed. Sentence 2 in Section 5.1 was also removed.)

Moved to approve this policy, by Asana, seconded by Crookes; approved by unanimous consent.

b- School Safety Policy
Policy #24: Draft language for our policy on school safety was based closely on templates from organizations supporting the development of charter schools, and cross-checked against policies in typical charter schools in Hawai‘i

Discussion focused on the reason for a sub policy on school uniforms (and employee dress code). A future revision of this section will be brought back to the board for approval at our next meeting. A simple statement of the intent of this policy is expected, with full details of dress codes etc to be ported out to a student and an employee handbook that would be approved annually.

4) Financial update
Andy briefed board members on the Foundation expenses drawn down from the grant. We will have just completed our first year, by October 30th. After primarily salary-related expenditures, remaining funds (a substantial amount) will be allocated to publicity and recruitment expenses, if the Charter Commission approves.

Meeting was adjourned 5:55 pm

A tentative time for the next Kūlia board meeting first Tuesday of November, that is Nov 07 2023 4:30 pm by zoom to be confirmed by email.
—------