

## ACA SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

### Meeting # 5 (School Year 2016-2017)

**Thursday, March 16, 2017**

**Attendance:** Irfan Choudhery, Veneranda Sanchez , Dr. Tomeh, Samah Bkhaitan, Nora Bitar, Hana Khorchid, Christine Choudhery, Zaitun Hamdan, Sumaya Abdul Quadir, Dalal Jawad, Badiah Lababidi, Asma Hussain, Robert Lyon, Noor Basharat, Sister Wasilla

**Absentees:** Nancy Elsharaway

Meeting started at 3:45pm

- 1) Duaa' was conducted by Ms. Samah
- 2) Reviewed, Edited, and Approved previous month's Minutes

### **Corrections – Previous February Meeting Minutes**

- Noor Basharat to be added to the attendance list
- Girl's talent show conducted on 11<sup>th</sup> and not 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 2017
- Ms. Wasilla's and Nancy's names were spelled incorrectly

### **Principal's Report:**

- MAP testing in process
- Getting ready to conduct ASPIRE testing after MAP testing
- Arabic day would be celebrated during the next week
- State Quran competition will be hosted at ACA on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 1:00 PM
- Currently working on preparing summer program for 6-12 grades beginning in July of 2017. Depending on the interest and enrollment, ACA may offer a summer program for 1-5 grades also

### **PTA/Sports Committee:**

- Spring Carnival will be celebrated on Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The event will present different varieties of food in addition to fun and games for all different ages
- ACA started collaboration in reference to basketball with YMCA, first game scheduled for this coming Saturday on 03/18/17

### **Security Code**

ACA Safety Committee on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, issued a statement regarding the ongoing challenges in reference to the security code combination for the rear parking lot entry gate. This issue is directly connected to the safety and security of ACA students and staff. A vibrant discussion took place regarding

this key topic. Different Council members expressed views and recommendations of how to secure the security code combination of rear parking lot entry gate.

**Following action items were discussed in this regard:**

- Security code will be changed on a monthly basis. Responsible party: Ms. Samah
- To discuss changing protocol with respect to use of rear parking lot entry gate and the use of the security code combination by Good Tree and Sunday school. Responsible party: Ms. Samah
- To post signage in front for the rear parking lot entry gate warning of the implications of misuse of the security code for staff and students. Responsible party: Ms. Samah.

**Staff and Teacher Dress Code**

This topic was brought into discussion based on the comments made in the Board Shura meeting last month (February 2017) from parents in reference to teachers and staff not following proper dress code based on the current employee handbook.

A vibrant discussion took place regarding this sensitive and complex topic. To initiate this important discussion, the following dress code policy was read by Irfan Choudhery during the meeting with the intention of providing the most updated information regarding this topic to all the Council members.

Following is the dress code policy, which was utilized during the meeting (available on page 20 of the employee handbook).

**DRESS CODE**

Neatness, cleanliness, and modesty in dress are essential in an Islamic school environment. If we want our students, parents, colleagues and public to respect us as serious and professional, we must help by dressing accordingly. Faculty and staff members are required to dress in a high standard of modesty and use good judgement when selecting their attire. All Muslim employees must comply with the Islamic dress code.

Clothing must be non-transparent, loose fitting that covers from the neckline to the ankle. Jeans and flip-flops are not acceptable. All female Muslim employees should cover their hair at all times skirts and dresses should be ankle length. Long sleeves are required. Garments worn over pants should be loose fitting and reach mid-thigh. Hosiery is recommended. Makeup and jewelry should be kept minimal. All male employees should wear polo shirts or dress shirts. Dress slacks, no shorts.

After the policy was read, parents and the student representative commented that teachers and staff should model the behavior, which we expect our students to follow. Since the topic is multifaceted, Sister Badiah suggested that we should divide this topic into two main discussions:

- a) Whether some shape or form of uniform is viable for teachers and staff?
- b) If the answer to the above is yes, what different options and possibilities exist for such a change?

A key topic discussed by various members was pointing out the importance of enforcing current policy regarding the dress code for staff and teachers, while not trying to create new policies and enforcing

uniform on staff and teachers. In addition to other members of the Council, Sister Veneranda emphasized this point clearly more than one time during this discussion.

At the same time, Dr. Tomeh commented that future uniform possibility has two key dimensions, style and color. As a whole, the Principal was supportive of the uniform concept for staff and teacher during this discussion although wanted to explore the different options available in collaboration with other staff members.

After considerable discussion, the following motion was proposed by Sister Badiah and seconded by Sister Hana.

**Motion:**

Teachers and Staff to have uniform requirement at ACA.

**Results of the Motion:**

10 votes in favor of the motion, one against while 2 members abstained. The motion was passed.

After the passage of the motion, it was decided the next step would be collaboratively work within the Council in exploring the different choices and options which might exist to possible uniform requirement for staff and teachers. It was also discussed and agreed that the uniform option will be available to both genders in reference to staff and teachers.

**Action Item:**

All Council members are encouraged in helping to explore different choices and options which might exist in reference to uniform requirements for staff and teachers and share this information with the Council during the April 2017 meeting.

Sister Dalal and Sumaya showed interest in exploring this option, and to bring information and even samples back to the Council during the next meeting.

**Grading Deadlines:**

Irfan Choudhery pointed out the fact that some of the teachers are not entering grades into RenWeb in a timely manner. Delay of timely entry of gradable activities for students into RenWeb causes considerable challenges for students not knowing what their final grade is before the finals. Many times the grade assumed on behalf of the student may be incorrect or wrong because not all gradable activities (assignments, tests course, quizzes, etc.) were entered into RenWeb by the teacher.

The Principal acknowledged the existence of this challenge although added that this behavior is only limited to a few teachers only. She's working with them in order to improve this practice. No specific action item was assigned to this although this is an issue which is chronic in nature and should be looked into again in future.

**Confusing/misleading ACA Email Address:**

Irfan Choudhery pointed out the fact that the current email address (ACA HR-PR Consultant @ AZ Academy.Org) being used for communication to ACA stakeholders is confusing due to the use of terms like: HR and PR in the email address.

It was suggested that to minimize confusion, probably the email address should be updated to something like ACA Communications or ACA Office of Communication.

**Action Item:**

To modify or change the existing e-mail address of ACA HR-PR Consultant @ AZ Academy.Org by adding the term ACA communications or ACA office of communication. Responsible party: Ms. Samah.

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 07, 2017.

Closing to wall was conducted by Irfan Choudhery.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.