

**SOAR Charter School Board Meeting
September 12, 2014**

Date, Time and Place: September 12, 2014, SOAR 4800 Telluride Street, Building 4,
Denver Colorado 80249

Attendance of Board Members:

Present: Sue Sava, Rona Wilensky, Ethan Hemming (most of the meeting), Ellin Keene,
Shelli Brown, William Weintraub, Rosann Ward

Present by phone: Dan Smink, Ethan Hemming (2nd half of meeting)

Absent:

Quorum? Yes

Also in attendance: Marc Waxman, Brad Fischer, Lacey Bixby, Al Fischer, Brenna
Copeland, Carol Mehesy

Members of the public in attendance: Al Fischer

Meeting brought to order - Shelli moved, Rona seconds 8:50 AM

Agenda

- 8:45 AM Consent agenda
- Introductions
 - August Minutes
 - Changing from Ellin to Rona for who called the meeting to order
 - Financial packet
 - No longer reporting Oakland on the financial packet. The audit is done. Finance is all GVR. There was an update to financial policies – we added a sentence that says we’re following the DPS guidelines around our title funds.
 - FPF (financial performance framework) – this piece shows where we’re strong according the ratios that DPS looks at.
 - We met with DPS finance folks to go over fpf & they were comfortable about the area’s that weren’t green. If it was a red area, it could be explained.

Motion to approve – William moved, Rosann seconded

- 8:55 AM School update
- Ellin noted that all of the updates Marc adds to the board emails are very helpful & save a lot of time.

- Competency, autonomy – Marc spoke on how he feels about his role this year.
- School updates -
 - Dashboard
 - Things to note – enrollment is 4 under projections – we are thinking we’ll be at or over enrollment by October count. Attendance is strong. Teacher retention is at zero – we hope to keep it that way. Very strong staff this year.
 - Suspensions – Marc told staff that there won’t be any suspensions this year, unless it’s something we can’t get around – for example, weapons. Yesterday there was a fight between 2 5th grade students & it was escalated & calmed down very quickly. Different approach to how we handle bad behaviors this year.
 - Parent educations – bullying policy & bullying approach.
 - Summer Institute Survey
 - PD
 - What is the relationship between PTO & SAC? We are keeping these separate. PTO is focused on community building/engagement. SAC is data review & strategic planning. Marc & Sue are to figure out the metrics.
 - Suggestions for improving SAC attendance: handing out invitations at arrival/dismissal & eblasts.

9:05 AM

TCAP/SPF Data Presentation

- Completely new DRA & PARCC testing this year.
 - Our DRA grows each year – right now we’re at the highest we’ve ever been.
- SMI – math interim assessment tool. This is aligned with common core.
- Jose Vilson – math teacher from The University of Rochester. (Possible help with test preparation.)
- We’ve changed writing so it’s much more aligned with PARCC.
- SPF ratings from the year before last, 4th grade significantly underperformed, but they had the highest DRA levels.
- Blueprint math tutoring – how did that payoff? We haven’t seen anything in data that shows if it worked or not. In terms of financial investment & what’s good for the kids, we stand by the fact that we aren’t using tutoring this year.
- Students are more confident in subjects when they build relationships with those coaching them.

(Ethan leaving, Lacey dialing in for him.)

10:00 AM

Vision Process Explanation

- Sue set out a timeline for us to reshape the vision and establish guiding principles
- Reviewing the Strategic planning committee report
- The old (growth) vision wasn't appropriate to our mission.
 - Core Elements -We have a commitment to the arts & we firmly believe social/emotional learning goes hand in hand with academic instruction.
 - We want to create a planning process that is grounded in an updated vision.
 - We aspire to create guiding principles that could be meaningful for ourselves. The board is to recreate a new vision to help everyone make decisions to match the principles.
- Next steps
 - Oct/Nov – We want to think about what we are passionate about. (Sue may miss the Oct. meeting, we will start in November.)
 - Dec/Jan – Essential questions
 - Jan/Feb – Principles
 - March/April – Mission, metrics
 - May – Unveil principles
 - June – Action planning (Rosann, Bill, Ellin, Marc & staff)

10:10 AM

Finance Committee Debrief

- Audit
 - Both audits are done – we used to show an assigned (board put in reserves) & unassigned (allowed to roll over into future years for reserves)
- These tie back to the SPF number that turned yellow – DPS uses unassigned to calculate that number. For audit purposes, we will start showing it this way.

Motion to approve – Dan moved, Rona seconded

- Budget Approval
 - Big changes – roll over was better than expected because we didn't spend as much fund balance. We added a G/T consultant - \$50k. (Marc would like to approve that line item as gifted/talent support – he wants flexibility knowing that we will get it covered under that budget.)
- Discussion about how we're checking who we're looking at to fill this position.
- We received \$77k for kinder paras

Motion to approve – Rona moved, Rosann seconded

10:20 AM

Board Education – SEL Continuum

- Meghan Statton in to present

- 4 week action plan
 - SEL action team – 8 staff members. They built the continuum, relied on their own background experience, making SEL specific to our kids, we are looking at certain grade levels & making goals based around where we think they should be by the time they leave that certain grade level.
 - Curriculum calendar
 - The curriculum calendar was created so teachers can focus on one competency at a time. This will change & grow over the year as we learn how the process works.
 - The calendar outlines competencies when they're being taught. We will focus as a school in 2 weeks blocks on a specific competency.
 - One point person for each grade level – the point is from a different grade level.
 - Meghan is meeting with teachers on a regular basis, one on one to talk about students who are in need of significant SEL building.

10:40 AM

Fundraising Discussion

- Rosann will send out materials to review.
- We can raise money to offset current items.
- Looking at core elements on last page – we need to talk about the SEL piece. We need to determine what the rollout will be to approach funders.
- Rosann needs help determining who is going to reach out to whom.
 - The items in blue, she doesn't have context on these foundations. (Do we know anyone who works at these places?)
 - Once we know who we have collectively, send your info to Rosann before the October meeting.

11:00 AM

Adjourn

Adjourn into Executive Session 11:00AM – Sue moved, Rosann seconded