

SOAR Charter School Board Meeting
October 10, 2014

Date, Time and Place: October 10, 2014, SOAR 4800 Telluride Street, Building 4,
Denver Colorado 80249

Attendance of Board Members:

Present: Rona Wilensky, Ethan Hemming, Shelli Brown, William
Weintraub, Rosann Ward

Present by phone:

Absent: Ellin Keene, Sue Sava, Brad Fischer

Quorum? Yes

Also in attendance: Marc Waxman, Lacei Bixby, Sonia Sisneros

Members of the public in attendance: Claudia Gutierrez

Meeting brought to order - Bill moved, Rona seconds 8:52 AM

Agenda

8:45 Consent Agenda

- Introductions
 - Claudia Gutierrez (SOAR Parent) introduced as a new possible board member.
- September Minutes
- Financial Packet
 - Comments made about finances kept up really well.

Shelli moved, Bill seconds 8:58 AM

9:00 School update

- Dashboard
 - Marc didn't put in PD numbers in on purpose because he wanted to talk through PD.
 - Beth in ELL and teacher coaching.
 - Gianna in for several short visits working on literacy, SEL & PARCC work.

9:15 SPF Presentation

- Math
 - Tricky to get useful data out of because it is end of the year standards so it's hard to tell what kids need to learn next.

- Material related to the renewal process gets presented later on. Initial parent/school meeting happens on Monday, 10/13. “SPF Family Meeting”
 - Discussion of how the SPF meeting should go & the slides
- SPF: principal portal with scores reviewed.
 - Parent ambassadors to help assist thinking through how best to explain how the SPF is calculated.
 - Summary scorecard
- Discussion of possible “non-renewal”
 - All schools going through the renewal process have to have a parent meeting.
 - All schools need to have a parent meeting about the SPF.
 - DPS is required to be at the meeting and they are listing “nonrenewal” as a possible outcome. This isn’t entirely accurate because we are not a candidate for nonrenewal.
 - The issue is that parents will see this and then the earliest we will get the true outcome is 2-4 weeks out after that.
- The site visit
 - Instruction is not yet consistent – the balance of providing support and oversight of what they learn.
 - Teachers mentioned in their interviews that they need to ask for coaching as opposed to it being mandatory.
 - It could be that we have the choice & the district mandates it.
 - Marc is wrapping up individual observations & giving feedback to teachers.
 - Marc is doing formal & informal walkthroughs with teachers right now.
 - Marc has submitted a \$50k grant to increase Gianna & Rachael’s time for onsite coaching in math & literacy.
 - The OSRI report was a snapshot; it’s not a touchstone to what’s really going on inside of the school. It provided some possible trend lines but we want to make sure we’re not getting buried under this document.
 - It also pointed out, that there is a lot on Marc’s plate – this is the basis for the request of more time with Gianna and Rachel. The end of November will be a good checkpoint to see how Marc’s workload is after the formals.

9:30 Succession Planning

- SOAR Leadership succession planning
 - Talking through the meeting that Marc, Rona & Sue had
 - Worst case scenario – school founders being led by board
 - If we needed to bring someone in, they will want their own level of how things are run.
 - Be open to change – things don’t always need to be ran as they have been in the past.

- If someone new came in, how long would it take & how would you learn to trust them, etc.
 - Board knows as much as the executive committee at this point.
 - Who is the back up? How far apart is the #1 & #2?
 - Strong bench = strong organization
 - Reinforce development of teacher “ladder/pipeline” & build teacher buy-in, capacity and understanding – strong strategy, building staff up, maintaining staff – competency of this staff will make this work.
 - Teacher leaders – people who aren’t in the classroom all of the time. Maybe adding more administration leader pipeline needs to involve relationship building between leaders & the board. Small “L” and big “L” – leadership vs. Leadership.
 - Marc’s next item is to work on what will teacher pipeline look like (look at budget process).
- Think about “Board actions” (if there’s an emergency & Marc isn’t here anymore).

9:45 Board Education

- Common Core Standards and PARCC
 - Watched Common Core video & had discussion around it.
 - We hired experts to rewrite our reading, writing & math curriculum.
 - In every grade level, we made a reading/writing/math lead. They met with each expert to make each curriculum calendar a unit.
 - Most states had to tie teacher evaluations with this curriculum.
 - Marc reviewing test with board to show the complexity of the standards.
 - Poorly set up, hard to understand, difficult to organize info & take test.

10:30 Continue Fundraising Discussion

- Individual donors and Board role and/or discuss fundraising action plan
 - We researched our past funders to identify who we might want to reach back out to – we’ve started to reach back out to already.
 - Discussion about who should reach out to whom, what the conversation should be around that.
 - Potential new funders – working off of Rosann’s list.
 - Marc/Rosann meeting next week about funders.
 - Individual donors – do we want to do an annual appeal?
 - Time & effort may not be worth it – Marc doesn’t think we should.
- Should parents be solicited for donations – ask for \$1 – get them in the position of giving something or does this “ask” go through Colorado gives day.

11:00 Adjourn

Dan moved, Bill seconds