

SOAR Charter School Board Meeting

Date, Time and Place: October 9th, 2015, 4800 Telluride St. BLDG 4, Denver, CO 80249

Attendance of Board Members:

Present: Sue Sava, Rosann Ward, William Weintraub, Ethan Hemming, Claudia Gutierrez

Present by phone: Ellin Keene

Absent: Rona Wilensky, Shelli Brown, Dan Smink

Staff absent: Brad Fischer

Quorum? Yes

Also in attendance: Marc Waxman, Sonia Sisneros, Jessica (Jess) Welch

Members of the public in attendance: none

Meeting brought to order – Rosann moved, Bill seconds 8:55 AM

Business Meeting

8:45 AM – Public Comment
None

8:50 AM – Consent Agenda

Finance Committee Update

The yearly audit was distributed to DPS on time with no issues. The finance committee discussed the August financials; no issues. More details will be presented at the November Board meeting. The process for determining future reserves was discussed in terms of the Finance Committee being charged with creating this process.

Minutes

Lacei is doing a great job with the level of detail in the minutes.

- Sonia to send the SAC meeting schedule to Laurie Godwin, if she is elected to the SOAR Board later in this meeting. Bill is attending the October SAC meeting.

We are not refilling the family engagement coordinator position; this money will be returned to the budget. We will address other priorities in the budget with these funds. Board members

requested that Marc and staff continue to find other cost savings in the budget as the year progresses.

October Count was strong: down two kinder students but overenrolled in 3rd grade by one student – but, the budget is tight. Marc, Sonia and Brad are looking for other opportunities in the budget to “loosen” funds to support the budget. Areas that we may have over budgeted are being tightened.

Rosann moved, Bill seconds to approve the consent agenda.

8:55 AM – New Board Member (VOTE NEEDED)

Laurie Godwin is the new Board member nominated for approval/election. She visited the school and toured the building with Marc and Shelli. She was complimentary about the school. The reason she is interested in SOAR is because she really believes in progressive education.

Motion to invite onto the Board, Rosann moved, Bill second. Marc will reach out to Laurie letting her know that she has been elected to the Board and onboarding steps.

Make sure the January retreat is included in her onboarding communication. The November agenda will reflect future Board development efforts.

9:00 AM – Board Attendance and Related Policy Revision (VOTE NEEDED)

Approved with the recommended edits, Bill motioned and Rosann second. Sonia will complete the edits suggested and send via email to the entire Board as “adopted”.

9:10 AM – Finance Committee Report

Covered in Consent Agenda

9:20 AM – Director’s Report

DRA: Jess explained what DPS has approved to use in place of DRA. It is iStation for ReadAct implementation. Ellin, Marc and Jess will get together to talk about alternatives to getting the data in addition to iStation. There is a fair amount of professional development required as part of this shift. Marc is going to connect with Ellin on getting this time scheduled. The entire school needs to be on the same page with whatever the outcome is; not teacher by teacher giving varying forms of assessment.

9:30 AM – Board Education and Data Report – Fall Data Review

The parent satisfaction survey indicates that traffic is an issue. We should go on record saying that we don’t want to wait for a child to get hit or injured in the parking lot for something to change. Jess has been working with the STRIVE operations manager to partner on adding more staff outside during heavy traffic times.

Claudia shared her experience as a parent dealing with the traffic daily.

A parent volunteer may be an option. Jess will continue to hold STRIVE accountable. The Board getting involved on a governance level is necessary if the city continues to be unresponsive. The SOAR staff is doing everything possible. Jess will send Sue documentation of work and meetings that have occurred.

Marc gave an update that the cultural competency work is going well.

SOAR Data Collection, Review and planning process

Jess presents a high level summary of the three interim assessments that SOAR gives. Jess develops these processes with Marc's support in customization for SOAR.

- DRA:
 - Teachers tracking on a Google doc any student below grade level. Jess is overseeing this work to ensure supports are taking place.
- Writing prompts:
 - Three times a year
 - Aligned with PARCC
 - Data used from the writing rubric - gives useful information to teachers
- Math unit assessments (pre and post):
 - Each grade gives a pre and post for every unit
 - Assessment items are aligned with Common Core standards
 - Data tracked in Google docs. Jess is overseeing this work to ensure supports are taking place. This data includes the grouping of students as well as individual supports.
 - Jess meets once per month to discuss outcomes

MTSS (Multi-tiered Support Systems)

Three different tiers; the goals are set specific to the tier and student. This work is monitored on a 6-week cycle to ensure fidelity.

Other types of data gathered on a continuous basis:

- Conference notes
- Observations
- Quizzes/tests
- AMC
- Published writing pieces

Access is a standardized test is required for all ELL students. It is very time intensive, 1st through 5th given twice per year. Last years' scores were not as strong as years prior. Jess and Marc met with the district to describe the ELA approach at SOAR and how that may have impacted scores.

Marc and Sue met with Tiered Quality Assurance and they are aware of our work on this front. We are in a tier that determines that we can ask Quality Assurance Team for support if we want their assistance.

Fall Data Review (see attached slide deck)

DRA: 5th grade has a drop. Jess has continued refining of the DRA norming process. This is the grade had the highest attrition. Students that left were some of our highest scoring students.

This year's 5th grade has a large number of ELL and IEP. We also have a large number of students being screened for IEP. More than 50% account for this number.

Jess fields questions from Board members as it relates to explanation of the “cliff” in the data – which- “could be more important than the scores”. This could bring another level of understanding and what does that mean. Especially, for students that are new to SOAR.

10:15 AM – Closure of ED Review

Board was delayed in finalizing ED Review because the Board had to rely on data roll-up, 360 and self-review instead of disaggregated ED review data. Marc and sue have agreed on some general goals:

1. Move from buy-in to best practice. Not just about belief but doing it better than ever. This overarching premise should be present in all work
2. Have guiding principles; revisit them and implementing the action plans

Re Suggested ED Search Process

SOAR VISION:

SOAR STUDENTS CREATE FULL AND MEANINGFUL LIVES, ENRICH OUR DEMOCRACY, AND CREATE A MORE JUST SOCIETY.

SOAR MISSION:

The mission of SOAR is to provide students of all backgrounds and performance levels with access to a balance of rigorous academics, social instruction, and expanded opportunities. SOAR empowers children to become complete people who make informed, deliberate decisions and lead socially responsible, productive lives.

SOARing Principles

- We develop habits of systems thinking.
- We work with and are responsive to our families and the community
- We foster the health and well-being of our students and families We cultivate intellectual and academic growth
- We nurture the development of analytical and critical thinking
- We develop social- emotional attributes and skills
- We cultivate creative competencies

As the SOAR Governing Board designs a framework for a ED Search Process, we will align our planning to the SOAR Vision, Mission and SOARing Principles.

Suggested framework:

We have begun conversations to capture best practices on ED Search processes. Sue and Rosann are drafting initial take-always from these conversations as well as their own experiences in ED searches. We will bring a search consultant to the SOAR Board meeting on 11/13 so that we can discuss best practices and gain an understanding of the potential roles of Board, Executive Committee, staff and families. We will draft a framing process that will be inclusive of stakeholder input from each of these constituencies.

10:20 AM – Transition Plan

Marc has shared with most of the Board individually as well as the SOAR leadership team and Lacei about his plans to move out of state at the end of the school year. Laurie is also in the loop so that she knows what is going on.

From Marc's perspective, he sees this move as a transition not as a departure. Ideally, he would join the board and be a consultant. He is clear that he wants to support the school moving forward. Marc will tell staff on Monday in small groups in their team meetings. The parent communication will come later. Creating a process is essential. Marc wants to be clear about the fact that including the current administrative staff in the process will lead to security for staff, families and kids.

Sue and Rosann will lead the search process for the board.

This work must begin immediately. Deliverables are due mid-week next week. Deliverables include Marc's creation of a leadership profile and the Board's deliverable of the next meeting being scheduled.

10:40 AM – Board Committee Reports (no updates)

- Strategic Planning Committee
- Board reflection - where does board see itself in guiding principles
- Governance Committee/Board Development
- Marketing Committee

10:55 AM – Adjourn

Bill moved, Rosann seconds – 10:55AM