

**WESTINGHOUSE ARTS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Meeting Minutes**

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**Wednesday, May 1, 6:30pm**

**<https://westinghousearts-org.zoom.us/j/4985722966> BoardMeeting**

**Meeting ID: 829 0442 0112**

**Passcode: 413522**

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**Present:**

Mr. William Pricener - Board President and Treasurer  
Ms. Bernadette Gibson - Chair of Education Committee (Zoom)  
Ms. Gloria Rayman - Chair of Development Committee  
Mr. Greg Jakub - Chair of Nominating Committee  
Dr. John Hisiro - Board Member (Zoom)  
Dr. Donald Marinelli - Board Member (Zoom)  
Mr. Dexter Hairston - Board Secretary (Zoom)  
Dr. Kelly Lombard - WAA School Principal

Dr. Debra Lehew - WAA Director of Special Education  
Mr. Alex Boyd - WAA School Operations Manager  
Ms. Anna Very - WAA Dean of Students

**Guests:**

Westinghouse Arts FTO Members  
Westinghouse Arts Faculty  
Westinghouse Arts Parents  
Westinghouse Arts Students  
Members of the public via Zoom

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*The Meeting of the Board of Directors began at 6:41pm.*

**Roll Call of Board Members:**

*Mr. William Pricener welcomed all attending the meeting via Zoom and in person.*

**1. Board Business**

**Ms. Danielle Janicki** - I am a parent of a sophomore musical theatre major. When I addressed this board in September, I indicated a need for transparency and communication because without it, you have mistrust and conspiracy. At that time I asked for information on the relationship between WAA and TCV Arts. I followed up in emails to multiple board members and never got anything. I let it slide because I thought that if you got rid of Fosbrink, things would be on the right path. I'm in almost every board meeting.

**Mr. Pricener** - Oh, I know.

**Ms. Danielle Janicki** - What I've come to understand since then, sitting in these meetings was that it's not just Fosbrink that was the problem. Each of you are all responsible for whatever position this school is in right now. That includes you, Mr. Solicitor. The same solicitor representing Woodland Hills, a neighboring district that Westinghouse pulls the most students from.

Now I see that you are voting tonight to ratify JSD Consulting. I was here back in January when you said "We're going to bring on Jill Regan, she has 26 years of experience, and she's going to right the ship." Well, I know Ms. Regan is here tonight with a WAA badge. Was that a misleading thing when you said she was going to be hired in January?

**Mr. Pricener** - No that was not misleading. If I may?

**Member of the Public** - She has 3 minutes.

**Ms. Janicki** - So you want to bring her in as a financial consultant. You already hired her. That is apparent. Why was it withheld that Ms. Regan is the business manager for Woodland Hills? Why wasn't that mentioned in the other meetings? It appears to me we have two big conflicts of interest here, Mr. Racunas and Ms. Regan. I'm a Woodland Hills High School Alumni. 32 years, I have no issues with Woodland Hills. Woodland Hills doesn't like WAA. They don't allow us to advertise our musical. Don't sit there and snark at me.

**Mr. Matthew Racunas** - I'll address you when you're done, I'll allow you your 3 minutes.

**Ms. Janicki** - I hope you do. You are allowing a competing manager a look at our books. Yet you withhold financial information from your constituents. You continue to take advice from a solicitor who allowed major missteps under Fosbrink for a long time. Under your watch. Charter school law says that a charter school is held accountable to the public, the commonwealth. We are here to hold you accountable. I would like to see you replace the solicitor and I want to see the board vote no on finally ratifying the contract of Jill Regan who was already hired. If changes aren't made, I'm going to go to the PA Department of Education, I'm going to go to East Allegheny. This is not ok. I think your hearts are in the right place. I think you're nice people. I think you're overwhelmed. I think you don't know what you're doing. And I think you're being snowballed by Mr. Racunas and Ms. Regan.

**Ms. Austenne Gniadek** - Hello. My name is Austenne Gniadek, and I work in the studio art department. One of the most compelling articles I've ever read was written by Matthew Weaver and published in 2018 in The Guardian. The article's title is "Medical Students Raised on Screens Lack Skills for Surgery." It discusses how cutting creative programs, such as what we teach in the studio arts department, reduces students' abilities to develop the fine motor skills necessary for careers in the medical field.

A Forbes article published in 2023 by Nikita Tambe and Aashika Jain outlines 20 skills employers look for in potential candidates. These skills involve social media, digital marketing, and web development. Our digital program teaches these skills and more to our students. Other skills include efficient written communication and professional writing skills. Our creative writing program produces skilled and articulate writers who are already published and proficient in several writing software programs by the time they graduate.

Our performing arts department's showcases can only be successful with all of the soft skills outlined in this article. Teamwork, self-management, communication, and adaptability are all qualities explicitly gained and exemplified by the combination of our dance, vocal, instrumental, musical theater, and theater departments. Creative problem-solving and design thinking are listed at the top of this article and within multitudes of other developmental research. Creative problem-solving is one of the most important things we can teach our students, and it majorly factors into each of our programs.

As educators, we aim to facilitate a space where we set our students for success. The facts support the need for the arts in the lives of all students. Not every student is afforded the opportunity to pursue a passion as we allow here at Westinghouse Arts Academy. Countless schools want to push STEM and robotics-related curricula. Wanting to jump on that bandwagon does not allow us to stand out and offer something unique and desirable. We have students who travel over an hour both ways to attend this school. What we offer here is not accessible at other educational institutions.

That all being said, this school needs help with misallocating funds. The proceeds from events in the past, like Coffee Shop and Lemonade Stand, among many others, have generated profits that have disappeared and remain unaccounted for. That is not the error of our arts programs or our students. Changing our programs will not remedy this school's financial struggles. Our finances have been mismanaged at this school, but our economic stability needs to be improved while simultaneously maintaining our founding mission. The guiding principles of arts in education are the reason for this school. It is why our students, teachers, and administrators are here.

In that respect, I would like to highlight how Dr. Kelly Muic-Lombard has changed the trajectory of this school. During her time here, many others and I have watched as she helped cultivate a structure that did not exist before she came here.

Her presence is an integral part of the function of this institution. She believes in this school and inspires us to show up for our students and the families of WAA every day.

I am acutely aware of this school's business dynamic. I understand that this is a numbers game. The more students we have, the more money we have. But I am telling you, students will leave this school if we stray from our purpose. I'm speaking on behalf of my love for the arts and this school, but more than anything, I speak on behalf of the students. We serve a community that doesn't exist in other schools. This school is a safe and welcoming place for creatives who stand apart from the crowd in more ways than one. If the mission of this school is to remain student-centered, then cutting any of our arts programs in favor of rebranding in hopes of more significant revenue would be a far cry from student-centered. Our students rely on this space for safety and acceptance in an educational environment. Many of our students come here because they cannot thrive under the average expectations of a conventional learning institution. I implore you to maintain what is at the heart of the school. Westinghouse Arts Academy is nothing without the arts, and the students, teachers, families, and administrators care about making a difference through the arts. Thank you for your time.

**Ms. Stacey Emrock** - Daughter Jocelyn is a senior dance major. I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words about the dance program and the recent field trip to Norfolk, VA for the regional high school dance festival. First, the dance program at Westinghouse has been an amazing adventure for her. She improved so much not only as a dancer but as a performer. She has come into her own, and I attribute her success to her teachers, Miss Tracey, Mrs. T., Ms. Kat, Mr. Nick and Mr. Alex. I also want to recognize Dr. Lehew in all of this. When I couldn't get a response from other teachers, Dr. Lehew was the one who got things done for Jocelyn.

Secondly, I was blessed to be able to participate as a dance chaperone these last two years for the regional dance festival. I was able to see what the festival could do for our dancers. It was a life changing experience for many of our students, including my daughter. They were able to take masterclasses with teachers from around the country, audition for scholarships. I got to see the smiles on their faces when they got to perform on stage, when they saw their number on the board after auditions, when they walked across the stage to get their scholarships at the end of the festival. Priceless experience. Many students would not have this opportunity elsewhere. (*outlined scholarship and college acceptances that Jocelyn received*). All because of this school. All because of WAACS. We would not have had this opportunity anywhere else. This school just the way it is is so important to the students who attend. It is unlike any other school.

It is upsetting to see the downfall of this school because of mismanagement and very bad decisions. According to policy, board president and officers serve for one year. Mr. Pricener has been the president for as long as I can remember. Why has there been no change? How long do members serve, and how are they elected? It seems that there are a lot of friends and neighbors that I'm not confident have the necessary qualifications and will act in the best interest of the school. How can we trust that good decisions are being made when it seems that the current board doesn't perform the necessary due diligence to make the right choices? The case in point is the failed culinary program that took money from other programs that was presented by Mr. Fosbrink was accepted by the board last year. Why aren't there parent representatives on this board? You are making decisions in our childrens' lives and we should have a say in what decisions you make. Most of you rarely visit the school, and have no idea what is going on with our students. I ask that you elect a parent to the board.

**Ms. Michelle Lukas** - I have been an educator for 30 years. The way Mr. Racunas spoke to Ms. Janicki was unprofessional.

*Mr. Racunas apologized.*

**Ms. Michelle Lukas** - No one likes to hear what they've been doing wrong, but we need to own up to things.

I spoke to you before. On the website, there is a small balanced budget for 2024. Do you have a revised budget that shows the shortfall? How much debt? What are we doing about the debt? Financial reports should be done and

shared at board meetings. (*Outlined the financial reports that she has come across in her experience.*) I am formally requesting a copy of the financial report and charter school report. I understand there's a teacher shortage, my daughter has been lacking academically because of teacher shortages. What are we doing in regard to that?

**Ms. Shannon Visconti** - Have a 9th grade student here. She is here for this musical theatre department only and we would leave if that is cut at all. Are you considering filing for bankruptcy? Robotics program? What is the success measured on? Woodland Hills has only had this program for two years? How are we measuring this program? We need good data to make decisions for our programs. TV production studio, fashion program, or improving what we are already doing. I just can't believe I'm here having this conversation at an arts school.

**Colleen Kimberlin** - In addition to my fellow parents, I have observed very little to strengthen the existing programs and attract new students to them. Many of the parents have volunteered our services to assist in these efforts. Why has the school continually ignored these efforts? For two and a half years, I have been asking you to address the issues with the vocal program, which has been neglected and under supported yet is a point of differentiation for this school. Mr. Berger has a vision for vocal which I think will raise our profile and attract more students to come here. I expect this board to support their efforts and I want to know how you plan to do so.

The board regularly references a major deficit. What is the current deficit amount and what is being done to address it? What is the relationship between TCVA and WAA? Why are you allowing the same legal representative across both organizations when that is a clear conflict of interest? Is this board planning to declare bankruptcy, and if so, what is your plan for our students in the school?

Regarding the robotics program, not from VEX for the following: projected number of new students, projected increase in revenue, costs beyond what any grants will cover, interest level from current students, and expected changes to class sizes. I spent a little time in online robotics forums for families and this is what I learned. It is about \$1500, first year for a new field. \$100-250 per student competition. \$1200-\$5000 in costs for robots. The quality of these programs and the quality of the experience for students is dependent on the volunteers. We don't have enough volunteers as it is. What are your plans for managing things and where are these plans documented?

In surveys I sent out to these forums, the majority said they would not send their student to a school that did not have a robust set of science classes offered, which we don't. I want to know if you have a plan to incorporate these classes and what is being defunded or displaced as a result. I want to know if anyone in this decision making process has a personal relationship with anybody at VEX. VEX has numerous internal issues that are well documented on multiple websites that involve sexual harassment and bigotry. Is this the type of organization we want our school associated with? Given that our charter is with East Allegheny, why are we hiring consultants that are affiliated with Woodland Hills, especially if that district has made it difficult to come to our school and wants to call us "Ghetto CAPA"? Why are we not pursuing tech grants that promote our existing programs like the Adobe rollout, tech for our recording studio, or tv studio to attract more students? These are questions we have been asking for a while. They are not rhetorical, we expect them to be answered on the record. Our students deserve better, and they deserve the education that they signed up for when they came here.

**Ms. Valin Morrison** - current 12 grade student at Westinghouse. I've been here for four years. I don't think I've heard of anything like what we do here. I've heard a lot about adjustments to programs. I know that our current science teachers personally fund our labs. Instead of getting grants for robotics, why don't we get grants for a lab. It's silly and I feel like we could be focusing our energy on other things. We don't have any money for paint. Instead of focusing money on robotics, we should be focusing money on our programs we already have.

**Mr. Patrick Morrison** - Valin's father. 4 years ago, she did not like being at Norwin. I heard about this school through some friends. She said "I want to go there." We didn't know anything about this school. We were extraordinarily skeptical about coming here. We asked friends, parents, did tours, and decided to give it a shot. 4 years later, this is probably the best decision that I've ever made for my daughter. She has thrived in this program. She is going to college for special effects. She has become even more incredible than she was before she started. I don't know anything about

the politics. All I know is that this school is the best thing for my daughter. The students need this school. They don't have access to the programs we have here anywhere else. We need to keep this school the way it is and grow it the way it is. Prior to today, I didn't know you all existed.

**Mr. Racunas** - I have a lot of things to say, and I think there is some misinformation out there.

**Ms. Karri Handa** - I am here to represent the alumni. I am a parent of an alumni, your last years' salutatorian. My two concerns are the financial resources - if that is such dire straits, bringing in other programs will take away from the programs that we are already doing. It is a detriment to have to buy other curriculum and resources. That money could have gone to buying things for the programs we have now. Be mindful that we do not want to go into other resources thinking maybe robotics will strengthen us...more AP courses would be helpful. And there is a free resource that you should be using. Statistics from your alumni of their success, we should be bringing them and their statistics to help. I'll just give you a quick statistic. Slippery Rock has a 3.5% acceptance rate, same as Harvard University. We have two students that are there. These are quick statistics that we can use to bring students in.

**Ms. Lisa Reno** - former FTO president in 2022 and 2023. Parent of a junior. Digital to studio major, now interested in theatre/musical theatre. What I've come to say is that teachers need markers and paper. Why are we paying a consultant for financial matters? What is our current business manager not doing? Students are coming here for arts education, and that is our differentiating factor. Other people I've heard from say that this school doesn't exist or that there are previous poor statistics. Students in Vocal that aren't caroling out in communities. Missing out on community engagement with our current programs. We ask that the board say no to JSC consulting and VEX robotics.

**Ms. Makenna Wingrove** - sculpture and ceramics teacher, worked here 3 years. This is a wonderful school. I've never seen anything like this. Looking back on previous places of work, there is a brighter and happier atmosphere, and students can truly be themselves. We've gotten complaints in the past of, "Why doesn't the board tell us anything?" "Why can't we get supplies?" Never heard "geez. This was a STEM school." We can't afford paint, but we want to build robots? Realistically, if we say this is a stem school, state of the art, they're going to come here with a broken computer and a microchip, they'll tell us that we have to be creative, then all the teachers will leave and it will be a mess. We should focus on what we are currently doing. If we're having money problems, we can come together as a community to help it. Trying to cover it up with, "we're going to do this, this, and this," will not work. We introduced a program that we're not ready for. Avoid the mistake of bringing in kids and then not delivering on the promises. We want to have a good legacy with the current programs. We should be focusing on what we have because what we have is very beautiful. We should maintain the culture we have right now. If we're having problems, we should be more open about it and get parents involved, etc.

**Ms. Amanda Zimmer** - parent of a committed incoming 9th grader for next year. I work in education as well, so I'm following this closely. Everything shared about conflicts of interest. We are coming to this school because of the arts program, if we want to go find STEM, we can go elsewhere. We are coming for the arts. We are coming for the safe, inclusive community. Mr. Lenz met my child one time in person. He turned around and recognized him, that was the most exciting thing that happened to my child in the last five years. I really am asking that there are tons of ways that you can be looking at recruitment. There are lots of people willing to help, it doesn't need to be big expensive campaigns. We can recruit from community outreach. It's not because of a big, fancy campaign. Focus on what you do well, do one thing and do it well. Find the resources, look for that. If we want robots, we'll go somewhere. I do have significant concerns as someone who has been recruited and committed.

**Alea DelPrete** - Digital teacher here. I was hired in Nov. of 2017. Think of all the things I've seen. This is not really about robots, this is about the consistency of using the people in the school and the students to deflect what's really going on behind the scenes. When the first CEO was sent out, then we went through a constant restructure. It's a question about what's going on behind the scenes. We can't use the restructure to blame it on the programs. It's not the arts programs fault,

We take steps back every time you restructure. Digital arts, I had 5 kids in the beginning. We weaved arounda ll the drama, all the politics. Listen to me from experience. We are a great school. We have the most passion from the people in this place than I have ever seen. It's really hard to do the right thing. I hope it's not about money, from the surface, that's what it looks like.

**April Morrison** - I just wanted to say, clearly these parents are invested and passionate, you all here invested and passionate. We're all on the same team, this is a great first step in truly working together and bridging those gaps. You may feel attacked and defensive. They feel left out and untrusting because of history. We're all here together. It's a good platform.

**Ms. Michelle Lukas** - I would also just like to say. I work down in Wilksburg School District. Our students have an opportunity to go to CAPA. I show my daughters performances, I recruit really hard to get kids to go to WAA, not CAPA. It's \$18,000 to go to CAPA outside of Pittsburgh. This was my daughter's only choice. She was introverted, she was in a dark place when she came. Nick and Alex can vouch. She could not get up and perform. Now she gets up and sings, she's more pleasant. I work really hard to get kids to come here and not go to CAPA. All of those Gene Kelly Awards tell you you have something here.

#### **A.. Statement by Board President - Mr. William Pricener**

**Mr. Pricener** - Outstanding performance this weekend. Could not believe the quality of the performance. Nick and Alex, the parents, staff, and volunteers did an outstanding job.

I also feel I have to address a few things. There's been a great deal of misinformation, disinformation, and outright rumors. Not once has anyone ever talked about bankruptcy at this school. Where in the heck did that come from? I don't know. Are we having financial issues? Yes. But I also think it is extremely unfair to say that Mr. Racunas isn't doing his job or to attack Ms. Regan. This gentleman has put in hours and hours and hours. You can say "oh, he's getting paid big money." Let me tell you this, though. He takes his pay last, he hasn't received a check for one year. To say that Mr. Racunas hasn't represented this school properly is wrong or has some ulterior motive is wrong. Absolutely wrong.

Eliminating an arts program - I have no idea where this came in. Are we looking for other opportunities, additional programming that won't cost us money that could potentially bring in students? Not once has anyone talked about eliminating any of the arts programs.

Where these rumors are coming from, I have no idea. They're malicious. They're making the school look bad, and us look bad. I don't care if I look bad. If you don't think I care about this school, I went to this school. I don't need this job. I'm retired, I don't need it. I don't need to be the president of this school board. I seriously don't. Someone else can take it in a heartbeat. To say that we don't volunteer? Go down to the cafeteria and see how many times I've been here washing dishes the last few weeks. I'm here all the time. The mayor is here all the time. Gloria works behind the scenes because she works in Pittsburgh and it's hard for her to get to Wilmerding. It's really unusual for her to get here.

As far as VEX is concerned, are we looking into it? We are absolutely looking into it. Has any decision been made? No. And do I feel attacked today? Yes, but it's ok. This is what I signed up for with my \$0 salary.

Fundraising. You probably don't know this, but at the beginning of this year, in two days, I reached out to contacts and raised over \$6000. Why did I raise that? Because the teachers didn't have enough supplies. And we cannot allow them to continue to put that out. Can I raise that \$6000 again? I absolutely can, and I will. Even if I'm voted off this board, I will raise that money because I believe in this school.

I don't deal every day with the teachers. I deal with Dr. Lehew, Dr. Lombard, and Miss Very and Nick and Alex. They're everywhere.

The idea of alumni recruiting...duh!

I think that's it. I'm going to let the other board members have an opportunity to say something.

**Mr. Greg Jakub** - Some of you don't know this, the last dance program that went to Virginia, 4 board members put up their own money for the kids to be able to go. I fought with East Allegheny School District as a resident to get this building. East Allegheny is 5.3 million in debt. You see Mount Lebanon with \$3M. There are issues with the schools all around. Yes, there are teacher issues. The three of us here and all the board members - it would kill us to have something happen to this school. He comes in on a regular basis, I come in. I'm dancing with kids in the hallway. I have a vested principle In this school, this building, these children. When the kids walk across the stage for graduation, we hand them their diplomas. Some of the kids know us by name. Over my dead body will we close this school, even if all hell broke loose.

**Ms. Rayman** - Thank you for everyone who has come tonight. This feedback is very valuable. I sat here with most of this thinking "where did these rumors come from?" They are unfounded. I have no ties to this school or community, but I am a lifelong arts enthusiast, sponsor of arts programs in pittsburgh. I'm doing this for the kids. I consider these students to be my kids. When it comes to me, the very first thing we think of is how this will affect the kids. Charter schools are suffering, but we're prepared to fight that battle. Thank you all for coming, and thank you for the feedback.

**Mr. Racunas** - This is a good thing, a good talk. These types of meetings can be very beneficial for both sides. You're all concerned and worried. Rumors are out there and you're wondering why, or where is this coming from? You can't deny that the board cares. I'm here because I care. I understand if there's mistrust or whatever's going on because I serve in 20 different communities. I don't need to be here. I haven't been paid in a long time. I'm not here to make money, I'm here because I really care about this school. I agree that this is a great place. It's intriguing to me and I support it 110%, which is why I've been here and I've stuck around and tried to do things and pulling from my resources to try to help this place. I'm trying to correct issues and mistakes that have been made. I'm a tool for the board members, and I offer what I deem to be help. I'm not perfect. I'm not saying I have all of the answers, but I've been doing this work for a long time, I've represented a lot of school districts, municipalities, public entities over the last 25 years. I know the basics, I know my way around the ropes. I can see where problems are and can offer opportunities to address those problems.

The VEX program is brought in as a supplement, it's not brought in to replace or do anything to the arts basis of the school. It's an add on. The reason we want to look into it is because I'm trying to structure a deal where the payment would only be based on enrollment that comes in.

Given the financial situation, we don't have the money to pay. I'm trying to structure something where we can add a program which could generate numbers and at the same time we don't have to worry about that. And again, that's something the board will ultimately decide, and they'll have to look at and see if it's something they want to do to help the issues.

All of these issues go away with enrollment, if we have 500 kids, then we wouldn't have these issues. If we can't buy markers, that tells us what is going on. I'm trying to do anything I can personally to try to fix those problems. That's where Ms. Regan and VEX came in. It's up to the board whether they decide to do that. "Go find the helper" I'm the helper. We're all in this together. I don't represent TCVA, they have their own attorney, so I don't know where that came from. We have an independent auditor, so that already happens.

**Ms. Janicki** - Can we see the audit reports?

**Mr. Racunas** - Yes. They're public record, so you can see them.

**Ms. Janicki** - We will submit that request. I go back to, how much are we paying Ms. Regan? What's on the docket for that because you have a business manager in place. Why are we paying a consultant to pay our bills? Again, if the

person we have in place isn't qualified, then you find someone who is qualified. Consultants are expensive, I know they are. Anytime you hear the word consultant and you went ahead and hired somebody, that's a concern for me as a parent. When we can't afford supplies, why are we paying a consultant?

**Mr. Racunas** - So, I don't think Ms. Regan has been paid yet. That's besides the point. The idea is to bring in someone in the short term to fix the real deficiencies, to sort of right the ship. And then she goes and the business manager takes over.

**Ms. Janicki** - Find someone qualified, someone to stay for the long term and can keep the ship right. I'm sorry if you feel attacked, and I'm sorry to Ms. Regan.

**Ms. Regan** - I'm also not Ms. Regan, Woodland Hills business manager, I am JSD Consulting. I have my own business. I have seven children of my own. Some are artsy fartsy, some play football. I'm just trying to do my best here, and I came because Matt and I are friends. He said, "Can you bring your consulting business because the ship is sinking over there. We need your help, we need your expertise, we need you to go in and show them what's wrong and how they need to fix it with the auditor." My first phone call was to the auditor. I'm not here to call anybody "ghetto" something.

**Ms. Janicki** - That's what the students at Woodland Hills have called us.

*(There was a disruption in the room, as many people started talking at once.)*

**Ms. Alea DelPrete** - In digital arts, Adobe certification program is already kind of filling this robotics "blank space". I do have an issue not aligning with what we do. Robotics and coding doesn't align with our stuff. We're not doing cookie cutter projects here. Come up with a design for a brochure for eclipse, choose applications. That's not the only thing we do. You have to think about the technology that is already here. I am already hitting a wall with the tech we have. I know you say you care. No one is going to care more than us because we are working with the kids day in and day out. There are hidden skills there.

**Mr. Racunas** - The reality is that all of that that all the funding you're talking about is generated by enrollment. If our enrollment was higher, we wouldn't have a problem.

**Ms. Lisa Reno** - You have free labor from all these parents. In a month, we generated more volunteer time than I have seen in three years here to put on that musical. You have people that have worked in these professional fields, and we have said we will help you. Nobody ever takes us up on it.

Mr. Racunas - I'm not saying that. I'm saying the supplies generated comes from enrollment.

**Ms. Kimberlin** - That's what we're saying. In the past year, I have generated a dozen opportunities for community outreach. I found a place where Nick could send some of the musical theatre kids to do some scenes from the show. I have 6 places where we could put vocal students to sing and instrumental kids to play. Everybody in this city knows who Lincoln Park is. Nobody knows who owe are. How do we get our name out there? By putting those kids out in the community and showing them what they can do. It doesn't matter how much we say how awesome we are. We have to show them. I have offered this up to the board, I have offered this up to teachers, I have offered this up to Kelly. And you know how many times someone has asked me about it? Zero. And some kid is going to be sitting in the audience, looking at what those kids put on, and say, "I want to do that. I want to go to that school." And I can't get anybody to talk to me about it.

**Ms. Marian Sefcik** - And if transportation is the issue, FTO always makes it happen. We bust our butts fundraising so that the kids can do what they want. Austenne needs museum putty? She's got it because of us. Don't say we can't get these kids to the winter market to sing. Don't tell me you can't get them places...I'm tired of hearing, "We can't do it because of this or that." You don't come and ask. I've said it to the teachers, I've said it to Kelly. We aren't mind



readers, if you need money you need to tell us what you need it for. We might not be able to help all the way, but we can make it happen.

**Mr. Pricener** - If there's one thing I've learned in 37 years with the YMCA, no one's going to give you money unless you ask for it.

**Ms. Sefcik** - Exactly. So don't tell me we have no way to get these kids places. I hear the people in studio and digital, but whether we like it or not, our performing arts department is our football team. That is the group that brings in the revenue. Our outstanding children brought in over \$21,000 at the box office this weekend. Over 1300 people walked into that auditorium that, by the way, our students cleaned. I came in every day to set up concessions, and watched my kids clean the auditorium because we can't afford a weekend custodial staff. I watched my granddaughter redecorate the dressing rooms every night personally because she believed that they deserved to be treated like professionals because that's how they acted. I had a parent come up to me and say, "Those kids are so good, you forget they're kids."

**Ms. Reno** - If the answer is recruitment, and we're saying we can help you, why is it so hard to get your response for that? What is the answer?

**Ms. Rayman** - I would love to hear from you. The question is, how do we monetize this? If it's a tv show watched by 50 million people, if I can't make money off of that, it doesn't matter. We put an ad in the Kellys last year. Do we know how many inquiries we got off of that? Less than 20 who actually inquired. I totally agree, this is our football team. Yes, we can get them to PPG and all of these places. How do we monetize that, what is the next step?

**Ms. Emily Newman** - I'm an art teacher here, my child who goes to CAPA. He was in Sweeney Todd. I live in Wilksburg, I didn't know that this school existed because it's called Westinghouse. You've got to put "George" in front. People get us confused with the other Westinghouse school.

**Ms. Visconti** - I don't know the exact amount you get paid per student. I don't know what the financial issues. There are so many people who would come here, but can't get here with bussing. I know we probably can't get a shuttle bus system like Lincoln Park. What about, bare minimum, getting carpool lists compiled?

**Ms. Stacey Emrock** - If you allow parents to help, they will make the carpooling happen. We're not allowed. We're not allowed to do it.

**Ms. Reno** - You put the QR code at every performance.

**Ms. Rayman** - That's the top of the funnel. We have a sales funnel, and that QR is the top of the funnel.

**Ms. Reno** - Right now, we're doing nothing. For five years, we've been asking to help and you won't let us do anything.

**Ms. Janicki** - The last time a direct mail went out, I received the direct mail and my daughter already went here. Scrub the list. I work in sales and marketing too. I understand that we need to have trackable data. We need to have a CRM database. Yes, we need all of that. We just need to start. I don't want to steal Becky Flaherty's thunder, she has been in fundraising for 25 years. She used to be the president of Big Brothers Big Sisters in Pittsburgh. She reached over a year ago, and on multiple occasions on how to join the board and was met with 0 response. This is a parent that has serious fundraising experience. She sits on national boards, why aren't we using her? I encourage you to engage with us and with Becky. We all bring a little something to the table. We can get through this together, but we need to work together.

**Ms. Kimberlin** - We are a free resource. We are volunteering our professional experience. We are not looking for payment, we are not looking for accolades.

**Mr. Racunas** - I think anyone who is willing to help generate enrollment, the board will not shut it down. The admin actually years ago offered an incentive to generate students. There have been different things tried. The enrollment issue isn't something new.

**Ms. Reno** - We know.

**Mr. Racunas** - I don't know what you've been met with in the past. I think the board and the admin it's something the board will welcome. If you can generate people coming into this school, word of mouth and other experiences, that's exactly what we need.

**Ms. Sefcik** - Word of mouth isn't doing it, Matt.

**Mr. Nick Lenz** - I've given this question a lot of thought. It's challenging for me, I've been here for 3 years. Musical Theatre, when we came in and did Spelling Bee, no one thought we could take home 6 Gene Kellys. It was never a thought in my head. I've never participated in the Kellys, I've never participated. It's been said to me in the past that the Gene Kellys have no real tangible outcome as far as recruitment, enrollment, bringing people in, bringing money in. From my experience, something that is not thought about in that conversation is that 3 years ago, we were not on the map. No one knew who the musical theatre program or the theatre program or even the school was. They just didn't know. People started coming and saying, "Oh, Westinghouse Arts Academy." All I can give you is data. We have trackable data at this point. We sold 662 tickets at Spelling Bee, Joseph sold 1100, this year we sold 1295 tickets. In regard to monetizing, I agree. I wish it was something singular. Hopefully, we establish this track record and at year 5 we will see the community buy in and build monetization from that event. I wanted to contribute that because it's something that I've given a lot of thought to.

**Ms. Karri Handa** - Our daughter came in the year of the pandemic, 2019. She left Brentwood, came here, proved to the rest of Brentwood that she could leave and be a successful student. The next year, she brought another student from Brentwood, the next year, another student, the next year another left his senior year to come to WAA to further his arts education. He was the Supporting Actor nominee for Gene Kelly. Now is a BFA Acting Major and Baldwin Wallace. So my daughter brought \$160,000 from Brentwood school district. And believe me, I enjoy knowing that they were signing that check every month to you. That was word of mouth. A previous employee that was getting alumni going, I said, "Social media, testimonials of alumni, and statistics of alumni. Where they're going." 13 musical theatre seniors graduated last year, 11 got into schools, 6 of them are BFA majors at some of the top colleges in the country. Using those success stories and the success stories of the alumni as they continue.

**Ms. Sefcik** - The other thing we don't emphasize is there are concerns with academics. People say, "We really like the musical theatre program. We really like the digital arts program. We really like the studio arts program. What are the academics?" We don't promote. You go to other high school graduations, and even if it's not vocalized, there may be asterisks next to their name to see who got scholarships. My oldest granddaughter graduated last year. She was a vocal major, is now a biology major at Kent, who gave her a \$50,000 academic scholarship. People need to hear that there are not just scholarships going out to our kids in the arts, that there are academic scholarships. That is where some of the resistance is. We're not promoting that. Doesn't have to be in graduation programs, but it's a concern. Backpacking on what Nick said, this weekend at the performance, there were 2 families that came up to the concession table, one had a 7th grader and one had a 9th grader who came to see the musical. Their kids have been yammering at them to go to our school. We're out there, just not strong enough. There are people who are coming because they are hearing good things about this. You have two potentials there. I know two's not a lot, but in our duck pond, 2 more ducks is great. We have a rather small pond right now. The academic side: I've told you multiple times, Amanda Bateman's story with my student.

**Mr. Pricener** - I've said that to her every time I see them.

**Ms. Sefcik** - But that's not out there, Bill. We have a lot of kids doing well academically as well as through the arts, and people need to know that.

**Mx. Travis Rigby** - Conductor and music director of Chicago. 6th year at WAA. I've seen, like Alea, a lot of change, bad times, good times, and everything that goes with it. I wanted to follow Nick's point a little bit. I think if what we're looking at in terms of monetization is solely based on how many people clicked on a QR code, we're not looking at the full picture. I'm not trying to sound cynical about this, but it's probably coming out that way. I'm glad that Nick had the data.

When I started working here, I think there were 8 or 9 people in the instrumental department. Some of them were majors, some not. There's a concert coming up with close to 40 people just playing instruments. That's not counting the vocal department, which probably has another 30, 40 people represented on stage too. We've grown based on the growth of our reputation. This weekend, a student came up to me 3 times during the course of the performance, before the performance, during intermission, and after the performance. He complimented us on how excited he would be to be in a place like this. Of course I told him, "You CAN be in this. You should apply." He's in the orchestra at Thomas Jefferson High School. Stuff like that is probably not showing up tracking on the website. At the same time, though, there's marketing and stuff that goes out for the musical. I've been here six years, I don't think my concerts haven't been marketed that extensively. It's got the same potential. It's the same kids who played in the pit and got nominated for best student orchestra 3 times. It's the same kids who won best vocal ensemble twice. But there's no marketing for these events. I'd be surprised for someone to tell me when my concert is. It hasn't been announced or publicized in any way. We're talking about enrollment and increasing our publicity, and things like that. But what's actually being done to address that, to change that?

**Ms. Stacey Emrock** - I'd like to apologize to Mx. Rigby. You've been amazing with my student. I'm so sorry I forgot to tell you earlier. I wanted to give you a little story. My daughter started in 8th grade at a brand new dance studio that my best friend opened. Do you know how much help my daughter had? This is a noncompetitive studio. Brand new. There were 8 students at the time that they opened. Jocelyn came here, auditioned in 9th grade, phenomenal. When she participated on stage for the recital, people were blown away. Do you know how many students the next year came? 28 new students came to her studio. I know that doesn't seem like a lot.

**Mr. Pricener** - Oh, yes, it does.

**Ms. Emrock** - Brand new, podunk studio in Apollo. Keep going. This is Jocelyn's senior year, she's been there a couple years. Every time we market that studio, Jocelyn performs. Not only is the name for Westinghouse out there, but the dance click that goes here. We have 210 students because of my daughter. The studio owner will openly admit that it's due to her. We need to get our students out there. They need to be seen. They kind of need to be in your face. The dance department has so many ideas to get them out there. I'm not familiar with the other arts at the school. We need to be in their face. The dancers want to do a flash mob. We need to be more open minded outside of the box. We need to be in people's faces, like CAPA, like Lincoln Park, We need to get our name out there. Parents will help you guys. Parents want to work on this.

**Mr. Lenz** - Because of financial constraints, we don't have the man power. That's frustrating as a teacher, as somebody who wants to see the numbers increase. We have one person doing seven jobs.

**Dr. Lombard** - May I? I was just going to say that. It seems that we need to have a separate meeting about marketing and who can do what and what that plan would look like. So that we can recruit, so our money troubles go away. We have an exorbitant amount of students knocking on our doors. I will, with Alex's help, coordinate another meeting, in person, via zoom, so that we can get all of these ideas. I can't keep writing down all these ideas that everybody has generated. And that is the core issue. It's not about VEX, it's not about anything but marketing. I don't know the facts and figures, but in my estimation, we have done zilch with marketing because we haven't had any money. We're never going to get more students if we don't market in the way that we can. If all we have is us - because we don't have a dedicated person for marketing. If everyone's in favor of that, I would like to propose that as our next step in addition to any other business.

**Mr. Pricener** - Oh, we will hand that off to you. We really do need to get back to the agenda.

**Mr. Jakub** - It was brought up about academics, I've been on the board probably the shortest time of anybody. When I came here, that was probably the big issue. Academics. I will tip my hat to your principal because it has gotten better and better each year.

**Dr. Lombard** - I couldn't do it without the teachers though and their cooperation.

**Ms. Austenne Gniadek** - This woman is the biggest asset this school has seen. I'll follow her to the ends of the earth.

**Mr. Pricener** - Thank you for all of your enthusiasm. Thank you for your suggestions. Thank you for calling the board on the carpet because sometimes that is what needs to happen. As far as monies to go places, that was the first time I've heard this. When the dance department needed money to go on a trip, the board itself got together and raised the money for it.

**Mr. Jakub** - Some of it.

**Mr. Pricener** - We will do whatever we need to if people tell us. That means that the administration needs to tell us. If you're short money, we'll find a way.

#### **b. Motion for Approval of Minutes from the April 3, 2024 Board Meeting VOTE**

**Ms. Anna Very** - They are not prepared for this evening because I need to transcribe the dictation.

**Mr. Pricener** - Tabled for next month.

#### **d. Board Committee Reports - reorganization**

**Mr. Pricener** - We just want to let everyone know that the board is going to be adding additional committees to our original committees Nominating, Finance, Fundraising, and Personnel. I'm just going to read these and give an explanation of each one.

- Policy and Governance - primarily to support the functioning of the board. Goal setting for the board policy review. Legislative Advocacy. Policies, procedure, personnel, and HR
- Education/Student Discipline - reviewing curriculum recommendations, understanding achievement results and programming. Ms. Bernadette, please be on that committee. Materials, resources, instructional art programming, non-art curriculum, extracurricular, and student disciplinary matters
- Operations - primarily support short and long range planning regarding financial matters, technology, facilities, dealing with safety, building and grounds, and finance

We don't need a vote on that, those are just the additional committees, which means we're going to have to recruit more board members, so stay tuned.

## **2. Financial Report**

**Mr. Pricener** - I'm going to call on Ms. Regan to give an overview on the state of the school.

**Ms. Jill Regan** - I honestly don't feel comfortable doing that at this time. I have to be honest, and I'm not going to be honest.

**Mr. Pricener** - Ok, we'll skip that for now. General Business -

**Ms. Emrock** - This is what we want to know.

Ms. Regan - I'm not the business manager.

Mr. Racunas - You're an unpaid consultant.

Ms. Regan - You're right, I am unpaid.

Member of the Public - Then why are you even here?

Ms. Regan - I thought I was coming to help, but instead I was accosted.

Mr. Racunas - Move on from this.

**3. General Business**

Mr. Pricener - Mr. Racunas has done a phenomenal job working with the landlord negotiating a new lease.

Racunas - I've worked with the landlord to restructure our lease payments. I think that's going to generate somewhere around the savings of \$17,500 per month in a reduced lease, so that should help things a little bit. That's the proposed lease amendment.

**a. Motion to ratify the approval of the Lease Amendment VOTE**

Mr. Pricener - Can I have a motion to approve the lease amendment?

<b>MOTION: <u>ratify the approval of the Lease Amendment VOTE</u></b>			
<b>1st: Rayman</b>		<b>2nd: Jakub</b>	
<b>YEA: All</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAINING: 0</b>	<b>MOTION: Carried</b>

**b. Motion to ratify the agreement with JSD Consulting. VOTE**

Mr. Pricener - I said at the beginning that this was an oversight. I literally did think that we had approved that. I truly did. It wasn't until we went back that we found it wasn't. We talked about it, but we didn't necessarily vote on it. That's why it's here tonight. Can I have a motion to ratify the agreement with JSD Consulting?

<b>MOTION: <u>ratify the agreement with JSD Consulting. VOTE</u></b>			
<b>1st: Rayman</b>		<b>2nd: Gibson</b>	
<b>YEA: All</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAINING: 0</b>	<b>MOTION: Carried</b>

**c. Motion to approve the application by Dr. Kelly Lombard for Remake Learning Moonshot Grant VOTE**

Dr. Lombard - The Remake Learning Network is a group of local educators in the Southwestern PA and Tristate area. They are looking at innovative ways to engage students in learning. They have offered for this first time, up to \$70,000 for a Moonshot Grant. I would like to propose the Adobe Certification. There's an easily implementable program that Alea DelPrete has formulated that I would like to submit. Historically, in school business, asking for permission before applying for the grant is what's customary. Don't know if we'll get the grant

Mr. Pricener - So we just need to approve you to apply. It would be nuts if we didn't approve applying for a grant.

<b>MOTION: <u>approve the application by Dr. Kelly Lombard for Remake Learning Moonshot Grant VOTE</u></b>			
<b>1st: Hairston</b>		<b>2nd: Jakub</b>	
<b>YEA: All</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAINING: 0</b>	<b>MOTION: Carried</b>

**4. Report from the School Administration – Dr. Kelly Lombard**

**a. Approval of Program of Studies 2024-2025 VOTE**

**Mr. Pricener** - These are all subject to amendment, correct? If we've got a lot more kids, we would have to amend our program. If we don't get nearly enough kids, we might have to amend our program, is that correct?

**Dr. Lombard** - Yes and no. The program of studies is a listing of all the courses and the course sequence and progressions of each and every program. If we would generate more students, it would just mean we would need more teachers and more sections of these classes. What we have worked on, the teachers, the department heads, Miss Very was the chairperson of coordinating all of these efforts. We have for the first time in our history a very concise curriculum for each and every art program and each and every non-art program. More kids would be in these classes, just more sections. Maybe we would have the problem of where would we put everybody.

**Ms. Very** - We will have that problem. I can safely say that we will have that problem.

**Mr. Pricener** - And what a problem to have.

**Ms. Rayman** - Excellent.

**Mr. Pricener** - If there are less kids?

**Dr. Lombard** - If there are less kids, we would have to look at our program -

**Mr. Pricener** - We're able to amend it, right?

**Dr. Lombard** - Yes.

**Mr. Racunas** - Is this something that can wait? Generally, you would do something like this with the budget. We haven't even discussed the preliminary budget.

**Dr. Lombard** - What we do though is the course requests for the students who are in our possession for next year. They generate the requests for these courses. Some of these courses may not run due to lack of interest, but some of the courses have to run because they are graduation requirements.

**Mr. Racunas** - I understand your curriculum. I haven't looked at the list. But what if there's something on there, you offer it, but then there's not enough to hire a teacher to offer it.

**Dr. Lombard** - Then we don't offer it. This is in hopeful expectation that we have at least the same if not more students. It is contingent upon - because teachers would love to know what they're teaching next year - don't worry about that. Let's worry about students, and how many students are requesting these courses or need these courses. As far as amendment, it's not talking about money or talking about staffing. It's talking about the courses we need to run these programs.

**Mr. Pricener** - Can I have a motion to approve the Program of Studies as Dr. Lombard has presented.

<b>MOTION: <u>Approval of Program of Studies 2024-2025 VOTE</u></b>			
<b>1st: Hisiro</b>		<b>2nd: Rayman</b>	
<b>YEA: All</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAINING: 0</b>	<b>MOTION: Carried</b>

**b. Department Reports**

**Mr. Pricener** - Three minutes!

**Mr. Nick Lenz introduced Ms. Stephanie Tolbert-King, dance teacher.**

**Ms. Tolbert-King** - Dance faculty. This year I organized for our dance department to attend the regional high school dance festival. This was a 5 day trip in Norfolk, VA at Governor’s School for the Arts. I just wanted to quickly go through some thank yous because it wasn’t just me. There were a lot of people that helped to make this possible - chaperones Tracey Casciato, Dana Bethune, and Stacey Emrock. Our families for their support and fundraising efforts. The dance majors in attendance for their fundraising efforts and their hard work. Alex Boyd, Dr. Lombard, Gregory Beal, Anna Very, Kathy Parello, Dr. Lehew, Nick Lenz, the FTO, the School Board, and all faculty and staff for accommodating student absences that week. Students had the opportunity to take master classes with top dance instructors on the East Coast. They had the opportunity to perform, network, audition for college and summer intensives and scholarships. They also attended a college recruitment fair.

***(Ms. Tolbert King outlined students who received accolades, college acceptances, and scholarships.)***

Next year, I plan to organize our school’s attendance for our third year to national high school dance festival at Point Park University. This is the largest dance festival in the US, showcasing excellence in dance since 1992. It is a really big deal for our school to be in attendance at this festival each year because it is by invitation only. It has been an honor and a privilege to plan these festivals the past two years and to arrange them. It’s something that students now look forward to each year. Our school is starting to become recognized at the festival. People are starting to remember Westinghouse. That is something that is really exciting, and I hope to be able to continue to do that. Our spring dance concert is Wednesday, May 22.

**Mr. Nick Lenz** - Mrs. Rebecca Lustig sent in for our ITS troupe. They will be holding their final open mic night on Thursday, May 9. They will be holding their yearly inductions on Friday May 19th. During that time, students that went to the Thespys, which is the PA State Thespian conference, they’ll be showcasing their work there as well, and there will be a cookie and punch reception as well. Mrs. Lustig also sent an overview of what she is doing in classes, which I will also encourage the board to see. She has been personally engaged in the Connected Arts Network Project since January of this year, and in their studies, she’s been focusing on culturally responsive teaching. We’re very excited that she’s getting that training.

Instrumental music program sent in an update for this past weekend, for “Chicago Teen Edition” 19 student orchestra members. This was the largest student orchestra since “All Together Now”, which was in the fall of 2020. This was the second largest orchestra. That orchestra had 24 students.

The music department, both vocal and instrumental, will be putting on a concert this Friday at 7pm. The theme of this concert is “The Evolution of Music” This concert will feature vocal and instrumental music composed as far back as 1,000 years ago and as recently as 2023. It’s shaping up to be a fantastic show.

A quick report on “Chicago Teen Edition”. We are excited to announce that it was a major financial success, which is something we have not seen in the past two years, which is very exciting. From the program ads, corporate sponsors,

ticket sales, and generous donors, the musical brought in roughly \$29,675. We're waiting to see the expenditures and how this matches up with the expenditures, but we stand to have a surplus this year.

**Mr. Pricener** - I want you to share one thing with the group. You mentioned that someone from CMU came up to you.

**Mr. Lenz** - A former mentor of mine, Rick Eddinger who is the chair of musical theatre and acting at Carnegie Mellon University, He came because his child is hopefully going to be attending next year in the studio arts program. Him and his wife came to see the show with their child, and I can read you the message he sent that was very heartfelt.

*(Mr. Lenz read the note to attendees.)*

We're very happy to have his support, and we're very proud of the show.

**Mr. Pricener** - Mr. Boyd, your set and staging was phenomenal.

**Mr. Boyd** - Thank you.

**Mr. Pricener** - It was simple and extravagant all at the same time.

Mr. Boyd - Thank you. If I could add just one thing for the record, Ticket sales brought in about \$20,000, There is another \$5000 in coordination with the FTO in their account right now from our joint fundraiser, so they have about \$5000 that's unaccounted for from the school.

**Dr. Lombard** - I have a few other things for my principal report. This is on our website, but the Keystones are May 15 to May 17. Due to our staffing concerns, we're moving to asynchronous virtual instruction that day for anyone not taking the Keystone exam. The Keystone takes up most of the day, and having all hands on deck to provide the standardization that is required, it is necessary for us to do that. This also helps to make for a conducive assessment environment, in addition. Algebra, almost 70 students. Bio is 120. And Literature is 80 students.

Also, Scheduling. We have the course requests coming in from students, and we will generate a tentative master schedule to see how that pans out with the number of students requesting. Dr. Lehew is chairing the graduation ceremonies and also the prom. Prom is going to be on May 10th.

**Dr. Lehew** - We have over 100 students going.

*(Mr. Pricener offered financial assistance for anyone who needs it.)*

**Dr. Lombard** - Graduation is June 6, 6:30pm.

**Dr. Lehew** - If a board member is coming to graduation, 5:45 so that we can place you in the processional lineup.

**Dr. Lombard** - I forgot to mention. We received a donation from Tribune Review Charities on behalf of Joe Lawrence in the amount of \$4000 to help further our mission of our organization. I would like to present this for a motion to accept this donation for our school.

<b>MOTION: Accept the donation of \$4000 from Tribune Review Charities VOTE</b>			
<b>1st: Jakub</b>		<b>2nd: Hisiro</b>	
<b>YEA: All</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAINING: 0</b>	<b>MOTION: Carried</b>



Mr. Pricener - Are there parameters?

Dr. Lombard - General operating.

Mr. Pricener - Awesome. Unrestricted. We love those.

**5. Recruitment/Marketing Report – Mr. Alex Boyd**

Mr. Pricener - Alex. Three minutes.

Mr. Alex Boyd - We began this week by sending out the acceptance letter to all students who have applied for July 1, 2024 until now. From a directive from the board, we have removed all barriers that may prevent a student from applying. This new process is that students can apply for the school and get academically accepted. Once they are academically accepted, they take placement tests and audition/review their portfolio and program heads to determine what classes are best for them. Removing the audition/portfolio review from the beginning of the process should help us increase our student count faster. All of this is now reflected in the new admissions letter. So as far as accepted students, we're up to 26 now. In the pipeline, we're at 18. And new applications, we're at 35.

*(Ms. Rayman asked for Mr. Boyd to repeat the numbers.)*

**a. Student Activities – No current report**

**7. Personnel**

**a. Motion to ratify the hiring of a substitute vocal teacher, Amber Leitsch 4/29/24 until the end of the 2023-2024 school year. VOTE**

Dr. Lombard - As of Monday, we have hired a short term substitute teacher for the vocal teacher who is on leave for the rest of the school year.

Mr. Pricener - That was very quick.

Dr. Lombard - It's very thankful that we have a lot of artistic people who know artistic people.

Mr. Pricener - I'm so glad we got that position filled so quickly.

<b>MOTION: ratify the hiring of a substitute vocal teacher, Amber Leitsch 4/29/24 until the end of the 2023-2024 school year. VOTE</b>			
<b>1st: Rayman</b>		<b>2nd: Dexter</b>	
<b>YEA: All</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAINING: 0</b>	<b>MOTION: Carried</b>

**8. Parent/Family/Community Outreach**

**a. Report from the FTO**

**(Ms. Sefcik explained the FTO's plan for Teacher Appreciation Week for each day, concessions run for the musical.)**

**Ms. Sefcik** - The FTO has a concern. Customarily, when the musical pays back what was fronted, then the money gets put into an account as seed money for next year's musical. That has not happened in the past. I'm not going to go down that rabbit hole.

**Mr. Pricener** - What happened before, happened before.

**Ms. Sefcik** - We didn't do "Wonderland" here, we did "Chicago", so I won't go down that rabbit hole. Speaking on behalf of the FTO, we would like a guarantee that what is left after the bills are repaid to the school, that the money is set aside for next year's musical. Parent group formed that raised additional money to help get this musical to where it got to on that stage. Feeding 70 kids for 8 days. I want us to start a new path that what these people have worked so hard to do, to earn and the reputation that we gained goes directly to next year's musical. I want them to have the opportunity to start next year with the money. That money needs to be in it's own place.

**Mr. Jakub** - What if we put it in FTO?

**Ms. Sefcik** - It's a 501c3, looking to be a booster program.

**Mr. Boyd** - About \$10,000 coverage from the general fund has also happened in the past.

**Mr. Nick** - Is that a loan or is it given? That will change the surplus that we have.

**Ms. Sefcik** - If we continue to build that surplus, then we don't need to get that up front money from the general fund anymore. Not if that money goes to pay the electric bill. That money needs to be available. My kiddo is a senior next year, and I want her to go out with a bang.

I think you will see that parent group be there for a musical.

*(Ms. Sefcik detailed all of the parent, student, and faculty involvement.)*

Every department was represented in that production.

You mentioned that when you're doing more with committees. You need to recruit Danielle Janicki. You need to get a parent on your board and get parent input. We were giving out the information for the board meeting tonight. You need to get them involved. These are our kids.

Next FTO meeting is Monday the 6th. I encourage the board members to attend. Please show up and hear what we're talking about. A lot of people bring concerns there who aren't comfortable talking at a board meeting.

Gene Kellys are May 25th. If anyone would like to attend, please let Alex know.

*(Mr. Nick explained how the tickets are acquired.)*

## **9. Cafeteria/Food Service, Technology, Facilities, Buildings and Grounds, Security and Safety**

### **a. Report from the School Administrator – Dr. Kelly Lombard and Mr. Alex Boyd**

**Dr. Lombard** - This is a new area for me. We are in need of a rental for A/C for graduation and arts fest. Rental fees for about \$3500. If we do not contract for it, we may not be able to secure it.

*(Ms. Rayman asked for clarification on the price.)*

## **11. Adjournment**

*Ms. Rayman* motioned to adjourn the general meeting.

*Mr. Pricener* ended the general meeting at 8:45pm.

An executive session was held at the conclusion of the general meeting.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Monthly Board Work Session Meeting – May 29, 2024 @ 6:30pm**

**Monthly Board Meeting – June 5, 2024 @ 6:30pm**

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6/17/2024  
Date

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*Will Pricener*  
Board Secretary. President