



MINUTES

**Monday, June 12, 2023
5:30 pm**

**The meeting was held at The CO League's Offices
and [here via Zoom](#)**

MISSION: We exist to foster a diverse and equitable community of youth and adults striving together for academic, personal and civic excellence.

VISION: Inclusive excellence in public education.

The Board uses a series of qualifiers, where appropriate, to help clarify the nature of each presentation/report.

1. The decision has been made and updates are provided (Inform)
2. Input is needed to assist the board to make the best decision (Discussion/Input)
3. Brainstorming is needed to help identify all options (Brainstorm)
4. Input and/or decision is assigned to a Special Committee (Small Group)
5. The decision is ready for vote (Vote)

ATTENDANCE

Board Executive Committee:

Joe Whitfield, Chair
Stephanie Grossman, Vice Chair
Marc Furton, Treasurer
Anna Rogers, Secretary

Board Members:

Annie Bielecki, Board Member
Kamrin Coffey, Board Member
Drew Goltermann, Board Member
Gwen Maurello, Board Member
Grace Nailing, Board Member
Meg Ramey, Board Member
Kenny Smith, Board Member
Ambar Suero, Board Member

Highline Ex-Officio Members:

Chris Ferris, Highline Academy Executive Director
Brittany Joyce, Highline Director of Strategy and Communications
Manda Troutman, Outreach and Communications Manager

Other:

Nikea Bland, HASE Parent and 2023-24 Board Member
Kaylee Hart, 2023-24 Board Member
Katherine Casey, 2023-24 Board Member

Absent:

Sarah Verni-Lau, Highline Academy Southeast Principal
Vanessa Rodriguez, Highline Academy Northeast Principal
Michael Rodriguez, HANE Teacher
Austin Young, HANE Teacher
Erika Paulino, HASE Front Office Manager
Evette Green, HASE Teacher

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
Call to Order – Joe Whitfield – Call to Order (5:38 pm) Quorum Establish A quorum of the Board was established. The agenda was adopted with no changes. Mission Moment Gwen Maurello read aloud the mission and vision statement. Gwen mentioned that it is bittersweet for her, as it is her last official time saying this as a Highline Board member. Gwen shared that we embody the mission in everything we do. Gwen has come to the realization that we take for granted that education is cyclical. DEI has been a part of our program since day one, however what we have done in support of this work has grown and changed over time. We now have a DEI committee and an increased commitment from the Board level. Highline’s striving for excellence has deepened over the years from all levels of the organization. Gwen’s reflection of what we are doing and have done has been inspiring and awesome. Joe thanked Gwen for her many contributions over the years on behalf of the Board and everyone. Highline Academy is a Proud DPS Charter School			
Consent Agenda – Joe Whitfield – Governance – Vote (5:41 pm) Minutes from the May 22, 2023 meeting A motion was made by Joe Whitfield and seconded by Stephanie Grossman to approve the May 22, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.			
See BOD Packet for: - May 2023 Budget to Actuals - EOY REACH Up Report 2022-23 Annual Report - Black Excellence Plans 2022-23 Strategic Plan Report			
Public Comment (5:42 pm) - Public comment received via email: “Earlier this year the board sent out a request for staff feedback prior to our salary negotiations. The board changed restrictions on our school calendar and increased salary but another item that was mentioned was modifying the school calendar to a shorter school day and/or year. Chris mentioned that if we changed this, the board would need to revise our charter and the discussion seemed to stop there. My question is, how do we go about getting this discussion back on the board's agenda? Our school calendar is already set for the 23-24 school year but because we'd need staff and community feedback prior to a potential change, my assumption is that we'd need to start this discussion early for the 24-25 school year.” - Joe suggested adding this topic onto the agenda for a future Board meeting for further discussion.			
E.D. Update - Chris Ferris - Inform (5:44 pm) Chris suggested a brief round of introductions for new Board members who will take office in 2023-24. Hiring and Retention Report - One of the main pillars of our Strategic Plan is becoming an anti-racist school. One of our goals for this objective is to increase diversity of staff to 45% BIPOC. At HASE we have 31% and at HANE we have 39% BIPOC staff. For the 2021-22 school year, HANE had 50% BIPOC staff. - August 2022 - June 2023 staff retention: 84% at HASE and 83% percent at HANE. - End of year (June 2023) to next year (August 2023) retention: 92% at HASE; 83% at HANE. - New hire BIPOC staff for 2023-24 school year: 33% at HASE and 40% at HANE. We continue to work toward our 45% BIPOC staff goal and we are taking it seriously. - We are very close to our voluntary staff retention rate goal of 90%. We are at 87% voluntary staff retention when you take out staff who were not invited back for 2023-24.			

End of year Strategic Plan & goals review

- Academic Excellence: Students who are significantly below grade level are receiving academic supports, and the UIP is aligned with school goals and our strategic plan. We are still working to make progress on academic goals #1-3.
- Becoming an Anti-Racist School: Students are taught conflict resolution and the school develops family cross-cultural engagement. We are still working to make progress on goals #2-4 and 5.
- Becoming an Ethical and SUsustainable Organization: We continue to meet and exceed our annual enrollment targets, and our fund reserve is no less than 30 days. We are awaiting feedback and scheduling with the DPS Board to approve our application to open middle school at HANE.
- Becoming One Highline: We are successfully aligning student performance expectations and teacher evaluations between the campuses. We need to continue working on One Highline goals #3-6.

Finance Committee - Marc Furton - Inform (5:59 pm)

May 2023 Budget to Actuals

- ESSER funding, the federal COVID relief funding we received in previous years and will next year, will go away for 2024-25. We expect to fully utilize that funding for 2023.
- We incurred higher expenses for repairs and maintenance and HASE (\$52k) for roof repairs, painting and carpet replacement.
- We are anticipating a year end surplus of \$216k for HASE and \$138k for HANE.
- At the July/August meeting, we will have preliminary year-end numbers.

Building Corporation - Chris Ferris - Inform (6:03 pm)

Facility Expansion Update

- Our contractor, Farrington Construction Management (FCM), is unable to obtain a payment and performance bond.
- We have a new owner's rep, John Sattler whose firm merged with NV5, who is working on a solution.
- We sent FCM a notice of breach of contract with 4 suggestions of how to remedy this issue.
- Chris Ferris is quite frustrated by the situation, as FCM did not make this information known in a timely manner. We are proceeding with caution.
- John recommends paying jointly to the contractor and the sub-contractor, and to manage the financial piece much more tightly.
- Chris is talking with the owner's rep about whether or not to pull out completely, however they advise not to do this, as many projects are successfully completed without the Payment and Performance Bond.
- The Small Business Association might be able to offer a bond at a higher cost to the contractor.
- The contractor gave us a letter explaining their issues. The situation is concerning.
- Stephanie asked if this is delaying construction. Chris answered that the current delays are due to weather.
- However, the current plan is to continue with construction in the hopes that we can get as much work out of FCM as possible.
- Gwen asked about the timeline to address the issue. Chris gave them until this Wednesday, June 14th to respond to the breach of contract. FCM should be answering with an explanation by this date.
- Anna Rogers asked if FCM can still possibly complete the project. Chris answered that FCM is highly motivated for their team to finish the project if at all possible.
- Stephanie Grossman asked if we need to do a full RFP again if we have to switch to another contractor. Chris said we might be able to go with the runners up if they are willing to take on the project, and hopefully not have to do a RFP again.
- Joe Whitfield and Kaylee Hart said that since we signed the contract, construction rates and materials have significantly gone up.
- Chris mentioned that interest rates and our bond is locked in, so we do not need to be concerned about this piece.
- If we had to pay 30% more (projected if we switched contractors) we would have to raise another ~\$1.5 million.
- Chris will send the Board updates and the letter FCM sent as well as the breach of contract that we sent to them.

Other Building projects update

- Chris shared that adding new outlets, carpet, paint and smaller projects for the existing building are going well.

REACH Up Committee - Kenny Smith - Inform (6:15 pm)

EOY Academic Readout

HASE Accomplishments

- In both Reading and Math STAR differences between subgroups shrank from 30% in spring 2022 to 20% in spring 2023
- Early Literacy proficiency is 74.5%
- Growth in math is 75.2%, reading growth is 76.3%
- Math proficiency is 74.8%

HASE Areas for Growth

- Reading Proficiency is 66.3%
- 5th and 6h grade are both lower in Reading proficiency and growth than other grades
- Ambar asked why we think the growth has dropped for Black students from winter to spring. Chris is going to take this question back to HASE admin for further investigation.

HANE Accomplishments

- Kinder and first grade Early Literacy growth is greater than the school goal of 65%
- Kinder Early Literacy proficiency is 71%
- Growth in Math for Black students is the highest of all subgroups
- ACCESS testing showing high redesignation rates (26 students)

HANE Areas for Growth

- Reading Proficiency (47.7%) and growth (54.8%)
- Math Proficiency (47.1%) and Growth (43%)

For the 2023-24 school year, we are looking to hire more experienced teachers at HANE to support academic success. Manda Troutman also noted that the class size is significantly larger at HANE compared to HASE because it is a District owned building. As a result, HANE continues to receive new students throughout the school year from DPS. A new elementary school, Ceylon Elementary, will open in 2024-25, which we are hopeful will help alleviate classroom sizes. The goal is to reduce the number of elementary classroom sizes when we bring on middle school grades, which will also help us replicate our model between the campuses.

DEI Committee - Grace Nailing - Inform (6:35 pm)

Results of Black Excellence Plan

HANE Areas of Success

- Exceeding target for BIPOC staff members
- Exceeding target for GT enrollment
- Discipline data shows little disparity
- Little to no gap in academic performance between Black students and the whole school population
- Strong family participation in events, conferences and Black Excellence meeting

HASE Areas of Success

- Math and reading scores for Black students seem to be meeting target
- Hiring more BIPOC Staff is in line with the target. This could be attributed to having strong leaders of color

at HANE and active recruitment by the leadership team.

- Teacher led DEI committee has started to promote and share resources for Culturally sustaining curriculum and work with families on Cultural fair
- Discipline data shows little disparity
- Teachers held a Culturally Responsive Education event for parents

HANE Areas of Opportunity

- Could increase academic achievement for Black students in reading
- Could improve staff cross cultural communication skills
- Could provide extracurricular programs for Black boys

HASE Areas of Opportunity

- Could increase participation of Black students in GT programs. Jeff Truelock will be the GT coordinator lead, which is great news because this campus has not had a teacher coordinator in many years.
- Could use BESS to develop methods for identifying students who are struggling with mental health
- Could increase family engagement
- Ambar Suero suggested the Highline Board become more active with socializing Highline's accomplishments and promoting the work the school is doing. This will go a long way in helping increase Highline's awareness and level of standing at a higher level. Ambar also invited Highline Board members to join her in meeting with DPS Board members monthly.
- Joe Withfield recognized the advancement of the GT program at HANE with greater representation of BIPOC students and a robust curriculum. We seek to replicate this success at HASE.

Safe school discussion for LGBTQ staff and students

- Annie Bielecki wanted to follow up an article she shared about LGBTQ educators and their hesitation to come out. She acknowledges that Highline is an inclusive community, and just wants to explore how the Highline Board can further support this.
- Annie would like to further discuss this at the retreat - that the leadership is explicitly clear of supporting all staff, including LGBTQ staff. Joe Whitfield shared that our mission captures this and wants to understand if there is something happening that is making staff feel less safe? Chris Ferris and Annie Bielecki shared that this is more general climate / external factors, and nothing that is happening at Highline. Joe suggests we conduct a staff survey on how they are feeling and how well the school is supporting all their identities.
- Ambar Suero is happy to share a story that RootED recently spearheaded on this issue.

Reach OUT Committee - Brittany Joyce - Inform (7:01 pm)

EOY Readout - Annual Report Review

- Highlights from the annual report were shared, including successes realized at the Network level and across the campuses. Statistics on the school's diversity, achievements with various programs (GT, SPED, project based learning, Maria Droste partnership and SEL support, athletics, ECE-3, Highline scholarship), and securing a 5 year charter renewal were discussed.
- The school exceeded or nearly met established fundraising goals for the year, which is laudable given continued fiscal/economic impacts due to the pandemic.
- Brittany Joyce reminded members that the annual report is an excellent tool to socialize Highline in support of funders, volunteers and ambassadors.

Reach In Committee - Stephanie Grossman - Vote + Inform (7:19 pm)

Vote to extend Marc Furton's term

- A motion was made by Stephnie Grossman and seconded by Drew Golterman to renew Marc Furton's term for 3 years and remaining as Co-Treasurer. The motion passed unanimously.

ED EOY Eval

- The Reach In committee will need to finalize the ED evaluation for the 2022-23 school year.

Special recognition for Gwen Maurello and Anna Rogers

- Special words of thanks and plaques were presented to Gwen and Anna for their commitment and years of service on Highline's Board. They are rolling off effective the 2023-24 school year.

Board REACH Awards

- Kamrin Coffey, Annie Bielecki, Meg Ramey, Marc Furton, Ambar Suero, Stephanie Grossman, and Joe Whitfield were recognized for going above and beyond in their service on the Highline Board for the 2022-23 school year. This is the Highline Board's inaugural end of year REACH awards presentation.

Welcoming our 2023-24 Board members

- Chris Ferris recognized and thanked Nikea Bland, Kaylee Hart, and Katherine Casey for joining our Board for the 2023-24 school year. She expressed that the Board looks forward to them joining the group and lending their experience to lead our school community.

Old Business - Chris Ferris - Inform (7:28 pm)

- No old business

Reminders/Announcements - Brittany Joyce - Inform (7:28 pm)

- Next BOD meeting: Summer Board retreat on July 28, 2023

Adjournment - Joe Whitfield - Adjourn Meeting - Vote (7:28 pm)

With no further business up for discussion, a motion was made by Joe Whitfield and seconded by Anna Rogers to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.