Business Plan – Succession Plan

Succession plan for the corporate board:

In the event of a vacancy on the corporate board, the position will be filled on the basis of expertise, demonstrated dedication to the mission of the school, and invitation by other members. The goal for membership is that there is expertise in education, financial matters, legal matters, and a personal connection with the school, either as a parent, student, or employee. Membership will be confirmed by unanimous vote of the members. In the event that the president retires, resigns, or for other reasons is no longer able to serve, a new president will be elected by the members from the members of the corporate board. The same will be true in filling other positions on the board. Since as a matter of practice the president of the corporate board is also the director of the school, special consideration will be made in the event of the vacancy occurring at the level of president, as follows: Once a vacancy of the director of the school is filled by outside search, that person will automatically become a member of the corporate board. Whether this person would become president of the corporate board is a matter of election by board members.

Succession plan for instructional leadership team:

In the effort to ensure that teachers are highly qualified (by the state's definition and according to AdvancED [our accrediting agency]), we will continue our practice of requiring two outside professional development experiences for each teacher each year – in an area chosen by the teacher but which can be demonstrated to be valuable not only to that teacher's development, but to the organization as a whole as well. Our parent teacher organization budgets a certain amount each year to assist teachers in paying for these programs. We will work to make sure the PTO continues with that support. In addition, our instructional leaders will continue to bring in outside professional development programs, e.g., recently, an expert in writing across the curriculum and a consultant for data analysis to assist in interpreting our testing strengths and weaknesses.

Our version of an incentive plan will be continued and refined. All teachers undergo an evaluation process designed by our teachers. The process allows our teachers to highlight their strengths and yearly contributions in several categories. High scores are rewarded with merit/performance pay. The

process generates three categories of awards, with the top-tier teachers receiving the most. Though the process has worked well for us, we have discussed refinements that would yield, for example, clearer distinctions among categories observed. The result, we hope, will be a clear path for teachers to follow to achieve the top tier.

Foothills Academy, as a relatively small school, does not recognize traditional department heads. However, as we continue to refine our programs, area leaders will emerge and be compensated for their work. This has happened in math, where one person has risen to a position of leadership. In the sciences, one-person leadership is difficult since we have both middle school and high school on one campus. In the effort to avoid always rewarding the high school instructional leader, we will follow a path of having a leader at middle school and one at high school. In social studies and English, the team approach works best. It is or should be understood that, whether the teacher is a subject-area leader on his/her own or as a team member, leadership is recognized through the evaluation process, and hence there is incentive to be a leader.

Our plan for bringing in new (new to us – we prefer at least three years' experience) highly qualified teachers will respond to a unique situation: Some of the entrenched "old guard" at Foothills Academy are nearing retirement age. We recognize that if several were to retire at once (two or three), those people might be difficult to replace. In addition, since we offer dual enrollment classes through Scottsdale and Mesa Community Colleges, our senior level teachers must hold a master's degree in the subject to be offered for dual enrollment. Our plan has four dimensions:

1. Cultivate substitutes with strong credentials. (In the past, we've hired from our substitute pool with great success.)
2. Keep in contact with human resource agencies that list a strong cadre of highly credentialed teachers looking for jobs.
3. Follow up on word-of-mouth reports of people who are known to be excellent teachers. (Our environment has proven to be attractive to teachers who prefer a college preparatory setting.)
4. Use contacts in colleges and universities to identify candidates with advanced degrees who might wish to teach high school seniors at a college level.

Finally, we will refine our process of identification of appropriate candidates who have sent inquiries and/or resumes to us throughout the year. This will involve following up on any and all applicants who meet our minimum requirements. Good candidates may be lost by virtue of the time of year in which they have inquired about a position and/or sent a resume. We currently begin looking at applicants of this sort in the spring. We'll enhance our process by making the identification of qualified candidates a year-round effort.