

NOTICE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF FLAGSTAFF ARTS & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, INC. (FALA)

AGENDA OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Our mission is to provide a transformative educational experience by developing leadership and cultivating academic excellence in the arts, sciences, and humanities. The individual growth of each student is supported and animated through our nurturing educational community.

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of FALA will hold the following:

- Event: **Regular Board** meeting open to the public
- Date: April 13, 2020
- Time: 5:00pm
- Location: Zoom: [Link \(incl Pwd\)](#)
Phone: +16699006833,,5383610069#,,770369#

Event information:

- The Board/committee may consider any item on this agenda in any order and at any time during the meeting.
 - Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.4, members of the Board/committee may participate either in person or by telephone, video or internet conferencing speakerphone or other technological devices.
 - The Board may vote to hold an executive session for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from the Board's attorney on any matter listed on the agenda pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3).
 - Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation, such as a sign language interpreter, 24-hours in advance by contacting Ms. Tulasi Fowler, Administrative Coordinator, 928-779-7223.
 - Materials for this meeting are available at the following:
 - <http://flagarts.com/category/news/>
 - 3401 N. Fort Valley Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
- I. **Call To Order - [Virtual Meeting Process](#).** Sharon calls the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Sharon reads the new virtual meeting process notes.
- II. **Roll Call:**
- A. Dr. Sharon Gorman, President PRESENT
 - B. Birgit Buss, Vice President PRESENT (TEMPORARILY OUT DURING ROLL CALL)
 - C. Phil Hagen, Secretary PRESENT
 - D. Dr. Barbara Boschmans, Treasurer PRESENT
 - E. Debra Edgerton, Member PRESENT
 - F. James Yih, Member PRESENT
- III. **Approval of Agenda.**
Debra moves to approve. Barbara seconds. James aye. Sharon aye. Debra aye. Barbara aye. Phil aye. Birgit abstains. No nays. Motion carries.
- IV. **Call to the Public:** Sharon notes the temporary suspensions of Call to Public and that it will resume once the board meets in person again.
"This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date."
- V. **Summary of Current Events** - Items to be heard only; the Board will not propose, discuss, or take legal action during the meeting unless the specific matter is properly noticed for legal action.
- A. Directors. Sharon says we will have more than one board meeting this month, as the budget was not ready for today so the board will again meet on April 20 to discuss. And we hope to approve teacher contracts on April 27. (Note: Sharon changes these dates later in the meeting.) Also, she will extend her role as board president till the end of summer, given pandemic and the need for consistency. Sharon adds that she had a wonderful opportunity to present on student engagement with teachers of FALA recently. A good learning experience. She commends the teachers for rising to the times. Barbara: As a parent she's not getting enough communication from the FALA administration. For example, April 20 is when school starts but she hasn't heard anything about that recently. More communication would be nice.

B. Executive Director (ED)

- Questions or Comments from the Public. ED Eli Cohen reads three notes from the FALA staff: Betsy Hamill in response to Elli's email about today's board meeting, in particular about scheduling and the need for open staff meetings. She also requests "call to public" be reopened. Second note from several teachers, about jobs, cutting classes and possible students leaving. Third note from Dustin Kuluris, on possible elimination of classes. Letters can be found [here](#).
- COVID-19 Update. Eli says we are in the middle of the all-school project and switching to regular classes next week. They are having discussions this week on the revised grading and the homework process, etc., as well as issues such as graduation and Senior Awards.
- OCR Training. Re a complaint against FALA in which we have to offer 504 training to all staff members: He's been in touch with the Office for Civil Rights, trying to do training next year, but that's unclear given circumstances.
- Bond Renegotiation. Now in the process of finalizing discussions with attorneys on floating a new bond on July 1, when we are eligible to renegotiate for a better rate. Would roll in other existing debts, including a bridge loan and the Mangus settlement.
- Minute Posting Error. Eli says it was his mistake for not posting the March board meeting minutes on time. He'll follow up with the Attorney General's office.
- Enrollment Update. There is interest in middle school grades and ninth, but no new interest in upper grades, which is not surprising. Will send out invites to families and potential enrollees for an upcoming virtual taste of FALA.

VI. Discussion Items

A. Dean of Academy

- Online offerings and strategies. Dean Jed Hayes says the question he's been getting most is, why not deliver online offerings right away? His research has found that normalcy works mostly for kids who are good at school to start with, and those who aren't become more vulnerable in times like these. He talked about the "Online Penalty" where kids first have to navigate technology before they can learn. While recognizing virtual instruction could have happened sooner, he says the delay has given staff time to work thoughtfully and prepare for virtual instruction, and the all-school project was a way to buy time. On April 20 FALA will move back to the normal curriculum taught online. Discussions are underway re how to handle performing arts online. FUSD will be allowing grading to continue but new grades can't harm students' pre existing grade. We will be meeting to finalize that plan for grading.

B. SPED Director

- Switching our services to online/virtual format. Kim Khatibi talks about SPED traditionally providing services through "pull-out" and student study center for specially designed sessions, and they're working on the best ways to support students when we go online. They will set up virtual centers that will be two times a week for students to meet with teachers, and are reaching out to students who don't have access, perhaps by telephone. Still figuring out all cases.
- Case managers contacting students/families to set up services and check about access issues. Also looking into how to best offer support. Other special advisors, such as therapists, working on doing one-on-one sessions online. We are continually reaching out to families to get services set up.
- Continuing with IEP meetings. We have a great department for support, and are figuring out how hangouts work and how to have meetings, etc.

C. Faculty Senate

- No Report

VII. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes:

- [2020-03-09 Regular Minutes](#)
Phil motions to approve. Debra seconds. Sharon aye. Debra aye. Phil aye. James aye. Birgit aye. Barbara aye. No nays. No abstentions. Motion carries.

VIII. Action Items

- A. Presentation, discussion, and possible action re: Approval of the recording of virtual Board meetings for expediency and transparency.

Sharon says this will be helpful for capturing the minutes given the nature of virtual meetings. James asks if we have tried this format with chat and audio and wonders where this recording will exist after

the meeting. Sharon replies that the recording link will be embedded in our minutes. Eli: We are recording audio and visuals. Birgit asks if the board will have to approve minutes and the recording. Sharon says no. Debra wishes to not have her image on camera. James: I like the idea of recordings available for reference, and that Phil is also taking notes. Birgit: If we record, then the recording should be made available to the public. Sharon: I agree, in the name of transparency.

Sharon motions to approve the recording of the virtual board meeting. James seconds. Sharon aye. James aye. Birgit aye. Phil aye. Debra aye. Barbara aye. No nays. No abstentions. Motion carries.

[RECORDING LINK](#)

B. Presentation, discussion, and possible action re: Strategic Planning Committee Update

Phil says the committee was heading down the homestretch when the pandemic derailed our meetings. Two of the study groups have completed their goals; the other study group, Arts & Academics, has been asked to polish their goals via email feedback and shared revisions—or if necessary, via a virtual session. Haven't heard from them. Perhaps Eli can help rekindle that fire. Once that group is done, we will hold a virtual Strategic Planning session and present our goals and an overview to the board.

C. Presentation, discussion, and possible action re: [Finance Committee Update](#)

Barbara says Eli talked about most of this during his discussion. FALA teacher and committee member Dustin Kuluris says that the state promised teachers 20 percent pay raise, but that goal will not be met. FALA's finances are not ideal, and there is pressure to put that money in the bank. But he thinks teachers should still see part of that pay raise—zero percent is a nonstarter. Eli says that this has been discussed and FALA does not want there to be a negative impact on teachers' salaries. Debra asks Barbara: Have we seen this "Skinny Bill"? Barbara says yes, it has passed the Arizona Legislature. Dustin: The bill does include 5 percent for teacher salaries. Faculty Senate rep Michael Levin speaks about the concern over cutting classes. Sharon says that conversation will come during the budget talks later this month. Barbara: We would love it if everybody came and had input.

D. Presentation, discussion, and possible action re: Approval of [Current Financial Reports](#)

Sharon asks Eli if he would start including a narrative in advance to better walk the board through these reports. Eli agrees. He notes that these reports are from February. P&L shows we are still positive for the year. Every month the cash flow is short which is why we need to be renegotiating the bond—could save \$60,000 per year. Revenue amounts are higher than earlier in the year but short of projections. Report for March shows us in the black, so it's overall moving in a positive direction. We ended up catching up to our enrollment projections by end of year, but that doesn't count for state money, which is based on timing of when you have the students. So we have to fix our budgeting process because we over-budgeted. Sharon: projecting more conservatively will be better overall. James: a couple of meetings ago we talked about getting these reports into a form that's more digestible. What's the status of that, of making it easier to read? Eli talks about how they're reclassifying transactions to fit with the state model, but a more board-friendly version will be coming, with an accompanying summary/narrative by next meeting. Debra: This is an important part of what we're supposed to be doing as a board, but there's so much information here. As a new board member, I would like a bit of training to better understand what I'm looking at. Eli: Maybe should do a budget training work session. Sharon agrees, adding that the board is looking at past budgets, so we're only approving that they've been done. Barbara: There's so many in the folder reports, just pulled from QuickBooks, so they're not in shape for mass consumption. Just need a general report for the board, maybe. Birgit: It would also be helpful to know what our approval means—that these reports are correct? Sharon says yes, with the knowledge that our outside accountant represents FALA in good faith. Barbara: One of our duties is making sure FALA's money is well spent. Sharon: Maybe we need an agenda item in the future. Eli: Maybe more of this could be done in the finance committee; they can put together the summary each month. So the board is not voting on whether these reports are correct, only that XYZ has happened. Sharon asks that this be a future agenda item, creating a means of better transparency for financial reports. Eli: Perhaps training comes sooner rather than later. Sharon agrees.

Sharon motions to approve. Barbara seconds. Sharon aye. Barbara aye. Phil aye. James aye. Birgit aye. No nays. Debra abstains. Motion carries.

- E. Presentation, discussion, and possible action re: Approval and Adoption of [2020-21 Bell Schedule](#) as per [Middle School Schedule Change Rationale](#)

Jed explains the logic behind these proposed changes, that the shorter periods idea hovers around attention span. He refers to the “rationale” notes. He says there is a lot of concern about academic backslide. This is a good way to mitigate that. A lot of good feedback from high school teachers that middle school students are not where they want them to be. Having a class every day helps. New schedule also allows for better indoctrination and evolution of The FALA Way. Lunch period would be staggered to allow less interaction and cause fewer behavior issues between lower and upper level students. Also allows for better safety and monitoring on campus, with few students to watch. The switch of early release time from Friday to Wednesday afternoon was an attempt to improve professional development (PD) and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) time. He also mentioned that the new schedule can help improve Advisory Period. Dustin says that the staff has not been consulted and that the new schedule would add time to his week. Jed replies that middle school teachers were approached. He agrees that there wasn’t enough time to consult everybody, but it’s not fair to say we didn’t consult with any of those teachers. Eli explains that Falcon Period is a new name for the period when middle and high school have electives at the same time, and these will be longer periods. Middle school would have two electives instead of three. High school schedule is the same except it starts later and ends later. Sharon asks about accommodations for students with siblings. Eli says there will be before- and after-school accommodations. Sharon: Are you addressing seat time and in compliance with seat time? Eli: yes. Barbara mentions that there are reasons based on research for doing length of class both ways. Jed: Our data shows that there’s not significant growth using that 85-minute block. Barbara expresses concern that she didn’t know what was going on with the schedule changes as a board member or a parent. A general discussion ensues about the new split schedule’s impact on teachers (including those who teach at both levels) many of the faculty in attendance on Zoom being allowed to express their concerns. There is board discussion on how this new schedule will impact students, their satisfaction, their homework, their transportation. Eli reminds that the reason behind the proposal is cultural problems on campus they have been struggling with. Barbara asks about the cost of this. Eli replies that it will have an impact because more teachers will be needed, but our middle school is growing and high school is not, so that’s a big consideration. Betsy and other teachers talk about the need for administration to listen to the community at large before continuing with the scheduling proposal, that more feedback is needed. “When you cut people and programs, you’re gonna lose people,” Betsy said. “It’s not a threat, it’s an honest accounting.”

After further discussion, Sharon motions to table this item based on the need for further investigation and to get more buy-in from teachers across the board. Phil seconds. Sharon aye. Barbara aye. Debra aye. James aye. Birgit aye. Phil aye. No nays. No abstentions. Motion carries.

- F. Presentation, discussion, and possible action re: Approval of [COVID-19 Resolution](#)

Eli explains that even though the state has decreed we must be closed, this resolution allows him and the board some more leeway. This is a template that other boards have been using in case further emergencies related to COVID-19 arise.

Sharon motions to approve. Debra seconds. Sharon aye. Debra aye. James aye. Birgit aye. Phil aye. No nays. Barbara abstains. Motion carries.

- IX. Future Agenda Items:** After much scheduling discussion, Sharon proposes the following meetings: April 27 5PM Special Board Meeting (virtual) to discuss and approve 2020-21 MS and HS Bell Schedule with supporting evidence-based report and teacher buy-in; April 29 5PM Special Board Meeting (virtual) to discuss and approve 2020-21 FALA School Budget; and May 4 5pm Special Board Meeting (virtual) for the Approval of Teacher Contracts.

- A. Approval and Adoption of 2020-21 Budget (**April 20**)
- B. Approval of Employment Contracts (**April 27**)
- C. Adoption of Employment Handbook (**May**)
- D. Review of 2020-2023 Strategic Plan (**May**)

- E. Review of Policies - Section B and K by Board (May) -- NEW
- F. Adoption of 2020-2023 Strategic Plan (June)
- G. Adoption of Student Handbook (June)
- H. Field Trip Plan for AY 2020-21 (June)
- I. Update and approve Trip Chaperone policy - Field Trip section (IJOA-R) (June)
- J. Update and approve Facilities Rental policy (June)
- K. Update and approve Policy on Attendance for performances/auditions (June)
- L. Approval of Internship Policy (June)
- M. Review ED Evaluation Process (September or October) - NEW
- N. Update on GoalBusters Fundraising Project (June)

X. Adjournment: Sharon motions to adjourn at 7:33 p.m. Barbara seconds. Sharon aye. Barbara aye. Phil aye. James aye. Birgit aye. Debra aye. No nays. No abstentions. Motion carries.

Agenda Posted: 2020-04-10 2:55PM

Minutes Posted: 2020-04-16 3:55PM