



MINUTES

Full Board of Directors Meeting

August 29, 2022

6:15 pm

**The meeting was held at the Northeast Campus
and [Online via Zoom using this link](#)**

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 (dial-in)

Anna Rogers, Secretary (dial-in)

Board Members:

Annie Bielecki, Board Member

Drew Goltermann, Board Member

Kamrin Coffey, Board Member (dial-in)

Gwen Maurello, Board Member (dial-in)

Grace Nailing, Board Member (dial-in)

Meg Ramey, Education First

Kenny Smith, Board Member (dial-in)

Highline Ex-Officio Members:

Chris Ferris, Highline Academy Executive Director

Sarah Verni-Lau, Highline Academy Southeast Principal

Vanessa Rodriguez, Highline Academy Northeast Principal

Brittany Joyce, Highline Director of Strategy and Communications

Teresa Fraiser, HR Director

Heather Knight, Project Manager

Michael Rodriguez, HANE Teacher

Evette Green, HASE Teacher

Other:

None

Absent:

Ambar Suero, Board Member

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
Call to Order – Joe Whitfield – Call to Order (6:18 pm) Quorum Establish Mission Moment • A quorum of the Board was established. The agenda was adopted with no changes. • Stephanie Grossman read aloud the mission and vision statement. Stephanie explained that our Highline community embraces all cultures, religions, ethnicities, socio-economic groups and is preparing our children for the real world. Our students are being equipped to better understand those who are different from themselves and be thoughtful members of their community.			
Consent Agenda – Joe Whitfield – Governance – Vote (6:21 pm) Minutes from the June 20 and July 29, 2022 meetings • A motion was made by Joe Whitfield and seconded by Annie Bielecki to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.			
Public Comment (6:22 pm) • There was no public comment.			
ED Update - Chris Ferris - Inform (6:22 pm) HANE Charter Renewal Update; SAC Update • Introductions for new staff Board reps were completed. • The Reach Up committee will present during the September Board meeting. Until then, Chris Ferris shared a few highlights from the 2022 Spring CMAS. ○ HANE's math scores were higher than surrounding neighborhood schools (the range is from 8-19 % for meeting or exceeding, with HANE at 20%). For ELA, 23% of students were meeting or exceeding (similar to that of neighborhood schools with a range of 23-32%). ○ For HASE, 39% were meeting or exceeding in math, and 61% for ELA. This campus is only a few percentage points away from its performance in 2019 when it was recognized for its academic performance and received the 2022 Blue Ribbon School award. Northeast Campus Charter Renewal • 2022 - 23 Unique Conditions: ○ CDE will publish the School Performance Framework (SPF) for the first time this fall since the adoption of the rating. The Ratings were not published since the fall of 2019 due to COVID. ○ We have limited growth data because only half of CMAS tests were mandated in the spring of 2021 and the participation rates were low. ○ Testing participation rates improved since the spring of 2021. However, there are still many schools with low participation rates. • 2022-23 Updates to DPS Charter Renewal Matrix ○ Addition of the accountability participation rate ○ Addition of a second matrix for schools with <95% accountability participation rate and/or <60% growth participation (Growth participation is the percentage of students contributing to the median growth percentile (MGP)). ○ Use of Similar Schools Measure for the second matrix. ○ One-year renewal option for schools receiving a rating of “Insufficient Data” from CDE. ○ This year, schools that receive a rating of improvement (“yellow”) may receive a recommendation of a 5-year term. ○ The district has removed the “2+2” term and replaced it with a “3+2”, thereby giving schools one more year in the base term. • There are two renewal matrices based on Accountability Participation rate AND growth participation in both Math and ELA. ○ Renewal Matrix A: Schools with 95% or greater Accountability Participation rate AND 60% growth			

participation in both Math and ELA.

- Renewal Matrix B: Schools with lower than 95% Accountability Participation rate OR lower than 60% growth participation.
- Highline should be in Matrix B and it is favorable for us. We do not know what the score is going to be, however it will be a mean score for similar schools.
- At HANE, our ELA data is at the border and our Math is above threshold. However, HANE might still be in Matrix A (this campus was yellow and then the state downgraded it to orange). While HANE has been rated orange for many years, the campus might attain yellow status again if the state has enough data to make that decision.
- Schools might be downgraded a level if they do not have at least 95% of participation. However, CDE just announced that this metric will not be taken into account this year. This means that if a school rates yellow and only has 94% participation, the State will not downgrade the school to orange as was done in the past.
- The 2021-22 school year was more normal in terms of testing, however some parents did not want their students to test given some missed a whole year of in-person schooling.
- How much power do schools have over the renewal process? DPS Staff make recommendations to the Superintendent and the Superintendent takes it to the DPS Board of Directors. It is a very rigorous and transparent process and the same standards are in place for all charter schools. The SPF is just one attribute factoring into the renewal term; school visits and interviews are additional components. The process can be very political and quid per quo.
- The site visit to HANE is October 20th and the feedback is usually very helpful, since it is a thorough review of a school's operations.
- The accountability participation rate shows the rate of participation among those students whose parents did not excuse them from testing. This means that parent excusals are not represented in either the denominator or numerator for the Accountability Participation Rate. The denominator does account for missed tests, mis-administrations, etc. This is different from Total Participation, in which parent excusals are counted in the numerator as non-participants.
- Growth participation: In order for Matrix A to apply, the school should have both ELA and Math growth data. This is to ensure that the growth calculation represents an adequate number of students in a school's building. Schools must have a Growth Participation Rate of 60% or higher for Matrix A to apply, as established by CDE. This percentage is calculated based on the number of students who were expected to test in both the Spring of 2021 and the Spring of 2022.

Principal Update - Sarah Verni-Lau & Vanessa Rodriguez - Inform (6:43 pm)

Start of school; initial PD plans

Highline Southeast Campus

- Both campuses hold a 3-week training for staff prior to the start of school. The first week is for new teachers to Highline, and the remaining 2 weeks are for all staff.
- The focus for the 2022-23 school year is strengthening systems and building upon successes from last year.
- Staff reflected on what went well and areas for improvement. Revamping the MTSS system was one large system change for this school year based on staff feedback. Streamlining systems for both academic and behavioral supports was also identified. Much of the Friday PD time is being devoted to this work.
- Inclusive culture is a staff culture goal for the year and Friday PD time will focus on this work as well. Fridays are early release days and we dedicate the afternoons to professional development (2-3.30 pm).
- What do our new teachers think about Highline's REACH program? We were fortunate to recruit and hire staff with high expertise and they only needed to learn Highline's systems. New hires also provided some feedback on how things were done in their previous schools and how Highline could benefit from those aspects. This campus is looking to hire one more staff member since there are a few people who will be on maternity leave starting in December.

Highline Northeast Campus

- Teachers were very appreciative of the balance between planning time and PD time.
- Had 15 new staff members join the team for the 2022-23 school year. They valued that the culture was

already established and that they can jump into instruction (vs. having to work on building culture).

- The focus for this year is on high standards and high expectations (rigor). Staff did a lot of work on norming systems and routines (staff culture, internal commitments).
- Inclusion is a focus for the year at this campus as well, and making a push to bring this to the forefront as Highline's vision. Asking the question of whether or not our teachers have the tools they need to help students of all abilities to succeed.
- For the first time ever, this campus now has 3-year olds in the building as a part of the Model 1 ECE program.
- Each grade level has an interventionist this year. HANE is mirroring HASE's structure of having a content specific teacher for each grade in 3rd-5th grade (shifting from a teacher teaching multiple subjects).
- Discipline was an area of growth and how to support students with conscious discipline. Highline partnered with the Conflict Center for restorative justice and microaggression training this summer for the staff.
- HANE as an ILT (Instructional Leadership Team) who also serve as campus leaders. This group looks intently into the data and creates defined goals to push for academic rigor.
- Actively seeking to engage families to make them an active participant in their child's learning. There is a sense of urgency to bring the campus to a place of academic excellence.
- Joe Whitfield explained that he is pleased to hear of the direction of the campus and the increased diversity of staff at HANE this year.

Chris Ferris explained that the start of the year has been very smooth and positive at both campuses. Teachers have stated that they feel very prepared and supported by the Admin team, and appreciate the number of adults supporting kids throughout the building. Stephanie Grossman expressed thanks for the Admin team's commitment to strengthening relationships with returning staff members.

Finance Committee - Marc Furton - Inform (7:01 pm)

2022 Unaudited actuals

- June 30, 2022 year end numbers were presented. We do not expect any major changes from the audit.
- ESSR II spending was slightly under, which means we will be able to carry these funds over to the 2022-23 school year.
- For consultant services at HASE (the architect fees in support of the expansion project) the school only incurred \$280k for the 2021-22 school year. We will incur more for this school year.
- Every year we budget for contingency yet we did not use it last year; both campuses ended with a surplus. The large surplus was driven by ESSR funding - it will be tighter in the future.
- Ended the fiscal year with a debt service coverage ratio of 2.7, above the 1.10 minimum threshold.
- Ended the fiscal year with 140 days cash on hand, above the minimum of 60 days.
- A draft of the audit will be available for the Board to review and hold a vote during the September Board meeting.

Building Corporation - Chris Ferris - Inform (7:06 pm)

HASE Facility Expansion update

- In June 2022 the Board voted to proceed with a one-story addition for the HASE building, shifting away from a two-story due to the sharp increase in interest rates.
- Chris shared the updated design and floorplan. Includes 5 middle school classrooms, 5 small offices, gender-neutral bathrooms, storage space, and a flexible learning space that can be used by all grade levels.
- The gym currently serves as a space for many different needs, so it will be valuable to have another area that can be used for common space.
- Architects finished the plans and provided them to the builders and the builders received quotes from their sub constructors. We had a budget meeting last week and discovered that we are over budget.
- There were areas we identified where we can reduce costs (i.e. light fixtures) while also meeting the basic need.
- Next steps are to submit all the information to obtain permits (from the City of Denver and Denver Water) and wait for approval. We will then be ready to start building in January 2023.
- We are slightly behind schedule (we planned to start in November 2022), due to changing the scope of the

project from 2 story to 1 story. Some approvals expired as a result and we have to secure new approval.

- The Bond market peaked in June 2022 and now it is back to where we were when we decided to move forward with the one story in June. Rates are the same or slightly higher than what was originally approved.
- Heather - at this point we are trying to finalize the cost and will not sacrifice the quality and the purpose of the space. The flexible learning space will be about the size of the atrium at our Northeast campus.
- Chris and Heather are currently searching for an owner's rep to oversee all the finances of the project and ensure we stay within budget and meet deadlines.

Reach Out Committee - Kamrin Coffey - Inform (7:21pm)

Update on HASE Capital Campaign; 2022-23 Goals

HASE Capital Campaign

- An RFP was sent out to select a capital campaign consultant in January 2022.
- Philanthropy Expert was selected in February 2022 with input from the Reach Out committee.
- The first plan of action was to determine the feasibility of a capital campaign for our community. The study confirmed that Highline does not have the potential to secure large donations (in quantity and amount) or to amass a large number of donors.
- Given the shift in scope for the HASE facility expansion project from 2 stories to 1 story, the need to fundraise for large sums is no longer a pressure point. Also, it was unclear what the ROI would be given the expense for the consultant and the amount of funds that Highline could generate with their support.
- As a result, we decided to no longer contract with Philanthropy Expert in support of the expansion project.
- We have also decided to not pursue a capital campaign in light of the feasibility study and have decided to instead set small milestones to fund items needed for the project (furniture, equipment, paint carpet, etc.) We will also hold fundraising events throughout the year to support the project (Highline Hu\$tle, expansion groundbreaking, Spring Auction). Families requested this approach to feel more connected to the project in tangible ways throughout the year and 'see' how their support has made a difference.
- The groundbreaking ceremony (slated for January 2023) will be a catalyst to mobilize the community and generate excitement about the project. The community will have opportunities to donate furniture, paint a wall, secure room naming rights, etc.

Update on 2022-23 Board Goals

- 2022-23 Board Pledge: \$7,850
 - Currently \$790 given to date
- 2021-22 Board Pledge: \$9,190
 - Can we push to meet or exceed last year's total?
- 2022-23 Current Fundraising total across the Network: \$2,886
 - \$1,158 is from shopping reward kick backs - this is a huge source leveraging existing shopping.
 - \$50k grant received from the William I Smith Foundation in support of the HASE Facility Expansion Project.
 - We are awaiting word from other grants we submitted this summer and others we will submit this fall.

REACH In - Stephanie Grossman - Inform (7:34 pm)

Annual Board forms; policy updates

- Annual Board forms have been returned and there are no policy updates this month.

Committee discussions from August meeting:

- ED goals from 2021-22 and new goals for 2022-23
- Uniform Improvement Plan (UIP) and working on the UIP with the Principals and the Board
 - The 2022-23 UIP deadline and rubric is now available to review. The UIP deadline has been pushed to the end of October due to the late release of CMAS data and SPF rating. It is unclear if HASE will need to undergo this process once we have been rated.
- Also discussed plans for the 2023-24 Board retreat.

Old Business - Chris Ferris - Inform (7:38 pm)

- None

Reminders/Announcements – Brittany Joyce – Inform (7:38 pm)

- Next BOD meeting: September 26th at 6:15 pm [here via Zoom](#)

Adjournment – Joe Whitfield – Adjourn Meeting – Vote (7:39 pm)

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