



MINUTES

Full Board of Directors Meeting

February 28, 2022
6:15pm

The meeting was held:

[Online via Zoom using this link](#)

Dial-in Number: +12532158782,,88055001423# US

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:

Gwen Maurello, Board Chair

Joe Whitfield, Co-Chair

Marc Furton, Treasurer

Anna Rogers, Secretary

Board Members:

Brent Baribeau, Board Member

Kamrin Coffey, Board Member

Ben Garey, Board Member

Stephanie Grossman, Board Member

Drew Kent, Board Member

Grace Nailing, Board Member

Kenny Smith, Board Member

Highline Ex-Officio Members:

Chris Ferris, Highline Academy Executive Director

Sarah Verni-Lau, Highline Academy Southeast Principal

Guerin Gray, Highline Academy Northeast Principal

Brittany Joyce, Highline Director of Communications

Teresa Fraiser, HR Director

Heather Knight, Project Manager

Erika Paulino, HASE Office Manager

Heather Miles, Southeast Campus Teacher

Austin Young, Northeast Campus Teacher

Other:

Carolyn Gallegos, HASE Assistant Principal

Dr. William Anderson, DU Professor

Absent:

Brandon Hellwig, Board Member

Leah Gerig, Northeast Campus Teacher

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
Call to Order – Gwen Maurello – Call to Order (6:16 pm) • Quorum Establish • Agenda Confirm • Mission and Vision restated A quorum of the Board was established. The agenda was adopted with no changes. Chris Ferris read aloud the mission and vision statement. Chris shared a video from Philanthropy Experts, one of the consultants who participated in the RFP process for the HASE facility expansion capital campaign project. Chris and the REACH Out committee found the video very inspiring and that it would be a fitting way to begin the meeting in grounding the Board and a reminder about why Highline’s program is so special.			
Consent Agenda – Gwen Maurello – Governance – Vote (6:21 pm) • January 24, 2022 Board Minutes • February 15, 2022 Board Minutes • Proposed 2022-23 School calendar A motion was made by Gwen Maurello and seconded by Joe Whitfield to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.			
See BOD Packet for: (6:22 pm) • Principal report on aligning the teacher evaluation; Discipline Data Report • HANE February SAC Meeting Report • January Financials; Forecast 2022-23 Campus Budgets; Salary Scale Proposal • RFP documents for HASE Capital Campaign consultants			
Public Comment (6:22 pm) There was no public comment.			
Executive Director Update - Chris Ferris - Inform (6:22 pm) Update on HANE Principal Selection • 5 teachers / staff members, and 3 parents (including Joe Whitfield, Highline’s Vice President) have applied to join the hiring committee for the Northeast campus principal position. • Currently 24 candidates have applied. Of those 24, 18 fully completed the application process. The school is working through phone screens now. The current 2 assistant principals at the Northeast campus have also applied for this position as well. • We have a robust interview process that includes interviews with various personnel. We expect the finalists to be selected by the 1st week of April and the final candidates will be presented to the Northeast community and to the Board of Directors. • 18 qualified candidates is a solid number, however the school is still doing outreach to recruit additional applicants. The school is not sure how many of the candidates will be a good fit based on responses received in the application process and experience captured on resumes. • The ethnic and gender breakdown for candidates for the Northeast campus principal position is below: ○ White: 12 ○ LatinX: 3 ○ Two or more races: 4 ○ African American: 3 ○ Declined to answer: 2 ○ Female: 15 ○ Male: 9 • The school currently does not have ethnicity targets for each stage of the interview. The hiring committee will discuss ethnicity targets for candidates as a new process item.			

- There are dozens of open principal positions open across the Denver metro area, which is a sign of the high turnover in education right now. There is tough competition for these roles.
- With Highline being a charter school, it is an advantage and more attractive for some candidates.
- Ben Garey suggested that the school may want to consider updating the strategic plan to note the current climate with teacher and administrator turnover in education. It is a challenging hiring environment in this sector. However, this will be discussed further at a later date.

HASE Facility Expansion Update

- It is hard to find a general contractor right now, so we are working with cost estimators. The school only received 1 bid for General Contractors, yet per the charter Highline is required to have more than 1 bid. Ratio Design, a current partner, suggested working with cost estimators. The school is trying to create a more realistic scope with more specific estimates. Then there will be a project design and then go to find the general contractor. The schematic design is moving forward.
- The concern was expressed about the cost of the cost estimators, but this is currently the only way forward.
- Ben Garey raised a concern about meeting the deadline to start in August. However, the school does not have much influence over some of the supply shortages in the country. Contractors are in high demand and we are affected by this. Some contractors did the tour but were not ready to take on a new project. It is hard for the contractor to make a bid if they don't understand the scope of the project, having more specifics will help with contractors. Residential is different from commercial. The size of the HASE expansion project might be a disadvantage, since there are larger projects that would be more attractive for contractors. Also with having a delay we will lose some flexibility.
- The Highline Board can make a decision to make an exception to select a contractor given there is just one bid, in light of the fact that there is a timing issue. The market is not getting better with shortages and war.
- Highline does not have to uphold the policy, yet the school does not have all the information/tools to make a decision during tonight's meeting. More work can be done in the committee and then the matter can be brought back for a vote during an adhoc Board meeting within the coming weeks.
- Interest rates are also rising, which is another reason why Ben Garey believes the school should expedite this process. Marc Furton suggested that the committee engage Gina Schlieman, the REACH In chair and policy expert, about the policy exception.
- Chris Ferris will speak with Heather Knight about the options.

Update on COVID Protocols

DPS ended mask mandates today, February 28, 2022. Highline is following the DPS guidelines, and strongly encouraging staff and students to wear a mask. Other restrictions were also lifted all at once by DPS. However, Highline made a decision to slowly lift restrictions with a more measured approach. Highline is eager to support a return to a more normal school experience while keeping student and staff safety first.

Principal Update - Guerin Gray and Sarah Verni-Lau- Inform (6:50 pm)

Aligning the teacher evaluation

- LEAP (Leading Effective Academic Practice) is an adaptive form of the DPS teacher evaluation system.
- The system uses indicators of: 1 learning environment and 3 interactional indicators (content learning, instructional method and pacing).
- Specific teacher and student behaviors are described in each category to rank the teacher appropriately (not meeting, approaching, effective, distinguished).
- Starting last year, an effort was made to have a uniform approach to the teacher evaluation system across both campuses.
- Procedures include zoom meetings, admin team observations, grade level or content specific working groups, sharing learning and strategies and plans to implement. Scored observations are done 3 times a year (beginning, mid and year end). This is when the final score is given vs. general feedback.
- Outcomes with this approach: more teachers are receiving effective or distinguished ratings, increased partnership, sharing schoolwide progress toward meeting indicators, teachers expressing appreciation for collaboration building, especially new teachers.

- Brent expressed gratitude for building a culture of positive and constructive feedback.
- Indicator feedback is color-coded and used as a checklist.
- Benefits of working remotely is that everything was done via zoom and avoided the physical meeting.

Discipline Update

- DPS requires information on how many incidents and how many suspensions the school has broken down by race and ethnicity. Both campuses have very low suspensions and it is deliberate since the school prefers to use other restorative justice and conscious discipline methods.
- Brent Basribeau asked if the school keeps track of lesser offenses and if cases are broken down by race. Just to make sure the school does not discriminate against some groups. At the Northeast campus, discipline is tracked internally and leaders are looking at the data right now to understand racial equity in disciplinary actions. The school is aware of the biases. At the Southeast campus there are meetings to discuss support for tier 2 students (need additional assistance) and students who need social emotional intervention. There are fewer racial discrepancies however, there is more of a gender gap.

Reach Up - Gwen Maurello - Inform (7:08 pm)

HANE February SAC (School Accountability Committee) Meeting Report

- Students recently completed the STAR test and the Reach up committee has not yet had a chance to review it. Results from the STAR assessment will be presented during the next meeting.
- The SAC presentation slides were briefly reviewed. The presentation includes the following:
 - Purpose of SAC: Enhance student achievement, engage school community, provide strategic direction as stated in the Unified Improvement Plan, bring community and parent voice to the table, hold open meetings and ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
 - Our rocks: reach up, reach out and reach in.

Finance - Marc Furton - Inform (7:09 pm)

January Budget to Actuals

- Highline's debt service covenant ratio is 2.52, above the 1.10 benchmark required per the debt agreement.
- The school has 139 days cash on hand, above the 60 days as required per the loan agreement.
- The school received final PPR numbers and it is \$4.9 million for HASE and \$4.7 million for HANE.
- The school is on track with total revenues (54% HASE, 58% HANE) and total expenses (54% HASE and 57% HANE) to budget.
- In the HASE budget, the financial advisor for the facility expansion project has not been included. This will be captured in the budget for next month.
- The Finance committee is expecting a surplus for both campuses.

Proposed Admin salary scale

- In January 2021, Colorado's Equal Pay Act went into effect. DPS published an Administrative pay scale in June 2021. While the school's intent is not to match the DPS scale, it is required to have a transparent salary policy for all employees. Want to honor the experience that administrators had prior to coming to Highline.
- Looked at the market rate nationally, across the state and locally to derive a starting salary point.
- This is the first of the proposed pay scales to ensure compliance. Salary scales for other non-teaching positions would be presented at a later date this year.
- Administrative Pay Scale Financial Impact:
 - HANE: \$1,143
 - HASE: \$14,290
 - Total: \$15,433
- Assistant Teacher Salary Scale Financial Impact:
 - HANE: \$34,558
 - HASE: \$24,386

- Total: \$58,944

- Would like to propose a 3% increase for teachers for the 2022-23 school year, which will be presented to the Board for approval in a meeting later this year once PPR is known.
- Total impact for the proposed Admin salary scale would be \$74,377 for next year. Over time this number will fluctuate.
- Brent Baribeau made a comment that the Board went through the process of creating a teacher pay scale 4-5 years ago, however this has never been done for administrative staff.
- Feedback received from the admin team was that it was very important for the school to honor the number of years of experience prior to coming to Highline as a part of the scale.
- Sarah Verni-Lau said that to see prior experience valued and reflected is a good thing for staff and boosts morale and intent to stay.
- Ben Garey inquired if the school could adopt an inflation model to help salaries keep up with rising costs in the Denver area. Chris Ferris said this model would be concerning if PPR (the school's main source of revenue) ever goes down and this could result in unexpected layoffs.
- A motion was made by Gwen Maurello and seconded by Brent Baribeau to pass the administrative salary scale and assistant teacher salary scale as proposed for the 2022-23 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

Forecast for Budget and PPR

- Projecting a 3% increase which would be \$4.8 million at the Northeast campus and \$5 million for HASE in revenue. Projections look solid for both campuses.
- It is expected that PPR will be higher than 3% per industry experts, so the finance committee is now going back to build the 2022-23 budget with a 6% assumption for PPR.

Reach Out - Kamrin Coffey - Inform (7:40 pm)

Approve Capital Campaign consultant for HASE expansion

Brittany Joyce and Chris Ferris conducted an RFP for capital campaign consultants for the HASE facility expansion project.

A few reasons why the REACH Out committee is recommending Philanthropy Expert (PE):

- They have a personal connection with several HASE families that will prove beneficial in cultivating relationships early on and generating excitement for the project
- PE is familiar with the Highline mission and vision and believes in the work of the school
- Strong track record for supporting charter schools and top remarks from references
- High energy, charm and enthusiasm came through from Melanie Ulle, the organization's founder and leader, and her team. This will be valuable for the capital campaign committee and potential donors.
- Melanie Ulle has committed to join committee meetings and donor meetings in support of facilitating asks and generating excitement
- Philanthropy Expert is more hands-on and in their proposal indicates that they provide additional support with moving the work forward vs. just providing strategic oversight. This was the case in particular for Make Philanthropy Work and the Kellogg Organization.
- References said that PE knows everyone in Denver and everyone loves them. They are a good match-maker for donors and clients. They are able to generate high engagement for staff and families in the school community.
- The following consultants were considered for the capital campaign consultancy for the HASE facility expansion:
 - Philanthropy Expert: Total \$117K
 - Make Philanthropy Work: Total \$94K
 - The Kellogg Organization: Total >\$138K
 - Known Philanthropy and Getacuity - not available due to capacity or were not responsive.
- A motion was made by Kamrin Coffey and seconded by Gwen Maurello to award the capital campaign work for the HASE facility expansion to Philanthropy Expert. The motion passed unanimously.

Fundraising activities and Board sponsorship

The below is an update on Board contributions to date:

- Pledge commitment total made during the summer Board retreat: \$9,190
- % to goal (includes scheduled recurring giving through June 2022): 76.7% (total of \$7,050)
- Number of Board members making a recurring monthly gift: 7
- Number of Board members who had someone in their network make a gift: 3
- Kamrin charged the Board to continue reaching out to their network and encouraging them to make a gift in support of the school. Also, to consider their own giving and make a meaningful gift to help reach the goal.

REACH In - Brent Baribeau - Inform (7:52 pm)

Announce group activity in support of recruiting new members for 2022-23

- The school will have 4 Board members roll-off at the end of the school year. The school seeks to maintain a good mix of parents and community members on the Board. We are in need of members to join the subcommittees below to help fill out and strengthen our roster.
- After the meeting has adjourned, Board members may select a breakout group they would like to join to brainstorm contacts and organizations to reach out to for 2022-23 Board recruitment.
 - Brandon & Chris - Policy / Legal
 - Kenny & Gwen - Academic
 - Kamrin & Brittany - Fundraising / Outreach

Old Business - Gwen Maurello - Inform (7:54 pm)

None

Reminders/Announcements – Gwen Maurello – Inform (7:54 pm)

- Next BOD meeting: Friday, March 25, 2022 at 8:30am at HASE
- Consider members of our community who would be a good fit for Highline's Board in 2022-23. Encourage them to apply [here](#).

Adjournment – Gwen Maurello – Adjourn Meeting – Vote (7:55 pm)

With no further business up for discussion, a motion was made by Brent Baribeau and seconded by Kamrin Coffey to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.