



West Virginia Academy, Ltd.  
Governing Board Meeting  
August 17, 2023 | 7:00pm (EST)

**Board Members Attending:** John Treu (J. Treu), Frank Fidler (F. Fidler), Frank Oliverio (F. Oliverio), Allison Woods (A. Woods), Susan Dull (S. Dull), Trista King (T. King), Glenn Larew (G. Larew), Stephanie McWilliams (S. McWilliams)

**Public Delegation(s)**

Colleen—Expressed concern regarding the lack of notification and timely communication of Teacher/Staff changes within grade levels to Parents.

Following expressed concern, lengthy discussion was held regarding the Board’s role, need for notifications, processes, timelines, standards, and grade-level specific needs. General agreement was reached to proceed with a potential policy across all grade levels. J. Treu notes himself, Susan, and Bogie are regularly at these meetings so they can communicate this concern to the Executive Team and add to the already existing checklist for staff members that leave or are terminated.

**Motion:** F. Oliverio moves to direct the Executive Team to propose a policy for Teacher changes and it be included in our next Board Meeting. Seconded by A. Woods.

**Discussion:** None.

**Outcome:** Motion is unanimously approved by the Governing Board.

**I - Approve Meeting Minutes to Prior Meeting(s)**

**Motion:** F. Oliverio moves to approve the 7/27/2023 Board Meeting minutes as circulated. Seconded by A. Woods.

**Discussion:** None.

**Outcome:** Motion is unanimously approved by the Governing Board.

**II– Amendment to Parent-Student Handbook (Cell Phone Policy)**

J. Treu, there has been a practice of how we deal with cell phones in school as they do cause distraction. There is already a policy in place, however, some of the practices have changed a

little bit. This proposal (Addendum 1) is from the Teachers and was drafted by Jennifer Romeo. There are instances where cell phones are used in classrooms for learning, so I would just suggest amending the circulated proposal to include “in some limited circumstances cell phones may be permitted for use in class for projects as expressly provided by a Professor, but such use shall not exceed the purpose of such use, and shall not permit students to use phones outside of the classroom or hallways before or after such class.” J. Treu, does anyone else have any suggestions, comments, or discussion. A. Woods, no I think it is definitely needed.

**Motion:** F. Oliverio moves to approve the proposed cell phone policy with amended language as above. Seconded by T. King.

**Discussion:** None.

**Outcome:** Motion is unanimously approved by the Governing Board.

### **III– Update on PCSB Approval of PRA**

J. Treu, the Charter School Board approved our PRA Amendment to add the Preston County Youth Center. Under our Charter Agreement, we are required to provide notice, however, we didn’t have to amend the agreement. I did ask them if we should amend the Charter and it was recommended to amend the Charter to include the new PRA so that it is very clear and that was approved a couple of weeks ago so now it can be signed and ties out that process.

No formal motions were made in this discussion.

### **IV– Update on Preston County Campus**

J. Treu, I did email an update to the Board, ultimately from two meetings ago, we had received enough survey responses for anticipation of 30-40 students, however, it didn’t pan out that way, and we didn’t know how many survey respondents would progress to fully enrolled kids. We ended up with about 8-10 total students on the first day. We did end up pushing back the start date to 8/10/2023 and then 8/17/2023 for more time for respondents. We did contact everyone via email and phone calls, if possible, to encourage registration. I think we learned this was too short of a registration period, its also a different demographic and we need different methods to get the Students in Preston through. The Executive Team on basis of enrollment numbers and other things, decided it would be better to defer to next year. In fairness to Glenn, he has been working tirelessly to get things ready. We also put a ton of effort in on the Executive side. As a Board, we approved to open a Preston Campus within three years of 3/2022. In terms of opening this fall it was discussed, but formal action wasn’t necessary as the Executive Team has the flexibility to open the Campus when ready.

G. Larew, I’m trying to navigate and learn, and I was very involved through the build-out process. Up through the 7/27/2023 meeting, the numbers were still at 78 prospective students. By 8/1/2023 we were down to 4 prospective students. The big question was funding shortfalls,

and I did offer to provide some grants. I've lived in Preston County for 70 years and my Team of volunteers and active people within the county have noted that there was a lack of communication with getting fully enrolled. I offered an incentive for uniforms and talked to Kelly who was assisting with the Enrollment, however, from 8/1/2023-8/10/2023 she wasn't aware of the incentive which I have a problem with.

F. Oliverio, we have to be very careful about any type of financial incentives.

G. Larew, we did work that out with John and Suji, however, it was still never communicated to Kelly. Classrooms were already set up and we even had people come to the meet and greet last night that thought they were enrolled.

Additional concerns were expressed regarding communication, survey results, registration/enrollment, financing/shortfalls, lack of acceptance of help from available resources, difficulties contacting survey respondents, and interested families in the community.

Following those expressed concerns, lengthy discussion was held regarding the potential to start classes at the Preston County Campus on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Concerns were expressed regarding the 180-day academic year and quality of programs with minimal enrollments. J. Treu noted that 6 out of 10 students who did fully enroll have agreed to shuttling from the Preston County Campus to Morgantown for now.

Further discussion was held regarding classrooms available/finished, growth funding, and possible timelines. J. Treu noted as a Board, we approved to open a Preston County Campus in the next three years and strongly cautioned against an attempted opening on October 1<sup>st</sup> due to an already overwhelmed and busy Executive Team. S. McWilliams noted it is difficult to plan without additional details and information.

Additional discussion regarding funding and fulfillment of pledge agreements was held. The Board agreed that we want our children to have a better education and working together to grow the Preston County Campus is key, suggestion was made to include Glenn in on meetings involving Preston County Campus as he can assist with information and barriers for Preston County families. A Task Force was suggested to improve communication. Also suggested was better communication with the Executive Committee and the Board. S. McWilliams noted the ACF is planning to have events at the Preston County Campus which presents a good opportunity for community engagement. J. Treu indicated that a calendar could be sent for Executive Committee Meetings involving the Preston County Campus. S. Dull indicated the Task Force could host its own meetings, empowering other contacts familiar with Preston County to attend.

G. Larew indicated that the previous approved agreement may need to be changed. J. Treu indicated changes could be proposed and would need to be brought to the Board for possible revisions, ultimately requiring Board approval.

Further discussion was held regarding grade levels, expansion by starting in younger grades, survey results/demand, and timeline for marketing/enrollment.

**Motion:** A. Woods moves to create a Preston County Task Force and appoints Glenn Larew and Roy Boggess to the Task Force, additional recommendation includes inviting Glenn to Executive Committee Meetings as relevant to decisions related to the Preston County Campus. Seconded by F. Oliverio.

**Discussion:** None.

**Outcome:** Motion is unanimously approved by the Governing Board.

#### **V– New/Additional Business**

F. Oliverio notes that Healthworks has an open-gym space and would like to consider the possibility of offering Physical Education courses for Middle and High School Students at that location. General discussion was held, and agreement was reached for F. Oliverio to approach Healthworks regarding potential opportunities.

**Motion:** F. Oliverio moves to adjourn. Seconded by F. Fidler.

**Discussion:** None.

**Outcome:** Motion is unanimously approved by the Governing Board.

**[Minutes approved on 9/21/2023]**

## Addendum 1

# Cell Phones

### 8.7.A Valuables, Electronic Devices and Games

It is not recommended that students or staff bring valuables onto the school campus. West Virginia Academy cannot be responsible for damage to or loss of cell phones or other valuable items. **Electronic games and gaming devices are not allowed** at West Virginia Academy and will be confiscated by faculty if found on campus. Cell phones are distracting to our academic efforts at West Virginia Academy and can be impactful to our safe school culture. Students shall keep their cell phones **in their backpack** from 7:40AM through dismissal at 2:50PM. Students may not have their phones out of their backpack at anytime. This policy extends to smartwatches that can be used for texting or calling. If a student is found using a cell phone in the building or has possession of a cell phone between 8:00AM-2:50PM, faculty will confiscate the phone and put into Homeroom classroom cell phone lockbox. The following is the procedure to confiscate a cell phone from a student (even if the phone allegedly belongs to a friend):

1. The first time a phone is confiscated, the student may retrieve it from the Homeroom lockbox at the end of the day;
2. The second time a phone is confiscated, parent and or guardian will be notified and the student must retrieve it at the end of the school day from the Secondary Student Success Specialist;
3. The third time a phone is confiscated, parent and or guardian can retrieve at the end of the school day from the Associate Director.

We recognize that cell phones are important and effective communication tools for parents and students. But this policy is so that we can ensure cell phones are not used to access the internet after school, in an unsupervised setting, where inappropriate content may be accessed and shared with other students. Students should not group together to watch videos or play games on electronic devices while waiting on the bus or in the car rider line. Students who are using their cell phone outside of these places after school will be given reminders. Students who persist in using their phones after school outside the guideline may have their phone confiscated and a parent conference may be initiated. This policy extends to smartwatches, tablets, or any other internet accessing device when being used for activities like texting, calling, social media, internet browsing, etc.