**DFA School Council Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 4:00PM**

**Present:** Renee Kelly (Principal), Gina Bassford (Lead Counselor), Jimmy Bower (Teacher), Latanya Jackson (Teacher), Laura Irwin (Parent), Chris Melcher (Parent), Jeremy Miller (Parent), Donghang “DH” Zhang (Parent) (Note: This was a hybrid meeting, and some members participated via Zoom)

**Agenda Items:**

1. The council discussed routine issues on its agenda for regular meetings, including reaching out to new members and how the council can help with the school.
   1. Mr. Chris Melcher will connect the people at Augusta University with Dr. Kelly to explore the possibility of having an AU day at DFA and the possibility of inviting DFA students to visit AU. On issues related to AU, the possibility of offering dual enrollment classes by AU on DFA campus was also discussed.
   2. The council discussed the issue of having more new members. Dr. Laura Irwin offered to reach out to Ms. Courteney Hatcher to invite her to join the council.
   3. Dr. DH Zhang will look into posting an “ad” to list all school council members
   4. The council welcomes MS. Latanya Jackson to join the council and wants to thank Ms. Tiffany Tatem for her service on the council.
2. The council decided to have two more meeting in Spring 2023. One on Feb 1 2023 and one on Wednesday April 12.
3. The council discussed in length the new grading policy.
   1. Dr. Kelly explained the new grading policy to the council. One particular point among these changes is about the fact that students can turn in late homework without any penalties.
   2. Parents on the council shared some concerns about the potential drawback of this policy – a student can fall too much behind with homework and will have a hard time to climb out the hole due to being too much behind schedule. Another concern was that students may fail to develop good study habits without a nudge of losing points for late homework.
   3. Teacher representatives on the council also expressed concerns about more students failing because of misusing the opportunities under the new grading policy. Also, too much a cumulation of late work at the end can result too heavy a work load for teachers at the end of the semester when students may need more help.
   4. Parents suggested that more frequent report cards or other communications with parents might be able to mitigate these issues.
   5. The possibility that the new grading policy can have pros and cons and the balance can vary from school to school. A magnet school like the DFA may be different in certain aspects in its student population and may benefit from certain flexibilities as to how the policy should be implemented. Parents expressed support for some policy changes for magnet schools.
4. The council discussed the issue abut engaging parents of low achieving students.
   1. DFA organized classes for parents for stress management
   2. Tools such as Infinite Campus can help parents but may be insufficient
   3. The council agreed to keep working on this issue and searching for ideas
5. Construction Update – the school has received designs for the Blackbox.
6. Any additional business – no addition business discussed beyond agenda items.