



New Frontier Educational Foundation

Minutes of the Board of Directors

Saturday, April 30, 2019

The meeting of the Board of Directors for the New Frontier Educational Foundation (Foundation) was called to order by President Greg Rieke at 9:40 a.m. The President noted that a quorum was present. Present were Board members Greg Rieke, Patrick Sirridge, Dr. Diana Carlin and Dr. Vusala Snyder. Also present were Ugur Demircan, Superintendent of Frontier Schools, Ermek Djunushev, Head of Counseling at Frontier Schools (Frontier) and a guest, Mark A. Mears, a marketing and mentoring program consultant.

Mr Rieke called attention to the minutes of the March 9 meeting and Dr. Snyder moved that they be approved and the motion was seconded by Mr. Sirridge. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sirridge presented the Treasurer's report noting that the most recent statement from Country Club Bank showed a balance of \$28,021. He pointed out that all current bills/obligations had been paid including the Foundation's D&O insurance and scholarship contributions to KC Scholars. A motion to approve the report was made by Dr. Snyder and seconded by Dr. Carlin. The motion passed unanimously.

A special report was then given by Mr. Djunushev on data relating to Frontier Schools' alumni and college attendance. The first slide showed a steady increase in enrollment and graduation numbers from Frontier since 2012. In that year, 12 students graduated while in 2019, either 86 or 87 will graduate (60 from the STEM high school). Mr. Djunushev stated that projections show a significant increase in graduates and enrollment in the next 2-4 years. A second slide related to college attendance. Mr. Djunushev noted that in 2012 there was a large drop-out rate while in 2018 the rate was much lower. He added that figures from 2018 also show an improvement in the rate of degree attainment. As for the type of college attended, Frontier graduates favor community colleges (e.g. Metropolitan Community College) for financial reasons. His next slide from 2018 showed that 71% of Frontier students attended college and this compared well with local school districts from Missouri – only Blue Springs and Liberty had higher college attendance rates. Finally, Mr. Djunushev advised the Board that the availability of financing from organizations like KC Scholars has been a significant "moving force" in permitting students to attend college, especially four year universities.

Mr. Djunushev then answered questions from Board members about issues relating to college attendance. He admitted that it is sometimes hard to convince students to attend college when they already have paying jobs and believe they can make a decent living. He noted that "our job" is to emphasize that a college degree will have tangible long-term benefits such as increases in salary and job-related benefit packages. Dr. Snyder analyzed this issue from a brain development standpoint

because adolescents tend to focus on short term goals and situations. Finally, Mr. Djunushev used a last slide to discuss what types of majors Frontier students choose in college. The data showed that 33% of Frontier graduates choose STEM majors compared to non-STEM (25%) and undecided (41%). He commented that he hoped students would give more thought to careers in late high school because they can lose valuable (and expensive) time in college without making progress toward a useful major.

The special reports segment of the meeting continued with a presentation by Mark Mears. He shared details of his background in business and how mentors changed his career focus from law to journalism and marketing. In his career in business/marketing, Mr. Mears has worked with Pepsico, McDonalds, Frito-Lay, JCPenney and NBC/Universal, Cheesecake Factory, Noodles & Company and Mimi's Café. He has now turned his focus on developing programs to help young people reach their full growth potential. He currently is working with the Kansas University Alumni Association on its mentoring initiative and has helped establish the Jayhawk Career Network. The program has four components with the acronym LEAF: Leadership, Engagement, Accountability and Fulfillment. At the moment, 3500 KU alumni have expressed interest in mentoring a KU student. The challenge will be to recruit students to the program and find ways to connect them with mentors.

Board discussion then turned to how Frontier could benefit from a mentoring program. Several commented that Frontier has a population that needs extra encouragement to pursue a college degree. Many students come from families that have not had educational opportunities and that also face financial challenges. Mr. Mears mentioned the Friends of Frontier initiative (conceived by Gene Augustine) and how it might serve as a source of mentors. Mr. Rieke asked who has to be involved for a mentoring program to be successful. Mr. Mears pointed to the Board as an obvious participant while Mr. Djunushev suggested that mentoring could be woven into the Frontier curriculum as an elective. Students would be provided opportunities to meet successful people in fields/occupations that interest them. He added that continuity would be a crucial element to the success of any mentoring program. Mr. Djunushev also thought the program would probably have to involve a coordinator at Frontier whose job it would be to work with local companies and organizations to find appropriate mentors. Such an approach might involve internships or other experiences that could not only provide one-on-one contact but also provide Frontier students with guidance about possible careers. Both Messrs. Mears and Djunushev agreed that any program must start with a solid explanation to Frontier students why a mentor program is important to them. Mr. Rieke closed the discussion by stating that he and Mr. Mears would have follow-up meetings on how to organize and implement a mentors program at Frontier Schools.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rieke reported that he has had various conversations with professionals in the non-profit area and he now believes it would be advisable for NFEF to accept its status as an IRS Private Foundation for two more years thereby reaching the five year mark following incorporation. Mr. Rieke has learned that this five year point is a time that non-profit organizations often reapply to the IRS for public charity status. He recommended that the Board put this matter on inactive status and Board members present agreed with this assessment.

Mr. Rieke and Dr. Carlin have identified a Rockhurst University student as a possible intern for NFEF and plan to meet with her in the near future.

Mr. Rieke stated that several people have suggested that the Frontier Schools website include personal stories about successful students. The videos/articles could highlight college acceptances, scholarships and experiences away from home. All Board members agreed that this would be an effective addition to the website.

The Board will need several new members this summer and the Nominating Committee plans to meet before the next Board meeting to identify potential candidates. Mr. Rieke reported that he had discussed Board membership with several individuals in the education field but their personal situations prevented them from being considered at this time.

In Mr. Cesar Cea's absence, it was decided that the agenda item of collaboration with the Hispanic Development Fund will be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

There was a discussion of the Amendments to the Memo of Understanding (Memo) between Frontier Schools and NFEF. Mr. Rieke reviewed the following areas of the Memo: (1) the opportunity of Frontier Schools faculty and staff to voluntarily contribute to NFEF through payroll deductions; (2) the ability of NFEF to purchase real estate for the benefit of Frontier Schools and enter into a lease with Frontier Schools at below-market rates; and (3) the creation of Friends of Frontier as an informal support group of Frontier Schools. Mr. Rieke advised the Board that the Frontier Schools Board had approved the Memo. After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Sirridge to approve the Memo and it was seconded by Dr. Snyder. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rieke reminded the Board that it needs to discuss a wish list for spending priorities along with other budget items at the upcoming annual meeting. In the interest of time, Mr. Rieke made brief comments about the following agenda items: (1) NFEF will explore affiliations with several local groups including KC STEM and Prep KC; (2) the Board needs to create a committee to formulate the long-term mentoring program and should also explore working with local companies such as Cerner and Burns & McDonnell regarding scholarships and apprenticeships; (3) introductory meetings/contacts have been made with the Girl Scouts regarding a collaborative program and with Ms. Neelima Parasker of SnapIT Solutions regarding mentoring /internships; (4) at an upcoming Board meeting, Mr. Rieke will plan to invite Margery Sendze from the Federal Reserve Bank to discuss the potential for internships at "The Fed" for PLTW students (STEM curriculum); (5) Mr. Rieke will coordinate with Mr. Demircan on a time in early August, 2019, to meet with Frontier Schools faculty and staff regarding a new payroll deduction plan; and (6) there will need to be a Board committee formed to help plan the Friends of Frontier event in October/November.

Mr. Djunushev then notified the Board that an important event is scheduled for May 1 at Frontier Stem High School; it is the presentation of scholarships to Frontier students from KC Scholars. He added that there is a high level of excitement about these scholarships in the senior class.

Finally, Board members discussed possible dates for the annual Board meeting in June and it was decided it would be on **June 29, 2019, at 9:30 a.m.** at the Frontier Schools Engagement Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Sirridge, Treasurer