

Community Council Meeting minutes 4/22/10

The sole purpose of coming together this month was to further address and explore the possibility of changing the name of our school. Several reasons were given by attendees that included addressing the need to align the name more with the charter to express that we are 'Arts based', that we fit more the 'expeditionary' school model (versus the harbor method) and are moving toward an emphasis on environmental issues by integrating the neighboring wetland into our curriculum. People are somewhat unaware that we are even a K-8 public charter school as opposed to say a private school that charges a hefty tuition.

It was also brought up that we may be limiting the number of possible enrollees by centering solely on the connection with Garden City versus looking at a broader Treasure Valley – type appeal. Concerns brought up included the costs involved in a name change, the impression that perhaps we would be distancing ourselves from our Garden City roots and the fact that we might be taking a step back by pursuing a name change at this time (and have to go through a new period of orienting and marketing ourselves to the community so that people don't think we are a new school).

No one at the meeting wanted to sever any ties or damage any relationship that had been forged to this point with the Garden City community, and as such, in the recommendations that follow, some of the choices do not change radically from the current name. If anything, we want to continue the close working relationship we have with the city and larger community as a whole. We felt as though both GCCS and Garden City have grown in positive ways since our relationship began several years ago.

The group divided into two teams represented by staff, board members and parents who then brainstormed some options. Once we came back together, the merits of each option were discussed and then voted on by the larger group. The following list represents the variety of choices and their representative number of votes that essentially wrapped up the meeting. It was suggested that these suggestions would be taken to the next month's meeting and looked at by the greater GCCS community for further review and refinement.

On a personal note, I'd like to extend my thanks to Wren Nicks – one of our parents whose research and ideas served as a jumping off point for group discussions as well as all those in attendance for their passionate ideas and willing participation in the process.

List of possible names for the school (as well as other discussion items):

- The following terms were discussed and viewed as possibly being integrated into the name of the school – "Muse", "Summit", "Wetlands", "Clarion", "Conservatory", as well as trees that are native to river corridors (Willow, Cottonwood, and Aspen).

These were the names given/brainstormed by a variety of the members present:

- Muse Arts Academy or Muse Arts Charter – 8 votes
- Expedition Arts Academy – 5 votes
- Academy of Learning Arts – 4 votes
- Learning Arts Charter School – 4 votes
- Garden City Arts Academy – 3 votes
- 3 Rivers Conservatory – 3 votes
- 5 Rs Charter School – 3 votes
- Treasure Valley Arts Charter – 1 vote
- Garden City Arts Charter – 1 vote
- River Arts Academy – 1 vote

A late addition that was spurred by the broad appeal of the name of the new “Galileo Math and Science School” in Eagle that was brought forward by a parent subsequent to the meeting was the inclusion of another figure from history that is known both for his artistic as well as scientific endeavors – Leonardo DaVinci.

Here were the suggestions that involved using his name (although I am not aware of the legality of taking an important historical figure and applying it to a school name). That will require a little more research. On a side note, there are many schools throughout the U.S. that use the DaVinci name in the title of their school – whether it be public (magnet or charter) or private.

DaVinci Arts Academy
DaVinci School of the Arts
DaVinci Academy of Arts and Sciences

You are welcome to send your feedback to Michael Tetrault, the parent rep to the board by e-mailing him at mtetrault@cableone.net