



College Prep in a Small School Environment

## **Peak to Peak Charter School**

### **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**December 4, 2013, 5:00 pm  
Auditoria**

*The Peak to Peak community will inspire students to fulfill their academic dreams for college, to develop their creative passions and athletic talents, and to become responsible citizens.*

**Board Members Present:** Elizabeth Gable, Scott Hudson, Kyle Mathews, Phil Mehalko, Suzanne Ovelman, Kelly Reeser, Greg Richards, Sam Todd, Lisa Walther, Thomas Willetto

**Board Members Absent:** Brad Elliott

**Guest(s):** [See scanned sheets]

#### **5:05 pm Call to order and roll call; Agenda change requests (Mr. Willetto)**

None.

#### **5:08 pm Administrative business: Approval of minutes and consent items (committee appointments; hires) (Mr. Willetto)**

Motion to approve BOD minutes from November 4, 2013 was made by Ms. Gable, seconded by Mr. Richards and approved by the Board 5-0-0. Ms. Walther abstained from voting due to her absence at the last meeting.

#### **5:10 pm Public comments (Community)**

Mr. Todd thanked:

- Elizabeth Begley and Cheryl Sack for their changes in the lunchroom. As a result, lunchroom participation rates are up.

Mr. Mehalko thanked the community for coming out in the cold.

Ms. Reeser thanked:

- The HOD committee for working tirelessly and hard on all the hires for the school
- The Accountability committee for their efforts on the Parent/Guardian Survey.

Ms. Ovelman thanked:

- Panda Smith for her work on the ROAR breakfast, attendance, and the internal survey.
- Sandy Ray for her generosity and volunteer time and Christy Hunter for providing food for the staff meetings.

- Tim Laramie for stepping in and making for a seamless transition in 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies.

Ms. Walther thanked:

- Parents and volunteers that supported the 5th grade Young Ameritowne event.

Mr. Mathews thanked:

- Officer Wendy Stogner for her availability on campus to assist with instruction in health education classes, counseling lessons and with safety and discipline support this fall.
- Tracy Wright for assisting with a range of projects across K-12. Tracy's flexibility and willingness to step in to support our internal climate surveys, grade level initiatives and general student support have made us a better school.
- Virginia Downey (studio art), Elizabeth Leach (Spanish) and Robert Reed (math) for taking great initiative this fall and holding high expectations for students.
- Mary Kathryn Wood for stepping in as Ms. Copeland's long-term substitute this winter and doing a great job with US and AP US government classes.
- Jacob Lehr and Carolyn Janssen for their work on an Innovation grant to secure three new iPads for math teachers. Jake's graduate research led the way to implementing youtube video problem-solving support online for our students.
- Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for great input on safety plans, responses in drills, and collaboration on student-based emergencies.

Ms. Gable welcomed board member Lisa Walther back from her absence.

Mr. Richards reminded the Community of the Feed the Puma event. Mr. Richards thanked:

- Millers Grill for their patronage to Peak to Peak.
- Tom Janssen for his good suggestions for fiscal policy for the school.

Mr. Brandon Bell – Introduced himself as the father of 4 children and co-author of the recall petition. Mr. Bell expressed his concern in the Board's leadership and the precedents that the Board has demonstrated. Mr. Bell stated the action behind the recall petition is to instill faith in our leadership. Mr. Bell endorsed Matt Hill as a recall candidate.

Ms. Jennifer Dauzvardis thanked the Middle School staff members Brian Knox, Manele Short, Monika Bunting, Linda Mace, John Steinbauer, PJ Zoellner, and Yolanda Meiler for their extra efforts in helping and educating her child and other students.

Mr. Andy McClure offered to support as an outside mediator between the recall petitioners and the Board of Directors.

Ms. Sandy Ray expressed that her actions supporting the recall petition was not a personal issue with Thomas Willetto and Greg Richards.

### **5:22 pm Recall Petition (Hudson)**

Motion to accept the recall petition of Mr. Richards and Mr. Willetto was made by Ms. Walther, seconded by Mr. Mehalko and approved by the Board 4-0-2. Mr. Richards and Mr. Willetto abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest.

### **5:25 pm Recall Election (Hudson)**

Mr. Hudson presented the following text to the Board regarding the recall election:

The board was presented with two petitions by email on November 20, 2013. The first petition was to recall board member Thomas Willetto. The second was to recall board member Greg Richards. Both petitions meet the two conditions called out in Section 7.3.1 of the Peak to Peak bylaws: signatures of 10% of voting community and presented prior to four months of the terms expiring. Therefore, a special election will be scheduled.

An Election Committee will be stood up to handle the logistics of the special election. The committee will consist of the following:

Brad Elliott (BOD rep)  
Phil Mehalko (BOD rep)  
Traci Schoeneweis (staff rep)  
Carolyn Janssen (staff rep)  
Joanne Hyman (Accountability)  
Tim Scherr (Accountability)  
Tina Crist (parent rep)  
Leah Rogers (parent rep)

I would like to propose the following to my fellow board members tonight for discussion, after which a final proposal will be presented to the Election Committee for review and feedback by noon next Monday, December 9th:

1. Per Section 7.3.4, the special election will be held one month after tonight's December 4th board meeting. Due to winter break, I propose that the regularly scheduled board meeting on January 8 be an Annual Meeting-type of venue where all of the candidates will sit through a question-and-answer session with questions submitted by members of the community. As per historic precedent, voting will be open for at least one week. I propose voting to begin the evening of January 8th after the candidate Q&A session and continue through 3 pm on Friday, January 17 at which time votes would be counted.
2. Per Sections 7.3.5 and 10.5, in order for a board member to be successfully recalled, at least 66% of cast ballots must be in favor of the recall, and at least 30% of the Community Members must have cast valid ballots.

3. I recommend three separate ballots. The first ballot will be a vote to recall Thomas Willetto. The second ballot will be a vote to recall Greg Richards. Both of these ballots will also include the names of the person(s) responsible for the petition and the reason(s) for removal. The third ballot will list the names of all replacement candidates and will ask the voter to vote for up to two candidates in the event that one or both recalls are successful.

4. In the event that neither recall is successful, the special election shall be considered complete and the board members named in the recall shall keep their seats.

5. In the event that one of the two recalls is successful, the replacement candidate with the most votes will fill the vacant seat for the remainder of the recalled member's term.

6. In the event that both recalls are successful, the replacement candidate with the most votes shall fill Thomas Willetto's vacated seat (as it is the longer of the two terms, expiring June 30, 2015) for the remainder of that term. The candidate with the second-most votes shall fill Greg Richard's vacated seat for the remainder of that term which expires June 30, 2014.

7. Per Section 7.2.6, the Election Committee will run the election and tabulate the results. The Election Committee will present the certified results to the board at the board meeting following the election, which is January 22. In the event of a successful recall, winning replacement candidates shall be installed after signing the appropriate Confidentiality Agreement and completing a background check.

8. The petitions have put forth Matthew Hill and Lisa Blumensaadt as replacement candidates. As with any Peak to Peak election, others should be allowed to submit their names as candidates. I propose that a deadline of Thursday, December 19th be set for persons to declare their candidacy to Traci Schoeneweis by submitting written answers to the standard five questions asked of candidates during the normal Annual Election. The answers from all candidates will be consolidated into one document and emailed to the community on Friday, December 20th.

[Board will discuss during the meeting, and then I will propose the following timeline assuming no changes:

Proposed timeline:

- Wednesday, December 4th: Board to discuss Scott's proposal during the board meeting and submit the proposal to the Election Committee for input/feedback.
- Monday, December 9th at noon: Election Committee to provide final feedback/input.

- Monday, December 9th, evening: Board to hold a 30-minute special board meeting to discuss Election Committee's feedback and recommendation, incorporate changes, and vote on final election plan.
- Tuesday, December 10th: Election Committee to email community with election details.
- Thursday, December 19th: Deadline to be considered as a candidate by submitting written answers to the five standard questions.
- Friday, December 20th: Candidate answers to be emailed to the community
- Wednesday, January 8th: Board meeting and candidate Q & A session; voting begins
- Friday, January 17th at 3pm: Voting ends, ballots counted by the Election Committee
- Wednesday, January 22nd: Election Committee presents certified results to Board of Directors

### **5:25 pm Finance and Budget Committee (FBC) Update (Richards/Todd)**

Mr. Todd updated the Board on the activities of the Finance and Budget Committee. He noted that the FBC was established to ensure that Peak to Peak properly accounts for public funds and to encourage sound financial management. The FBC includes personnel outside the school per the school bylaws. Mr. Todd recognized the FBC members Shawn Williamson, Ken Schrader, Tom Janssen, Louise Peng, Greg Richards, Kelly Reeser and Brad Elliot. Mr. Todd also noted that Ken Schrader will be relocating and a replacement to his position will be needed.

Mr. Todd thanked Tom Janssen for his comments about establishing an investment policy for Peak to Peak funds.

In a recent meeting with Standard & Poor's Mr. Todd stated that S&P feedback included that they use a 108 days cash reserve formula as part of Peak to Peak's BBB+ bond rating. Currently, Peak to Peak uses a 20% cash reserve formula of projected annual expense. The FBC is suggesting we change the reserve formula from 20% to 108 days to be in alignment with the preferred S&P rating criteria.

### **5:35 pm 6-12 Curriculum Recommendations for course name changes – summary of community feedback**

Mr. Mathews summarized the curriculum changes from the November 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. His summary was as follows:

- 1) Name changes to tech courses – removes “introduction” in their titles.
- 2) Name change to American literature
- 3) Pre-algebra to Pre-algebra Foundations.

Mr. Mathews explained that the importance in curriculum nomenclature shows a clear track of student progression and vertical alignment of the curriculum.

Motion to approve curriculum changes was made by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Hudson and approved by the Board 6-0-0.

### **5:42 pm Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Meeting Feedback – Themes & Action Planning**

Ms. Reeser summarized the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) meeting on November 14th. KPI meeting topics included testing, Talented and Gifted (TAG) students, budget performance, employee satisfaction results, and staff compensation. Ms. Reeser noted that the teachers expressed much interest in the testing and KPI data. Teachers also inquired how PARCC changes will impact the school.

Mr. Mathews noted that the flood days were cause for fundamental and strategic classroom decisions about what is important to our students. He noted that the Professional Development (PD) day lost to flooding will not be made up.

Mr. Willetto commented on the compensation KPI stating that “the school needs to be fiscally responsible and keeps teacher/staff raises as Peak to Peak’s highest financial priority.” Mr. Willetto stated that Peak to Peak needs to set its own standards for compensation. Mr. Willetto reiterated that Peak to Peak’s financial priorities as salary, campus build-out and cash reserves.

Ms. Reeser stated that the compensation scale was requested and posted on the website and noted that the bonus structure had the largest discussion during the KPI meeting.

### **5:58 pm Hiring & Organizational Development (HOD) Update (Frisbie)**

Ms. Frisbie reported that HOD has been very busy since the first of August. This year, HOD had 16 openings, 11 of which were long-term subs. Ms. Frisbie stated that HOD members are dedicated to finding the right person even if the school needs to wait to find the right person. Currently, Peak to Peak has 7 open positions.

Ms. Frisbie reported that the Elementary School principal position is now posted and that candidate applications are forthcoming. The Elementary School principal hiring team has been established and Ms. Frisbie is the Candidate Manager. Ms. Frisbie elaborated on the hiring process and stated that the HOD Anchors will vet every application. In addition, HOD volunteers will be reviewing applicants and the staff will participate in the hiring process. Paul Moore and Lori Douglas will be the staff reps for the Elementary principal search.

Ms. Frisbie further explained that the hiring process begins with a phone screen interview with members of the hiring team. After a successful phone screen, a candidate is invited to teach a 30-minute demonstration lesson with pre-selected content identified to be appropriate by the teacher from the classroom in which the demo will take place. Deea Frisbie, Kelly Reeser, Megan Freeman, Suzanne Ovelman, Kyle Mathews, Elizabeth Gable and/or Lisa Walther (as board liaisons) will participate in the interview, as well as other HOD members on the hire. The candidate will be invited for a 2-3 hour interview should they pass the demo phase. For the Elementary School principal position an additional step will include staff demo and the K-12 staff will be invited to attend. A staff survey will be conducted after the staff demo and data from the survey, along with student and HOD feedback will contribute to the hire.

HOD now has 22 members.

**6:10 pm Break**

**6:26 pm Communications Plan to Engage Stakeholders (Board)**

The Board discussed how to improve communications in an effective manner to all stakeholders (teachers, staff, community, etc.) Ms. Walther and Ms. Gable will be responsible for proposing a formalized plan for two way communications with Community input.

**6:48 pm Executive Director of Education (EDE) Report (Reeser)**

Ms. Reeser thanked:

- Melissa Christensen for leading the elementary school and for being the acting elementary principal.
- Suzanne Ovelman for overseeing up K12 special education role that was previously performed by Ms. Christensen
- Traci Schoeneweis for accepting the paraprofessionals oversight responsibilities (also previously performed by Ms. Christensen)
- Megan Freeman and Jen Dauzvardis for developing Peak to Peak’s K-12 flyer

Ms. Reeser reported that several administrators and teachers submitted proposals for conferences. Seven proposals were accepted by the Colorado League Conference. Ten proposals were submitted to the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools’ Conference. Two other teachers, Katy Mathes and Panda Smith, also submitted proposals to other conferences and were accepted.

Ms. Reeser reported that an external Professional Development (PD) staff process has been established. The process begins with a staff member’s application to their supervisor. The application must state how the PD ties into the staff member’s or Peak to Peak’s goals. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will decide how to prioritize and allocate funds for the external PD.

**6:55 pm Executive Director of Operations (EDO) Report (Todd)**

Mr. Todd reported that the Annual Gift Campaign is at \$85k. This is \$15k over last year at this time. For this year’s Annual Auction, Mr. Todd stated that electronic communication signs and Chromebooks for PARCC testing were selected as the primary items in this year’s Gifts from the Heart. Mr. Todd stated that the electronic signs inside on campus have a cost of \$15k per sign and that they would be multi-color, mounted on stone.

**7:05 pm Principal Reports – Middle School Update (Ovelman)**

Ms. Ovelman reported that the Middle School teachers adjusted their curriculum to make up for the flood days from the beginning of the school year. Their adjustments are focused on what is really important to teach. Middle school teachers are supporting good faith studying efforts of

the students and are meeting with students during study hall to assist in studying. This further supports the Middle School's focus on students performance. Ms. Ovelman reported that the fall internal climate survey taken by the students showed strong and consistent results. Ms. Ovelman is investigating how to improve the Middle School climate survey results and why there is a disagreement with other measures (e.g. interviews outside of survey). The Middle School students provided a pancake breakfast to the staff to show student appreciation.

### **7:10 pm Principal Reports – Elementary School Update (Christensen)**

Ms. Christensen reported that the Elementary staff deserves huge kudos for remaining positive and instructionally focused. She noted that the current mid-year testing consumes a lot of time for the teachers and that the teachers have been very dedicated to the process.

Ms. Christensen noted the following:

- Discussions on next year's schedule have started.
- The Elementary School will be integrating more technology instruction to the school. This will help to prepare the Elementary School for the next year testing changes with PARCC testing.
- Ms. Selders, long term sub, is fitting well into the school.
- New math curriculum, enVision Math, is working well and allowing for development of high level thinking. The Galileo assessment was dropped this year but the elementary school has implemented a new K-5 assessment in conjunction with the new curriculum.
- The iPads received from last year are being effectively used every day in the classrooms.

### **7:15 pm Principal Reports – High School Update (Mathews)**

Mr. Mathews reported:

1. Instructional staff are going through their full evaluation cycle or professional growth option meetings focusing on Unified Improvement Plan targets this fall/winter. Staff in their first three years are on formal evaluation rubrics including formal observations and conference meetings, and veteran staff are on professional growth option plans in years 4-7, going back on evaluation in years 8 and 12, as well as meeting for data updates 3 times a year.
2. College applications continue to be a focus for students, families and counselors between now and January 1. We have 2 seniors selected by NYU Abu Dhabi to attend interviews and selection meetings this week (Jhamal Fanning and Cassidy Clark), which is truly exceptional. Approximately 150 are selected globally to attend, and all tuition and costs are covered.
3. The Eye to Eye chapter at Peak to Peak is working very well under staff leadership by Jennifer Willette and student coordinators Addison Lewis and Emily Maersk-Moller. With the work of the high school mentors, they are doing a fantastic job supporting our middle school students with learning disabilities and focusing on their strengths.
4. I host weekly "senior invite" luncheons, 17 weeks in a row, to help seniors plan for second semester, identify leadership opportunities and to plan forward for graduation.



5. The high school staff is working with English teacher, Clara Quinlan and math teacher, Jake Lehr, on a K-12 Service Council international fund-raiser between now and May to support the orphans at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro to meet basic and educational needs. Our dean, Grant Safranek, and I will be duct-taped to the gym wall in costumes and pied, and high school teachers have offered to shave heads and wear bad clothes if fund-raising targets are achieved. Please support this effort which directly funds the orphans.

6. I'm leading the high school staff in an intentional effort to promote balance in our high schoolers to manage stress and think long-term about their future as productive and happy citizens. This also includes research on how to support healthy risk-taking, as well as identify character traits that make for long-term balance. Again, read my blogs on my web page for updates, and your feedback is appreciated.

7. The high school staff is undertaking new tech initiatives around iPad instruction and experimenting with a range of tools and online supports to help students access resources including recorded problem-solving sessions for differentiation.

#### **7:22 pm Future Meeting Topics (Willetto)**

Election Committee for the Special Election  
Committee Communication into Board meetings

#### **7:26 pm Executive Session – Legal**

No executive session was called.

#### **7:28 pm Adjourn (Willetto)**

Motion to adjourn the board was made by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Hudson and approved by the Board 6-0.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Phil Mehalko*

*For the Peak to Peak Board of Directors*