

# Aspire Trade High School BOD Meeting Minutes

**Location:** Zoom Call

**Date:** September 30, 2021

**Time:** 6:45 pm – 7:30 pm

## In Attendance

Board Chair – Lauren Nicholson

Vice Board Chair – Jennifer Nichols

Secretary – Marianna Sartin

Board Member – Amanda Cuff

## Absent

Treasurer – Jim Secunda

## Agenda Items

### 1.) Review and Approve August 17, 2021 Minutes

Meeting Minutes approved

### 2.) Meetings

#### a. CSAB Sept. 13 Meeting

We requested a second-year delay at this meeting. We did not get approval. CSAB gave us 60 days to come back to them with more information. We are required to get back to them on various items including: our enrollment list, marketing plan, fundraising plan, and status of building progress. They would prefer us to move quickly and open in any available building such as a warehouse or portables. We feel strongly about opening the school in a building with trade labs.

We are not a traditional charter school. We need to show CSAB that we can build the building on time (with a second-year delay) and that we can meet enrollment. Our next meeting is November 8<sup>th</sup> and all materials must be to the CSAB office by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

If our request is accepted, it would go to the state board for approval. We will continue to attend our ready to open meetings that run the next five months – September-January. Jennifer, Lauren, and Marianna are attending, and Jennifer will be in touch with board members individually regarding completing the assignments we have been given.

### **3.) Marketing**

#### **a. Website**

Our website is live and has a student interest form on it. We are also advertising the website and enrollment form with targeted searches in Google Ads (we have a non-profit ad grant account with them).

#### **b. Facebook/Instagram**

Our Aspire Trade High School Facebook and Instagram pages are up. We have begun advertising with a Facebook ad campaign that links to the website and we are receiving student interest form submittals.

#### **c. Merchandise**

We are ordering school merchandise and plan on having the school store on the website shortly.

### **4.) Student Interest/Enrollment**

Our goal is to have 210 students enrolled at opening – 120 freshman and 90 sophomores. We will need to have 75% (approx. 156 students) of that number enrolled by May 1, 2023 to open. We plan on hosting trade days at the school to boost enrollment. Do you (the board) have any student groups or contacts we can distribute enrollment information to? Please let Jennifer know. We also have 10 students at the Halton School that we will distribute enrollment information to. We will also reach out to local newspapers including Lee Sullivan of the Huntersville Herald to see if they can do a story on us. If you have media contacts please let us know.

#### **a. Materials**

We have created materials to hand out on the school. We have a paper copy of the student interest form to hand out -in addition families can complete the same form on the website on the enrollment page. The forms are available in both English and Spanish, in addition the website can translate to Spanish with one click.

#### **b. Ada Jenkins**

We are presenting to their middle schoolers and parents. They are excited to host us.

#### **c. Caterpillar Ministries**

We are presenting to families of more than 100 middle school students at a local Latino church on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **d. Possible Survey**

We are working with a survey company and have bought a list of 125,000 families in the five-county area. We will begin a survey on October 11, to find out which families have students interested in attending. We will get contact information so that we can keep them apprised of our progress and direct them to the website for additional information.

### **5.) Fundraising:**

We will raise half the money for the school building and borrow the other half. We are looking at approximately 20 million. We now have 6 million in pledges/cash. We hope to get that up to 10-11 million. We have quite a few big meetings scheduled. We continue to reach out to and meet with the donors list below.

The Aspire Board does most of the fundraising for our schools and they are looking for additional people, foundations and organizations to meet with. We have met with John Moore and Lynn Ivy and two other families. They are potential donors for a naming opportunity of the entire building, a lab or other area of the facility.

Lauren also noted that Mackenzie Scott is doing a second round of funding and if we can find a connection to her, we can submit our materials.

Jennifer has a second meeting in two weeks with Blythe Construction – if we offer heavy machinery operator licensing, they may be willing to partner along with Carolina Caterpillar with whom Dale has connection. Dale Halton also has a contact with an individual that has a company providing medical coding services. We hope to connect with her in the next few weeks.

Lake Norman Economic Development has recommended we offer quality control, CNC machining and fabrication. They are working on getting us contacts at companies in the area that could be our partners.

We are working with First Tryon on the loan. This is Lauren's contact; they offer strategic planning and are a boutique investment bank that has experiencing financing educational entities. They will help us source the loan and provide assistance with our budget, oversight, debt capacity, carrying costs and ensure we are a sustainable model. We are a non-profit foundation and do not wish to make any profit from our schools. What our schools pay on their loans must be manageable so they can provide a high-quality education.

The Aspire BOD is currently working on the following individuals:

- **Rick Hendrick**
- **Felix Sabates**
- **David Tepper**
- **Sally Gambrel Bridgeford**
- **Anonymous Donor (Jim) – Jim is still in touch with this friend and will reach out to him again.**

#### **6.) Next Meeting**

We will plan on generally having our meetings on the third Thursday of every month. Next month however due to scheduling conflicts are meeting will be on October 28, 2021 at 6:45 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.