**SOAR Charter School Board Meeting**

Date, Time and Place: August 12th, 2016, 4800 Telluride St. BLDG 4, Denver, CO 80249

**Attendance of Board Members:**

Present: Sue Sava, Shelli Brown, Sarah Glover, Rona Wilensky

Present by phone: Claudia Gutierrez, Dan Smink, Brad Fischer

Recused: n/a

Absent: William Weintraub, Rosann Ward

Staff absent:

**Quorum? Yes**

Also in attendance: Laurie Godwin, Sonia Sisneros, Kelly Moulton, Lacei Martinez

Members of the public in attendance: Jerry Osei-Tutu, Liane Morrison

Meeting brought to order – Shelli moved, Sarah seconded 8:49 AM

**Agenda:**

* 8:45-8:50 Public Comment
  + Welcome Jerry Osei-Tutu & Liane Morrison
* 8:45-9:00 Consent Agenda
  + Minutes
  + Monthly dashboard
    - Shelli asked about the June financials. Sonia notes that we had items come in under expected budget.
      * Budgeted year to date cash flow: $207,491
      * Actual year to date cash flow: $62,275
    - Sonia touched on teacher attrition
    - Shelli asks about teachers of color. Sonia will pull numbers that show how SOAR compares to other DPS schools & charters and report these numbers in November.
    - How are we working to manage teacher of color hiring & recruitment? Sonia is working on this.
    - Shelli mentions that Ashley, who works at PEBC, helps recruit teachers of color. Sue offered that Sonia could meet with Ashley if that would be helpful.
  + Monthly financials

Motion to approve consent agenda – Shelli moved, Dan seconded 9:04 AM

* 9:00-9:10 Finance Update
  + Approval of revisions to the Financial Policies (Vote)
    - Brad covered the details of changes to the financial policy.

Motion to adopt the revisions to the financial policies – Shelli moved, Sarah seconded 9:08 AM

* 9:10-9:20 Adoption of the Board Bylaws (Vote)
  + All board members to sign:
    - Conflict of Interest
    - Attendance Expectation forms

Motion to adopt the revised Board Bylaws – Sarah moved, Claudia seconded 9:14 AM

* 9:20-9:30 FY17 Board calendar revision (Vote)
  + - Regular Meetings
      * Three (3) meetings per trimester shall be held each year on dates determined by the Board.
      * Trimester 1: August, September, November
      * Trimester 2: December, January, February
      * Trimester 3: April, May, June

Motion to adopt the Board calendar revision – Shelli moved, Sarah seconded 9:15 AM

* 9:30-10:00 Update on Board pipeline
* Note from Sue: New board members resumes get circulated prior to the vote.
* Rona’s board recruitment & onboarding strategies include:
  + Phone screening
  + Meets with them in person
  + Has them meet with one other board member
  + Plans a school visit
  + Invites them to a board meeting
  + Liane Morrison (Vote)
    - Sue asked Liane to leave the room for her vote.
    - Sue has worked closely with Liane. She’s very philosophically aligned. She pushes for more money in schools. She has great financial expertise.

Motion to bring Liane Morrison on the SOAR Board – Sarah moved, Dan seconded 9:27 AM

* + Jerry Osei-Tutu (Vote)
    - Sue asked Jerry to leave the room for his vote.
    - Claudia has worked closely with Jerry on the search committee. Claudia mentioned that Jerry has a lot of volunteer time invested in SOAR.
    - Jerry wanted to know how much the Board listens to parent input. Shelli let him know that the Board’s commitment is to honor parents’ input.

Motion to bring Jerry Osei-Tutu on the SOAR Board – Shelli moved, Sarah seconded 9:24 AM

* + William Weintraub (Vote for re-election)

Motion to re-elect William Weintraub for another three year term on SOAR Board – Shelli moved, Sarah seconded 9:28 AM

* + Sarah Glover (Vote for Secretary)
    - Recused herself for the vote

Motion to elect Sarah Glover as Secretary serving the SOAR Board – Shelli moved, Liane seconded 9:35 AM

* + Shelli Brown farewell
    - The SOAR Board would like to express our gratitude to Shelli Brown for her work, time & dedication to our SOAR Board. Today is her last Board meeting.
  + Board Buddies
    - Jerry Osei-Tutu & William Weintraub
    - Liane Morrison & Claudia Gutierrez & Rona Wilensky
    - Sarah Glover & Sue Sava
  + Board Terms
    - Sue reviewed Board terms
* Laurie speaks on Mission moment
  + Back to School Night was amazing. The parent community was incredibly welcoming. They were appreciative that the principal was out & about with families. Parents were purposeful about approaching Laurie & meeting her.
  + Laurie attended DPS day where our music teacher Yuzo Nieto & the drummers played. Parents were really appreciative that Laurie attended DPS day.
  + While Laurie was walking around the building on the first day of school; she noticed that the students come ready to learn with great, eager attitudes.
  + Laurie is thrilled to be here & says that the students & staff are terrific.
* 10:15-10:30 Head of School Update
  + Staff Retreat
    - Laurie touches briefly on the staff retreat.
    - There’s work to be done on the Guiding Principles. The staff has no buy-in to these & this is a concern to Laurie. Staff feels these are Board created principles that have nothing to do with their work.
    - Staff talked about what their hopes & dreams are for the community, for their students, for SOAR, for themselves, etc.
    - Sonia mentions there are disconnects in the way SOAR is marketed. With each leader, the school has changed significantly.
    - Laurie wants to talk with the parent community & find out why they send their students to SOAR. She wants to know what they want to see, what needs to change, what are their hopes & dreams, etc.
    - Liane mentions that she wonders if parents are comfortable leaving their students here because we’re on a beautiful campus & in a newer school. This may have an impact on parents who move from an older school to SOAR because in a nicer school, parents will leave with good feelings & feel safe.
    - Dan & Sonia will get together for marketing once we have ideas solidified after meeting with parents.
    - Claudia asks if the teachers at the retreat felt good about returning. Do the teachers seem excited to be returning to SOAR?
      * Shelli mentions that most of the Board members weren’t at the retreat for long.
      * Sarah said she felt the energy was positive & exciting.
      * Sue said she was surprised about how positive the energy was for returning teachers. Staff came up to her & thanked her for the change. Staff felt comfortable with Laurie & feel that she is going to be a great & amazing person to work with.
* Shelli talks about being consistent throughout the year with rededicating our work to the SOAR Staff & the space that they’re in; to invest in the way that they support the students.
  + Sonia responds that she appreciates this & that it is important to embed this work into the culture of SOAR as opposed to hosting one off trainings.
  + Meeting w/Maya Lagana: timeline for Charter Renewal
    - Sue & Laurie had an initial meeting with Maya to find out what the status is of the charter renewal.
    - On the DPS framework SOAR is a red school. The renewal happens in fall of 2017. This next year’s data is critical.
    - The biggest gap in the data is math. We will be heavily focusing on 3/4/5 with math PD/training focus. Laurie will report to the Board on the data.
    - Jerry mentions that parents are looking at our school rating. He asks Laurie what our plan is if we continue to be a red school. What assurances will be given to parents?
    - Laurie responds that the only way to change this data is to have great teachers in the classroom. The first goal is to support & develop great teachers.
  + Board Education: Classroom Observations
    - Laurie & our Academic Director Jessica Welch stopped by classrooms yesterday and emailed teachers feedback about what they saw.
  + New observation/evaluation structure
    - Laurie & Jessica Welch will split this work.
  + Staff PTO/absences
    - Laurie is concerned about teacher leave & teacher absences. The entire staff is present only 20% of the school year. While we have Flex Teachers and other creative positions that contribute to this, it is still a concern for student learning.
    - Jerry mentions that parents notice that teachers are out a lot & have substitutes around breaks, before & after.
    - Sonia talks about the PTO policy. The policy isn’t changing, but Laurie is strongly enforcing it this year.
    - Shelli wants to know how we balance keeping teachers happy and keeping them in the building. Sonia mentions the extra fall break that we added this school year to help teachers find this balance.
    - Laurie mentions that the PTO policy is actually the problem around this. Teachers aren’t sure if they’ll be paid out for PTO, PTO doesn’t roll over, etc.
* 10:45-11:00 Director of Development & Operations Update
  + Enrollment & Student Attrition
    - Right now we’re about 15 students over enrolled
    - Kindergarten is full – which we didn’t expect
    - Expected enrollment 471 – We are budgeted at 455
    - Only 3 students who didn’t show up the first day aren’t returning. We were able to fill those 3 spots with waitlist students.
    - Sonia does exit interviews with families who don’t return. Most responses for leaving SOAR were connected with academic rigor.
  + Teacher Attrition & Recruitment
    - We had three new hires. One was for our art position that opened late due to a teacher FMLA situation .The other new hires were 3rd grade & a flex teacher. The flex teacher is from Stanley.
  + Animal Policy Included in Board Packet (Questions/Comments)
    - This is aligned with district policy.
    - We’re collecting allergy aversion from every student in the school.
    - We discussed how to handle a therapy dog in the building with students or families who may have experienced trauma with dogs. l
    - Gina met with families at Back to School night & explained how Kirby is a therapy dog.
* 11:00 Adjourn

Motion to adjourn – Shelli moved, Rona seconded 11:06 AM