



MINUTES

Full Board of Directors Meeting

September 26, 2022

6:15 pm

The meeting was held [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
Anna Rogers, Secretary

Board Members:

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

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
Austin Young, HANE Teacher
Erika Paulino, HASE Front Office Manager

Other:

Kait Schalow, HANE Teacher

Absent:

Kamrin Coffey, Board Member
Teresa Fraiser, HR Director
Heather Knight, Project Manager
Michael Rodriguez, HANE Teacher
Evette Green, HASE Teacher

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
Call to Order – Joe Whitfield – Call to Order (6:17 pm) Quorum Establish Mission Moment • A quorum of the Board was established. The agenda was adopted with no changes. • Joe Whitfield read aloud the mission and vision statement. Joe sent out the September newsletter to his family and friends who are in and out of the State. He does this on an approximate quarterly basis to gather input from others on our program. The feedback he received was extremely positive, with community members saying they appreciate the diversity, program, teachers, values, volunteers, and intentionality with a commitment to serving all students. Joe shared the time of his first introduction to Highline and that what resonated was the mission, vision, how his family was treated, and the diversity they saw at the school. They became completely bought into Highline from that point and sought to purchase their new home within proximity of the school. He continues to be proud of our program and that we are living out our mission.			
Consent Agenda – Joe Whitfield – Governance – Vote (6:17 pm) Minutes from the August 29, 2022 meeting • A motion was made by Joe Whitfield and seconded by Ambar Suero to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.			
Public Comment (6:25 pm) • There was no public comment.			
UIP Working Session - Chris Ferris - Discussion (6:25 pm) • A Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) is required by the State for all schools to help them identify how they will help improve students' learning. Schools are held accountable and are required to make these plans available to the public. • The UIP is shared with the SAC (School Accountability Committee) and the school's Board. It is then submitted to the State. The UIP for HANE is due on October 27th. HASE is not required to submit a UIP this year (it was completed last year). • At the October Board meeting, the final HANE UIP will be shared with the Highline Board for final approval prior to being submitted to the State. • Drew asked if there was any connection between the UIP and the renewal process. Chris explained that she is unsure and will ask the Portfolio team about this. • The Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) is the standardized state test (3rd to 12th grades). All students take CMAS in math and ELA (English Language Arts). The test is hard; even high performing schools see about only about 60-70% students meeting or exceeding. • For Highline, in the 2020-21 school year, only about 70% of students took the test and most of our virtual students did not take it. This impacts our growth scores. • HANE was rated yellow (Improvement) and HASE was rated green (Meets). • Due to HANE's CMAS rating, the campus is eligible for a 5-year renewal under the District's framework. • Positive trends at HANE: ○ We see little gaps between sub groups ○ Our MLL students consistently score well on ACCESS ○ Terrific growth in reading on grade level in grades K-3 last year • Priority Performance Challenges at HANE: ○ Proficiency levels in math and ELA are not at a high enough level • HANE root causes for areas of improvement: Teacher turnover in 2021-22, higher emphasis on culture vs. academic rigor, no clear teacher expectations, no dedicated writing blocks, overreliance of STAR data • Positive Trends at HASE: ○ Achievement in CMAS Math, ELA and Reading is close to pre-pandemic levels for us ○ Growth was over 50 MGP (median growth percentile) in both math and reading ○ Achievement levels for Black and Latino students are significantly higher than district averages.			

- Priority Performance Challenges at HASE:
 - Math achievement: We would like to see a higher rate of students meeting or exceeding grade level
 - There are significant gaps between students of color and white students in achievement, even though overall achievement for most is still high.
- HASE root causes for areas of improvement: helping students articulate their math thinking, questioning if there is enough focus on higher order math skills, questioning if our priority standards cover all the standards assessed, math is harder for parents so there is not as much assistance.
- The STAR assessment shows that HANE moved 28% of students from below grade level to meeting in the 2021-22 school year. By end of year in 21-22, 65.5% were at grade level or above. This is positive growth, as in 20-21 only 61.5% were at grade level.
- The STAR Assessment at HASE shows that for the 2021-22 school year, 82.6% of Kinder - 3rd grade students were at or above grade level according to the Read Act. For the 2020-21 school year, 74.4% were at grade level or above. This represents a 9% increase in movement of students from below to at or above in 21-22.

HANE Strategies for 2022-23:

- Increased coaching focused on instruction
- Raise the level of rigor in classroom instruction to meet grade level standards
- Rebuilding partnership and communication with families. MLE is a focus for this year.

HASE Strategies for 2022-23:

- Tier systems of support to address academic and behavioral needs. Collaborative support team - created to support students who are not achieving the highest performance level.
- Focus on writing in math.
- Rebuilding partnership with families. PBL blocks in middle school where parents can come in and observe the class.

Targets for Highline Academy based on our 5-year strategic plan:

- 80% meeting/exceeding grade level
- Sub group gaps are 10% or less

Small group breakouts

- Members were broken out into 2 groups (HANE and HASE) and were tasked to share feedback, ask questions, and think of 3 root causes for the data per campus.
- Targets were also discussed in small groups.

Whole group share outs

- At HASE, a big opportunity for growth is for students to be able to explain their answers in math. A strong component of the program is that skills are built upon and reinforced across content areas. Anna asked if sample questions can be released to families and Sarah said this is a good idea.
- At HANE, Annie asked about disruptive student behavior, discipline and how this impacts student learning during the day. Vanessa said this was a focus during summer institute and revisiting our restorative justice practices.
- Parents' involvement was discussed. Since Highline has such a large number of diverse families, parents might need more help in assisting children with homework.
- Erika proposed having family workshops to help them learn how to help their students with homework and how to carry the discipline that is used in the classroom at home.

Core Values Review - Chris Ferris - Inform (8:01 pm)

Members broke out into pairs to discuss Highline's Core Values and how they believe we are living them out.

- High Expectations, High Support - figuring out what each student needs and finding those resources, structures, curriculum and/or personnel to support the student.
- Students First: Teachers are expected to challenge each other to put students first, even when some

accommodations or needs of students can be inconvenient. Leaning into being pushed outside of our comfort zones to meet student needs becomes the norm.

- Everyone's a Learner - this includes students, teachers and parents
- Intentionally diverse and inclusive community
- Collaborative Leadership
- Reach Values - core of the student character program at Highline and include Reach In (Self Reflection), Reach Out (support others), Reach Up (strive for excellence).

Finance Committee - Marc Furton - Inform (8:10 pm)

Draft Audit

- The draft audit is presented to DPS and approved by the district.
- The audit opinion is unqualified (clean) and financial statements are fairly and appropriately presented, without any identified exceptions, and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).
- There are 2 sets of financial statements: Governmental Wide and Fund Balances. There are some differences between the two: Fixed assets and pension liabilities. The reconciliation is presented as well.
- The long term liability table includes our new bond schedule.
- Ended the fiscal year with \$5.8M in assets across the Highline network.
- Ended the fiscal year with a fund balance of \$2.9M.
- Until the District audit is complete, it will remain in draft form.
- A motion was made by Marc Furton and seconded by Joe Whitfield to approve the draft audit for the 2021-22 fiscal school year. The motion passed unanimously.

August 2022 Budget to Actuals

- We are 17% of the way through the year.
- Funded per pupil count: Currently we are at 498 at HANE (excludes ECE students) and 522 at HASE. These numbers will come in higher after October count and we will update our budget accordingly to reflect the increase. We are currently over-enrolled at both campuses.
- We are slightly above budget on revenue due to 25% of PPR revenue coming in early on in the school year.
- On expenses, we are slightly over on insurance due to rate increases for workman's compensation insurance and work related to the HASE facility expansion.
- Line 14: Special Education is now on a separate line item.

Multi-Year Agreements

- A new financial policy on multi-year agreements per GASB regulations needs to be reworked and discussed by the Finance committee and will be brought before the full Board during the October meeting.

Building Corporation - Chris Ferris - Inform (8:19 pm)

Owner's Rep and Farrington (GC) contract update

- An Owner's rep plays an important role in a construction project because they ensure work has been completed prior to payment being rendered; ensure timelines are being met across multiple parties; have the best interest of the client and help anticipate challenges / provide expertise to guide decisions.
- After a thorough and comprehensive RFP, the Building Corporation selected NV5 to be the Owner's rep for the facility expansion project at HASE. NV5 has identified several items in the Farrington contract to modify, as currently it is too favorable toward Farrington and not in Highline's benefit. The Farrington contract will be negotiated and finalized within the coming weeks.
- Ratio, the architect, is almost ready to submit the paperwork required for permits. It is unknown when permits will be received as the process is variable with the State, City and Denver Water.
- Highline qualified for the moral obligation bonds, which allows us to secure a lower interest rate. In June 2022, we voted to change the scope in the project from a 2-story to a 1-story in light of the sharp increase in interest rates since the fall of 2021. This delayed the project and this requires us to renew our rating with Moody's. This is required after 90 days.
- Moody's will be visiting HASE this Thursday for a site visit. It is anticipated that this process will go

smoothly since Highline has more reserves and more students on the waitlist. The bond market is very variable. We will need to pick the best moment to execute the bind with the help of our underwriter and partners.

Reminders/Announcements – Chris Ferris – Inform (8:26 pm)

- Next BOD meeting: Monday, October 24th at 6:15 pm
- Discussion: Should we keep this in person or move online? We will be observed by DPS at this meeting and need everyone to be present either in-person or online. One member has a definite conflict and will not be able to attend in person. Gwen said if it is preferable for her to not join remotely from Texas, she will oblige. All other members expressed they will be able to meet in person at HASE for that meeting.

Old Business - Chris Ferris - Inform (8:30 pm)

- None

Adjournment – Joe Whitfield – Adjourn Meeting – Vote (8:31 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.