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4 Colorado ● Montana ● North Dakota ● South Dakota ● Utah ● Wyoming

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6 Approved Minutes – Approved on 1/27/12
7 ASPIRE Board Meeting
8 October 8, 2011
9 Submitted by: Lori Brown-Wirth

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11
12
13 **Present**

14 Dawn Eckhardt – ASPIRE President, Lynne Brown, ASPIRE Past President, Rachel
15 Martinez - ASPIRE President-Elect, John Shafer – ASPIRE Treasurer, Lori Brown-
16 Wirth – ASPIRE Secretary, Nickie Archibeque - Colorado State President; Zach Hawkins
17 - Montana State President, Lori Larson – North Dakota State President, Cody McMichael
18 - South Dakota State President, and Lindsay Beddes - Utah State President; Sandy
19 Straley – Wyoming State President

20
21 **Also Present:**

22 Heath Alexander – Council for Opportunities in Education, Henry Ornelas - Colorado
23 President-Elect, Dugan Coburn – Montana President-Elect, Tina Ludens – South Dakota
24 President-Elect, Craig Harter – Utah President-Elect.

25
26 **Call to Order**

27 The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. on October 8, 2011 by President Dawn
28 Eckhardt. Lindsay Beddes was appointed Parliamentarian.

29
30 **Approval of 5/10/11/Minutes**

31 Minutes were reviewed for the May, 2011 ASPIRE Board Meeting. One correction:
32 Line 173; Correct the spelling of Dave Megquire.

33
34 **Motion**

35 A motion was made by Lynne Brown to approve the minutes with corrections. Lindsay
36 Beddes seconded the motion and all voted in favor and the amended minutes for the May
37 2011 minutes were approved.

38
39 **Introductions**

40 Introductions were made around the room.

41
42 **COE Update**

43 Heath Alexander proceeded to give an update for the Council for Opportunity in
44 Education (COE), giving a brief history of his TRiO experience. He distributed and
45 reviewed two hand-books related to advocacy and media. Heath said that both are in late
46 draft mode, and that COE asks for our feedback on them.

47

48 Heath reminded the board that last year, the two major issues stressed by COE were in
49 regard to media and alumni development. He discussed how these handbooks may be
50 useful in helping ASPIRE advocate for TRiO programs. Heath shared some of his own
51 experiences with congressmen stating that they do read articles we write, especially when
52 their offices are mentioned.

53
54 Discussion ensued on Op Eds and their importance in marketing our programs. Many
55 positive articles are needed. Heath encouraged Board Members to continue their good
56 work with media relations. As leaders, State Presidents should find others within their
57 states and region to help complete media and alumni projects. COE also has Op Ed
58 templates we can utilize. Heath noted that Op Eds are often best around holidays and
59 important events. Take local events and apply them to TRiO. Heath reminded the Board
60 that he and COE are here to assist.

61
62 Heath commented on concerns about the volatile climate in Washington DC right now.
63 This all plays into the media piece and the importance of advocacy. This is also an
64 election year, which is a concern for elected officials. Heath further discussed how the
65 handbooks he distributed can help in our advocacy efforts.

66
67 Heath reported that while TRiO has not been cut, 46 educational programs have been cut
68 this year. Continue to tell our congressmen that we report to many TRiO students,
69 parents, schools, etc. They prefer to cut programs that will not have people complaining
70 and fighting. It is important that we keep people engaged in speaking up. We do have
71 power. We must remain prepared and organized.

72
73 We must keep focusing on the media and our role as leaders is to relay the message to our
74 people to be involved and remain active. We cannot do this alone. Heath reminded us to
75 use COE and their resources as much as possible.

76
77 Discussion included efforts in Washington DC to reduce unemployment. TRiO is asking
78 for \$500M to help get people back to work within a year by investing in EOC.

79
80 Thanks were given to Heath and COE for all they do for ASPIRE. Heath acknowledged
81 the difficulty in getting the masses of TRiO to understand their power and how they can
82 help. He also noted that normally we ask for increases, but this year our focus is on not
83 being cut.

84
85 Rachel discussed the importance of information sharing and every person making regular
86 contacts – whether by e-mail, calls, etc. The Head Start movement was discussed and
87 how their people rallied and came together which led to their increases. TRiO is now on
88 the chopping block and we need to come together as ASPIRE.

89
90 Zach noted that areas of opportunity arise in watching for articles that may give us the
91 opportunity to comment with op eds, showing how TRiO helps. Discussion ensued on
92 the importance of alumni and participants becoming active voices.

93

94 Before leaving, Heath encouraged us to let congress know that we have the influence and
95 backing of thousands of participants – that we are not just one person. The handbook
96 “Guide for the Powerless” will help us understand this. The only way we have power is
97 through numbers. Heath and COE want to help with organizing people in our states and
98 region. The strongest states are those with the most people working to get the word out.
99

100 **President’s Report**

101 President Dawn Eckhardt reported that the ASPIRE Annual Report is now on the
102 website. The Annual Report includes state reports and President’s Report. She
103 congratulated our region for meeting and exceeding Fair Share this year at 136%.
104 ASPIRE is the second highest region in the country in meeting Fair Share.

105

106 Dawn was able to attend most of the state meetings in 2011. She stated she is happy to
107 report that many people are attending LDI this year; at COE last month and here at the
108 Utah conference.

109

110 COE and ASPIRE State Initiative funds were well represented. John noted that if
111 matching funds have not yet been received by states, it means a bill has not yet been sent
112 to him.

113

114 Dawn shared some of the specifics from the Annual Report, which was shown on the
115 overhead projector.

116

117 Mike Wade was COE Treasurer 2009-2011. Amy Verlanic will be assuming that role for
118 2011/2012. Dawn noted that ASPIRE is the only association that has not had a COE
119 Chairman but has served well with Treasurers. Dawn, Rachel and Lynne have served on
120 many COE committees. Dawn thanked Rachel and Lynne for stepping up this year.
121 ASPIRE has a great reputation and great leadership.

122

123 Dawn noted that federal updates are discouraging, but if we focus on the good things we
124 are doing, we will come out of this. Our region did well with ETS and EOC. Colorado
125 lost one ETS program, but also gained one. Upward Bound is the next program up for
126 renewal. Money is an issue.

127

128 Dawn collected \$10 from the ASPIRE Board members for the ASPIRE Board
129 advertisement, as it is tradition for the sitting board to personally sponsor it each year.

130

131 Dawn informed everyone of the 10 for 10 campaign supporting COE. Commitments are
132 due by December 31, 2011. New forms also include an “ongoing contribution” box.
133 This form will be distributed throughout the conference, and can also be found on the
134 COE website. Incentive for states to meet their goal is the registration fee waiver to
135 attend Policy Seminar to be given to a State President or new attendee, with the
136 expectation that they attend the State Leaders Caucus prior to the seminar. This waiver is
137 worth \$500. Dawn distributed forms and encouraged State Presidents to encourage
138 participation.

139

140 **Conference Update**

141 The Board reviewed highlights from the Committee Report by 2011 conference Chair,
142 Jami Bayles. Utah is doing a great job of raising money. Lindsay Beddes reported on the
143 changed format for the Newcomer Reception, which will be a continental breakfast.
144 Forty-eight participants are anticipated. Conference evaluations will be done completely
145 on-line. An e-mail will be sent to everyone at the end of the conference and will be
146 comprehensive.

147

148 Dawn shared expectations of the Board during the conference.

149

150 **Treasurer's Report**

151 John Shafer presented the ASPIRE Region Budget. Net assets for 2010 were
152 \$129,848.34. ASPIRE received approximately \$18,000 in membership fees after state
153 allotments. We received \$13,655 in personal memberships and \$10,700 in project
154 memberships. Personal donations were down. The conference budget is \$19,960 higher
155 than what was budgeted. Total income is \$21, 349.53 higher than what was budgeted.

156

157 John summarized general expenses. He reminded the board that at the last board
158 meeting, they elected to postpone the audit until the end of his term as Treasurer.
159 General expenses show that we spent \$6,192.79 less than we budgeted. Committee
160 expenses were \$2,770.05 less than what was budgeted. Total income for 2010 was
161 \$124,849.53. Total expenses were \$89,456.96. ASPIRE's net gain is \$35,392.57; thanks
162 in huge part to the success of the 2010 conference in Wyoming.

163

164 As of September 30, 2011, the ASPIRE checking account has \$148,214.02 and the
165 savings account balance is \$1,519.35. ASPIRE also has \$50,000 in a CD. Net assets are
166 currently \$199,733.37. John pointed out that these numbers do not mean a lot right now,
167 as the 2011 conference will change numbers considerably. John went through the
168 Treasurer's Report line by line.

169

170 We are currently paying nearly 8% in credit card processing fees per transaction. This is
171 a serious issue that must be addressed. Dawn noted that attorney fees were a one-time
172 fee for an attorney to review our By Laws and Operating Guidelines for compliance with
173 North Dakota laws now that we are incorporated in north Dakota. So far, we anticipate
174 an approximate \$18,000 profit for this year.

175

176 **Recess**

177 The Board took a short recess at 11:06 am.

178

179 **Reconvene**

180 The Board reconvened at 11:23 am.

181

182 **Treasurer's Report Continued**

183 John reviewed a chart he developed with numbers from previous conferences. Dawn
184 noted that this shows the importance of the conference on the ASPIRE budget.

185 Accounting fees have dropped considerably since the Treasurer is now doing the
186 accounting.

187
188 Many thanks were given to John Shafer for all his work over the last four years. John
189 also gave credit to his supervisor, Lynne Brown for allowing him the time to work on
190 ASPIRE activities. John reported that he will be happy to help the new Treasurer as
191 needed and will be available to work with them step by step.

192

193 **Development Committee Report**

194 The Development Report, put together by Carol Gritts, is on page 32 of the Annual
195 Report. ASPIRE contributed 136% of Fair Share for COE. The report includes a
196 breakdown of Project memberships by state for the current year.

197

198 Rachel gave kudos to Carol, Lynne, and Dawn for their work making calls and working
199 behind the scenes getting requests made to projects and people in ASPIRE helping to
200 make Fair Share. The report also includes a list of personal donations. It was noted that
201 the new Fair Share year began September 1, 2011.

202

203 **Membership Committee**

204 Lori Larson reported that ASPIRE had 378 members in 2010-11. This number is 29 less
205 than the previous year. This drop was due in part because of loss in staff, but the
206 majority was due to loss of student memberships. The majority of membership drops are
207 in Utah and South Dakota. Lori said she will work with them. "Friends of Alumni"
208 memberships are going up.

209

210 Lori reminded everyone that membership years can be caught up, but that the funds will
211 be posted for the current fiscal year. So far this year, we have 158 members, but many
212 people will pay their membership at the conference this week. Lori expects 224 members
213 by the end of the conference. Lori will be at the Registration Table during the conference
214 registration.

215

216 **Government Relations**

217 Cheryl Kingsbury continues to do a great job of taking national information and breaking
218 it down for us.

219

220 All the states were represented at Policy Seminar. This was a challenging year due to
221 budgets and new legislative members. The need to educate our leaders about TRiO was
222 reiterated. Progress is being made on the government relations front. TRiO was
223 represented in every legislative session.

224

225 TRiO appropriations were discussed. They were lower in 2011 than in 2010 but we do
226 still exist. Dawn noted that we will continue fighting as too many students are counting
227 on us.

228

229 **Elections Committee**

230 Elaine Metcalfe chairs this committee. This has not been a normal year since positions of
231 both President-Elect and Past president needed to be filled mid-year due to the departures
232 of Tammy Ward and Ryan Ross. Rachel will still to be elected to the office of president,
233 and others may still run for the office. Rachel noted that she was already planning to run
234 for President-Elect this year, so she was ready.

235

236 Derek Sporbert accepted the nomination of President-Elect for the upcoming year.
237 Currently, there are no nominees for Treasurer. As leaders, we need to work on
238 identifying and encouraging people who can accept the opportunity and responsibility to
239 serve in leadership roles. Discussion followed related to the possibility of not having a
240 candidate for the office of Treasurer step forward during the business meeting.

241

242 **Awards Committee**

243 Dawn reviewed Juli Larson's list. Winners of the Rising Star and Art Quinn awards will
244 be announced during the conference this week. TRiO Achievers have been notified and
245 invited to the TRiO Achievers Luncheon. This is the first year that 35 year service
246 awards will be given. Zack discussed recognition for Ray Carlisle and Kathy Felker.

247

248 **Financial Aid Committee**

249 Cody McMichael chairs this committee. At the May Board Meeting, we chose to change
250 the focus of the committee to Financial Literacy. Cody hopes to work with the President
251 in making this an active committee. He plans to coordinate with his own program and
252 wants to develop a financial literacy guidebook by January 2012 for the State
253 conferences. This will help students, directors, and staff by sharing information and
254 knowing what information has the most impact for students. He hopes to have a good
255 workshop ready for the 2012 conference in Billings.

256

257 Rachel reiterated that we do need to become experts in the area of financial literacy.
258 Cody stated that it has been a learning process of what students do not know. Zach
259 reported that he has been hearing concerns from students and their families in regard to
260 education debt and the costs of college. It is good to break down fears. Cody also noted
261 that the majority of identity theft happens to young people between ages 19-24. People
262 need to be informed. He encouraged everyone to share promotional information on
263 financial literacy.

264

265 Dawn thanked everyone for their work on the Score Cards. Dawn and Rachel reported
266 having discussed appointing co-chairs for all committees. This will help strengthen
267 committees by having a second person in charge. This is a topic for discussion at a future
268 meeting.

269

270 **Recess**

271 With no objections, the Board recessed for lunch at 12:15 pm.

272

273 **Reconvene**

274 The Board reconvened at 1:34 pm.

275

276 **State Reports**

277 Dawn called for State Reports. Nickie Archibeque gave the updates for Colorado. Zach
278 Hawkins shared the state report for Montana. Lori Larson summarized the North Dakota
279 activities. The South Dakota report was highlighted by Cody McMichael. Lindsay
280 Beddes updated the Board on the conference and state activities for Utah. Sandy Straley
281 gave the Wyoming state report.

282

283 **501(c)3 Update**

284 The 501(c)3 umbrella package was once again presented to the Board. Dawn shared a
285 brief history for newcomers. Beginning in 2006, each state was encouraged at the
286 national level to get non-profit status and tax exemption for the purpose of soliciting
287 corporate donations. Attorney Paul Schierer, who had submitted our original application
288 for an umbrella 501(c)3 status, realized that a \$3000 application fee had been overlooked.
289 Last year, the Board voted to pay this fee and proceed. The check was sent to the
290 attorney, but has not yet been cashed. Meanwhile, the Region is still tax-exempt. If a
291 state wants to accept a donation, payment should be made out to ASPIRE, Inc. with a
292 notation that it is for a specific state. In this way, the donation is tax deductible. Per our
293 accountant, all states are covered in this process.

294

295 Dawn is now asking the Board to consider not continuing with the 501(c)3 umbrella
296 application process. Many states have learned that they will not be allowed tax free
297 purchases even with individual tax exempt status. Lindsay questioned taking the issue to
298 the membership at large, and Dawn clarified that this was originally a Board action and
299 not a membership decision. Much discussion ensued.

300

301 **Motion**

302 Lindsay Beddes moved to table discussion of the 501(c)3 until the Wednesday Board
303 meeting to allow discussion at state meetings on Tuesday. Cody seconded the motion
304 and discussion was tabled.

305

306 **Cvent**

307 Dawn gave background on Cvent. ASPIRE has a five-year contract with Cvent. A
308 contract year is March 10th through March 9th. Cvent is used for regional conference
309 registrations, as well as for the larger states: Colorado, Montana, and Utah, for their state
310 meetings. Montana also added a Best Practices Conference this year, which raised Cvent
311 costs. Montana covered the additional fees.

312

313 Dawn requested that states begin registrations for their State meetings after March 10th in
314 order to avoid additional costs for this contract year. She asked the states to check with
315 her before that date to see where the numbers are.

316

317 **Operating Guidelines**

318

319 Changes were suggested for the Operating Guidelines - Section 3.3 Site of Board
320 Meetings. The Board Meeting Schedule for the next six years will be as follows:

321

Year	January Meeting	May Meeting	Annual Conference
2011-12	Colorado (2013)	Montana (2012)	Montana
2012-13	North Dakota (2014)	Colorado (2013)	Colorado
2013-14	South Dakota (2015)	North Dakota (2014)	North Dakota
2014-15	Wyoming (2016)	South Dakota (2015)	South Dakota
2015-16	Utah (2017)	Wyoming (2016)	Wyoming
2016-17	Montana (2018)	Utah (2017)	Utah

329

330 Changes were suggested for 2.6 Treasurer. Line 273. Remove reference to telephone
331 cards as we no longer use them.

332

333 Section 2.6 Line 283 “Send payment requests to State Treasurer. Move the following
334 remarks to 11.9 Administration of State Accounts.

335

336 Add “Requests for payment using state funds should be sent from the originator to the
337 State President and to the State Treasurer for approval signatures. Signed payment
338 requests are sent to the Regional Treasurer for check to be issued from ASPIRE. The
339 State Treasurer sends a copy of the approved request to the regional Accountant [10/11]”

340

341 Add “Requests for payments using regional funds are sent from the originator to the
342 Regional President. Signed payment requests are sent to the Regional Treasurer for
343 checks to be issued from ASPIRE. The Regional President sends a copy of the approved
344 request to the regional Accountant [10/11]”

345

346 Section 2.8 Line 390 – remove “officers” and add “Board members.”

347

348 **Motion**

349 A motion was made by John Shafer to approve the suggested changes to Operating
350 Guidelines. Zach Hawkins seconded the motion and the suggested changes were
351 approved.

352

353 The Board reviewed 4.4 – “Elections by Mail” in case it becomes necessary this year to
354 do elections by mail for the Regional Treasurer position. Discussion ensued on voting by
355 mail and by e-mail. The Board hopes this will not be an issue.

356

357 Review of the Membership section of Operating Guidelines was tabled until the January
358 Board Meeting.

359

360

361 **Old Business**

362

363 **Dun & Bradstreet**

364 Lindsay Beddes explained the importance of ASPIRE having a Dunn & Bradstreet listing
365 for charitable donors. In the private sector, every corporation has a Dunn & Bradstreet
366 number and listing. Prospective donors were asking why ASPIRE does not have a

367 listing. ASPIRE had a number but must pay a registration fee for a listing. John made a
368 recommendation that ASPIRE pay the \$229 activation fee.

369

370 **Motion**

371 Zach Hawkins moved that ASPIRE pay the one-time \$229 activation fee for a Dunn &
372 Bradstreet listing. Lori Brown-Wirth seconded the motion and it passed. John will
373 proceed with accomplishing this task.

374

375 **COE Table**

376 Wyoming State President Sandy Straley commented on the challenge for small states to
377 pay an equal share of the COE table for ASPIRE. She asked about the possibility of
378 considering a pro-rated amount for smaller states for next year. The Board will take it
379 into consideration.

380

381 **New Business**

382 President-Elect Rachel Martinez stated that she has a goal of getting TRiO more well-
383 known throughout the region during the next year.

384

385 **Motion to Adjourn**

386 Dawn entertained a motion to adjourn. Lynne Brown so moved. Lindsay seconded the
387 motion and the Regional Board Meeting of October 8th, 2011 was adjourned at 3:17 pm.

388

389

390

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394