



7094 Cottonwood Tree Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80927  
Phone: 719.570.0075 - Fax: 719.522.2900 Email: BoardBLRA@blracademy.org

**Mission Statement:**

*Create a safe, positive environment that fosters intellectual curiosity and a thirst for discovery where students and staff succeed through exceptional programs*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
AUGUST 8, 2021 AT BANNING LEWIS RANCH ACADEMY at 6:00pm.

1. **Call to Order** – 18:06 meeting called to order by Heather Zambrano
2. **Roll Call**
  - 2.1. Board Members: Deann Barnett, Todd Blum, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Scott Lewis, Matthew Pacheco, Heather Zambrano
    - 2.1.1. Absent: Alexandra Tomei
3. **Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Reading of the Mission Statement**
5. **Approval of Agenda**
  - 5.1. Discussion to amend agenda to have public comment
  - 5.2. Matt Pacheco moves to approve the agenda with amendment of public comment
  - 5.3. Krisell Creager-Lumpkins seconds the motion
  - 5.4. All approve, motion carries
6. **Public Comment**
  - 6.1. Jenn Even – requested that it be noted that Alex gave a pre-statement without the information presented; the failed search brought concern amongst admin team. For the Board to determine this a failed search, there are many questions. The by-laws are quoted on hiring head of the school. Straight out of bylaws. The team is tired and feels that there is a candidate that is more than worthy and that the board hindered the hiring process. Mrs. Even said that she will follow up with her statement in writing.
  - 6.2. Rick Dahlman – Seconds the comments that Mrs. Even stated. He seeks for greater transparency and partnership amongst the board and admin. He seeks clarity and feels confused when he doesn't know who is talking to who. He questions certain things, but feels everyone is in it for the same reason, but one-off conversations drive concern.
7. **Discussion Items**
  - 7.1. Bank Signers – Add Leanne Weyman, Cassie Prosch, and Heather Zambrano; Remove Deann Barnett
    - 7.1.1. Deann Barnett suggested not adding Leanne Weyman, because she is not always in the building. It helps to have 2 signers in the buildings. When we called the bank we only had Deann Barnett and Rob Wilkerson as the signers. Heather Zambrano stated that it is best to re-vote and add Rick

Dahlman and Rob Wilkerson and Leanne Weyman. The motion would be to add Leanne Weyman, Cassie Prosch, Heather Zambrano, Rick Dahlman, Rob Wilkerson, and remove Deann Barnett

## 7.2. Review Hiring Process and Guidelines

- 7.2.1. We are a growing organization and there has been fluctuation in the way that the process has been upheld.
- 7.2.2. In 2016 a management agreement states in section 5.01, that the board of directors has the authority to approve assignment to any of the campuses. Todd Blum read section 5.01 and 5.02. We interviewed the candidates 2 Thursdays ago, Heather Zambrano discussed the following day with Dr. Weyman to provide solutions. Heather states we understand, we hear you, we feel you. She also stated that there were a lot of moving pieces as well behind the scenes that didn't make its way into public and said we could have been better at communicating this.
- 7.2.3. We have had significant turn over at the Prep and almost always had annual turnover with regards to senior administrative leaders. It was stated we as a group want to hear the admin's needs and wants to hear from the admin team and we have failed at this. We see this through a different lens than admin. It was stated if we need a new process or disagree with the process then we can clean it up and make sure it gets to an agreed effort.
- 7.2.4. Would like to move forward and open up the discussion with the board.
- 7.2.5. Read 5.02 again, he read it as written. -states that the head of school will be an employee of Accel. Discussion about how this can be interpreted
- 7.2.6. 5.04 discusses support staff, read it as written. -states that there isn't a place that the principal really falls into. Historically has been how we provide guidance on the future of the school. Noted that there are discrepancies with how the agreement is written and that there is nothing in writing stating the board conducts interviews and hiring.
- 7.2.7. Discussed reciprocity in understanding. We need to trust administrators and there should be trust in the board as well. Must gain clarity and have the opportunity to collaborate.
- 7.2.8. Discussed management vs. governance and that the RVP should be hired by a board. Was there input from RVP? Stated yes there was collaboration with the RVP and clarified that RVP provided feedback from the interview committee, but not her personal feedback.
- 7.2.9. Noted that there was conflict between the two interview committees. RVP stated that there were 4 interview groups and that the data was not correct. -clarified the information sent was from individuals from the groups.

## 7.3. Letter to the BOD

- 7.3.1. Discussion – understand how the board collectively would like to respond to the letter.
  - 7.3.1.1. Requests the board to keep this professional and be concise and respectful.
  - 7.3.1.2. The 3 candidates have been made aware that we are not moving forward with regards to the board, if the board wants to re-consider, then we will need to have an executive session once again. This discussion should be about how we as a board would like to respond to the letter.
  - 7.3.1.3. Feelings expressed that we were making a good decision, but then after the letter it seems that all the information may not have been conveyed to the Admin team. -states that burnout is a real thing, but the turnover rate is not a desire that we want to have and would be open to discussion again.
  - 7.3.1.4. Discussion that we have had an uncomfortable amount of turnover in the principal position. We do not want a warm body or the right body. It is painful on the rest of the team.

Wants to see a true leader, and someone that can get the place where it needs to be. There were a lot of great aspects with all the candidates, but struggled with a specific person.

- 7.3.1.5. Discussion that the principal we hired last time was a different person from when we hired him to right before he resigned. - disengaged and not happy, doesn't know what happened but something broke him down.
- 7.3.1.6. Discussed the hiring process and felt that we did not have not have a rubric or structure for hiring of the individual for consistency.
  - 7.3.1.6.1. Noted that in the past that is how it was done.
  - 7.3.1.6.2. Discussion that was a problem and that was an issue we can learn from.
- 7.3.1.7. Discussion that creating a special meeting, and that we all read the letter and it touched her. Discussion that we assured the Admin team that this is the best decision. There should be trust in knowing that we know the person we hire will be here for many years going forward. Stated after the consensus was made that the board went into planning mode to discuss the way ahead and we have given all members their opportunity to speak and does not support the decision to re-consider.
- 7.3.1.8. We don't have financial information and addressing anyone on a way ahead. When we discuss solutions, that there was collaboration back and forth to find a solution. We need support, and what does that look like, lesson planning? Teacher evals? The term support is a vague topic, and we were trying to gather as much information to see what "right" looks like. RVP was doing some research on solutions, but has not been discussed.
- 7.3.1.9. To address the response, that the board is working on a contingency plan, and that it has been communicated to the candidates that we are not moving forward. Within the letter there is a request that one of these individuals is hired as an AP, that does not look good. And now because of the decision there needs to be a clear path forward and communicated with everyone.
- 7.3.1.10. Questions about if we hire an AP and then in a year can we afford to hire another principal?
- 7.3.1.11. Every scoring body had the information to make that decision. It needs to be the same across all panels – horizontally consistency.
- 7.3.1.12. Concerns that we did not have all the information as in the past, and it is inappropriate to offer them an AP role. There isn't a problem with telling them that, but would like to see how the Academic AP fits into the overall plan.
- 7.3.1.13. Discussion to address the solutions that were brought to the board in the letter, and BOD President reads them from the letter - none of this is ideal.
- 7.3.1.14. Continued concern that this still has potential turnover in 1 year with the interim position. A request to have a frank open discussion with Admin moving forward, and BOD President held open hours with staff to discuss needs.
- 7.3.1.15. RVP stated that solutions that are brought are appropriate, but she feels we are missing pieces in the total narrative. She wants to clarify, that one issue that is causing us pause (all of us), that there were 3 potential proposals, 4 possibly. She came up with a solution along with the team came up with a solution and hire someone was off the table per the board, she presented another solution, she wants to be clear that the solution for her to move into the role was not proposed by the admin team or Dr. W. She states that she asked the board president that we are asking to immediately hire an AP and stipend the other APs. She feels that there

is concern that the team feels cutout of the decision, the admin offered a solution and there was no conversation anymore. There was not enough back and forth.

- 7.3.1.16. Discussion that there counters and dialogue, and that we had went back forth. There were a lot of counters, but the solution was empowering, paying, uplifting the individuals covering down with the absence of an Principal. We have strong leaders in place, and that we should recognize the talent, compensate them, hire them help, and continue to look behind the scenes.
- 7.3.1.17. Mr. Lewis feels that he was not part of this conversation at all. He feels that he missed the meeting. Mrs. Zambrano clarified that there was conversation about this being potential, Mr. Lewis never said “yes” and didn’t vote, he stated his input. But there was no formal approval. Mr. Lewis notes that there was not formal approval. Mrs. Zambrano, states again the solutions, Dr. W steps in, utilize the current staff, or hire an interim principal and they would have to apply. Mr. Lewis wants to ask what the individuals are doing to get a stipend. Mrs. Zambrano states, we need to ask the management company, we had a principal leave on 1 July, and we had to have folks pick up all the excess. They made sure we could open the doors in August. She states the AP team made it all happen. Mr. Lewis states that he agrees to the bullet points, but feels like the stipend piece is good but he didn’t have a say in it.
- 7.3.1.18. President stated because she sent it to admin and they countered with only one solution. She states that the naming an interim principal was off the table unless we interviewed so that idea was dropped.
- 7.3.1.19. Discussion that if there was an interim role, it is best if BOD had an interview and the whole board should recognize them.
- 7.3.1.20. Request to learn about all the individuals before we discuss the stipend. He states he wants this to happen before they get a stipend.
- 7.3.1.21. Discussion about counter offers, and asked about the hiring of an AP, he clarification if it was only the RVP or the whole team. RVP states we have already hired an academic AP and she will be starting soon. She states that that was a solution to backfill a solution proposed by the board.
- 7.3.1.22. Discussed that there are people here that did an incredible amount of work and others that did not fill the role as much. So people did more work than others. Discussion that even though we are moving forward, members of the admin did not all agree on the way ahead. Interim was one solution, and the other was to give the current staff support allow them to continue until we could find a principal
- 7.3.1.23. Concerns that now knowing we have hired an academic AP, she is asking if some of those additional tasks will be handled by the AP. - received confirmation. The role of principal is now the role of principal. This buys us more time to find an appropriate candidate.
- 7.3.1.24. Questions on what gauge or rubric do we use to identify who stepped up and who didn’t for the stipend. --we need to utilize our management company and that giving a stipend to everyone is a slippery slope, and feels it could be seen as unfair by others. The board agreed the management company would show that. Requests it is quantifiable, and the admin “jumped in without a life vest” and did not write down all the things that they were doing.
- 7.3.1.25. Talks about being admin heavy and that she was not aware of the offer being made – BOD does not have a response to every question. Asked if the Admin team knew, it was stated that they did, but that it is formal and the person has accepted.

- 7.3.1.26. Discussion that maybe staff just need a name such as Rick Dahlman. If the RVP should be the right one, due to location, etc. RVP states that her instinct is to say what the teachers want? Suggestion that the board gather input on that before moving forward. Discussed we are asking the RVP to do just as the AP's have done by filling the hole.
- 7.3.1.27. Requests for an intermission and also to address the team members for their input/and to give them time to reflect. Others feel as if they were heard in the letter and doesn't want to back, but she wants to uplift/acknowledge.
- 7.3.1.28. Discussed an option is open dialog, 3 mins per person, etc
- 7.3.1.29. Break at 2002, re-convene at 2008
- 7.3.1.30. Meeting called back to order at 2009 by Mrs. Zambrano.
- 7.3.1.31. Expectation stated to everyone that signed the letter and that they will have a 3 min time frame. The board has the opportunity to have a q&a.
- 7.3.1.31.1. Mr. West – He has been in public education for a long time, and hired educators for 20+ years, he feels the RVP's process was solid and reliable. The admin team went forward very confident there was a leader, but the board's decision felt like a slap in the face (respectfully). He felt that the AP is a blessing and will help significantly. He feels the board needs to trust the staff because they have the experience. He feels that we have a principal in the building, but he feels it is not fair to the RVP to do it temporally. He feels the head hunter is a waste a money and states that we should just post in March. He advises we be careful about spending money on something that is not valid. He states we have a principal and leader in the building (Mr. Dalman). Mr. Pacheco asks his point of clarification, that when we hit time we let the individual finish after "time" was stated.
- 7.3.1.31.2. Mrs. Reeves, (high school teacher), feels as a high school teacher we need consistency, they are struggling, the students see it and are taking advantage of it, we need direction and someone to communicate. Having someone to step in does not solve the problem. She feels there is someone to do it. But she feels that with the trajectory we are going we are in trouble. She asks that we figure this out quickly so teachers can focus on teaching/administrating tasks.
- 7.3.1.31.3. Mr. Pacheco asks about head hunter vs. Mr. Dahlman, and which one she thinks would be best (Now vs. waiting to March), she feels that there is concern if an administrator is going to jump ship mid-year and go somewhere, that is concerning. She says to continue with Mr. Dahlman now and then hire in March. Mr. Blum asked clarification about teachers doing admin vs. teaching. Mrs. Reeves stated that the teachers are evaluating vs. lesson planning to help fill in the gaps because the AP's are doing other tasks instead of developing brand new teachers. Mrs. Barnett asked if basically we are at the proposed solution now, Dr. Weyman states that teachers are servant leaders and will give everything, but they need a leader figure. She feels that there would need to be some in depth planning for development, etc. She feels that the high school needs someone to be the approval authority, etc. Mrs. Barnett asks if Rick has the capacity. The RVP states that she feels Rick would have to answer, but she feels we could create a pathway where that capacity would be possible. The filling of the AP role may cover some 6-12 roles potentially. We are condensing 2 positions into 1 and there will be some loss. She does think it is possible.

- 7.3.1.31.4. Mrs. Evan – She agrees with our veteran teacher, she knows it is uncomfortable but thanks her for sharing her voice. She echo’s what Mr. West is saying. She states we have a principal in the building. But she is asking for Mr. Dahlman to be considered for the 6-12 principal in the interim. She knows he has put his blood sweat and tears into the school without being asked and without the title. He has already been doing it without being asked knowing we did not have a principal. He put in that time and energy, he is invested in listening and learning and growing. She is honored to work alongside him. She states there will be clearly defined lanes from everyone else in admin (AP’s, etc.). She states that it’s not different then what he has done before he is just representing 6-12. She feels his mission/vision align with the entire school. She recommends we search and once we find someone we hire quickly. She asks that the RVP and Principal lay out each lane. And that would be clearly communicated to all staff. Mr. Pacheco asks, if all the pieces fall into place, is there anything else that can be done for the teachers that would be missing to help them fulfil their duties as educators for this short-term solution. Mrs. Evan – states there need is clear, concise, consistency from their admin, and they did not get it last year. She states, we are servers, tell us what you want and we will do it well, but that can’t be done at the current moment. Mrs. Zambrano asks Mr. Dahlman if he has additional comment, he states yes.
- 7.3.1.31.5. Mr. Dahlman – he states the reality of the last year, it was distributive leadership, he states at middle school there is a 7 teacher committee leading stallion stables, there is an academic leadership team, reviewing renaissance data. The middle school is firing on all cylinders and ready to move fore. He has had conversations with high school teachers about what could be best at that level. He has heard that there are people ready to take on leadership roles and help lead, provide clarity and hold all accountable. He states that will benefit the organization. People try to fill too many roles and burn themselves out, and directing to a certain area. He asks that we hold a certain expectation and that is an outcome for all students. He will remain humble as he is in year 1, but he can share that d49 feels it is wise for him to step in. He feels that inconsistency was due to friction/lack of calibration between HS and MS. He feels we are improving and the more we have 1 consistent vision moving forward. He shared with the board president the next 30-60-90 plan. Mr. Pacheco clarifies that Mr. Dahlman would take on the role, he states “yes”. He does state if all goes well we could consider one principal, but it does take a long time to onboard another lead. There has been too much flux/trauma lately and it has been heavy. Mr. Pacheco sees there is leadership by title and earned, he sees it is earned and thanks Mr. Dahlman for being humble and having a servant’s heart for the school. He observed Mr. Dahlman at the kickoff and observed a leader. Mr. Lewis states that this is maybe not the best time for a head hunter and that March is a great time to start the process. He states Dr. Weyman states consolidation of responsibilities at the MS/HS, he wants to think that it isn’t a bad thing as we recover from COVID-19, communication has been sporadic. He states knowing it is a short-term fix for Mr. Dahlman, having that singular person now is needed at a time like this. Are we over complicating things, We are hurting because our school doesn’t have a head principal. He thinks this proposal makes a lot of sense.

## **8. Action Items**

- 8.1. Bank Signers – Add Leanne Weyman, Cassie Prosch, Heather Zambrano, Rick Dahlman, Rob Wilkerson, and remove Deann Barnett as bank signers.
  - 8.1.1. Mr. Pacheco Motions to Add Leanne Weyman, Cassie Prosch, Heather Zambrano, Rick Dahlman, Rob Wilkerson, and remove Deann Barnett as bank signers.
  - 8.1.2. Mrs. C-L seconds
  - 8.1.3. Discussion - none
  - 8.1.4. Vote Yes: Deann Barnett, Todd Blum, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Scott Lewis, Matthew Pacheco, Heather Zambrano
  - 8.1.5. Vote No: None
  - 8.1.6. Motion carries
- 8.2. Review Hiring Process and Guidelines
  - 8.2.1. Mr. Pacheco motions to continue reviewing the management agreement to seek clarification understanding about the hiring process
  - 8.2.2. Mrs. C-L seconds
  - 8.2.3. Discussion – Mrs. Barnett feels this is not an action item, but a policy and we should write a policy that spells out everything (rubric, scoring, etc.). Mrs. Zambrano states she does not want this to be lost and we need to action on this. Mrs. Barnett says this does not include the management agreement and should be future business. Mrs. C-L states that this is a policy validated through the management agreement, it is a policy that existed before any of us were here. She states if it should be in writing then we make a policy on it.
  - 8.2.4. Discussion - none
  - 8.2.5. Vote Yes: None
  - 8.2.6. Vote No: Deann Barnett, Todd Blum, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Scott Lewis, Matthew Pacheco, Heather Zambrano
  - 8.2.7. Motion carries
- 8.3. Letter to the BOD
  - 8.3.1. No action item needed. This has been tabled.

## **9. Executive Session**

- 9.1. None requested

## **10. Board Member Communication**

- 10.1. Deann Barnett states, we have had the conversation, do we need to formalize where we are going forward with the principal situation. Mr. Lewis asked about should this be on executive session. Mrs. C-L states, that we should establish the process and follow it. She states that if Mr. Dahlman wanted the job he should apply for it. Mrs. Barnett states that if we are talking about having this process in place until march, we need to decide. When should we make this decision. Mrs. C-L states we need to have more discussion, etc. Mrs. Zambrano, hears that we need to put this into the next agenda, potentially an executive session to be discussed at the next meeting. In the meantime, the RVP can provide additional information the board needs to make a decision at the next board meeting. Mrs. Barnett states that we are not going from AP to Principal. He was hired as a principal and would go from 6-8 to 6-12. Mrs. Barnett states the staff needs an answer quickly, we are in an emergency situation. Mrs. C-L feels we are considering an option the board originally said no to. She feels she

isn't clear as to what path we are taking. She feels we are going backwards. She states if they need an answer then we do it. Mrs. Zambrano feels that the board has a differing opinion and we need to be able to move forward. She proposes a week from tomorrow at our next board meeting we can go into an executive session. Mrs. C-L asks what that looks like on the agenda and how it written. Dr W states there are specific items that can be listed for an executive session, we can list personnel. Mrs. C-L talks about a plan f, then a plan b, and states it should be on the agenda. She doesn't care about what plan, but just wants to know the plan. Mr. Blum states that we consider the RVP proposal with all lanes identified, what the Principal and RVP does. Mr. Pacheco concurs. Mrs. Barnett clarifies the process for the next meeting.

**11. Adjournment** – 2105 by Heather Zambrano

**DATE: August 9, 2021**

//Signed//

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Alexandra Tomei, Secretary