



MINUTES

Full Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, April 27, 2020
6:15pm

The meeting was held:

Online
1-352-775-1377 / PIN: 981 704 083#

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:

Brent Baribeau, Board President
Joe Whitfield, Board Vice President
Eric Neumann, Treasurer
Gina Schlieman, Secretary

Board Members:

Gwen Maurello, Board Member
Brandon Hellwig, Board Member
Kenny Smith, Board Member
Drew Kent, Board Member
Ben Garey, Board Member

Highline Members:

Chris Ferris, Highline Executive Director
Sarah Verni-Lau, Highline Southeast Principal
Guerin Gray, Highline Northeast Principal
Brittany Joyce, Highline Director of Communications
Heather Miles, HASE 8th Grade Teacher
Allison Williams, HASE 5th Grade Teacher
Leslie Branson, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Coordinator, HANE

Other:

None

Absent:

None

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Qualifier/ Outcome</i>
Call to Order – Brent Baribeau – Call to Order (6:22pm) • Quorum Establish • Agenda Confirm / Discuss remote meeting protocol • Mission and Vision restated Attendance was taken, and a quorum identified with all current board members in attendance. The agenda was adopted with no change. Gwen Maurello read the mission and vision. Seeing teachers actively engage with students online and the helpful information in weekly newsletters shows that Highline is working hard to make a personal connection in spite of the unusual circumstances. As part of the mission moment, the Network team shared a video that was created in partnership with the Howard Gomez group, highlighting a portion of the DEI initiatives at Highline. The Board viewed independently prior to its release this week.			
Consent Agenda – Brent Baribeau – Governance – Vote (6:33pm) • Minutes from the March 23, 2020 meeting Brent Baribeau made a motion to pass the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Ben Garey. The motion passed unanimously.			
See BOD Packet for: (6:34pm) • Board policy • Budget to Actuals- Finance report • Remote Policies • Overview of Fundraising plan 20-21 • Master Plan Proposal from Ratio • Board Applications and resumes for Marc Furton and Anna Rogers			
Public Comment (6:34pm) There were no comments from the public.			

Executive Director Update - Chris Ferris - Inform (6:35pm)

Staff Culture Survey

- Highline conducted a staff culture survey in December 2019 using 3rd party research firm Insight, a program of the TNTTP (The New Teacher Project), which provides more details and normed-referenced results that was piloted with Highline for free this year. Insight is independently validated by leading research organizations, and has collected over 375,000 teacher responses from 2,350 schools since 2010. With their data from top performing schools in the country, as a baseline, 45% of teachers plan to stay at least 6 years, and 57% of teachers receive 2 or more retention strategies within a year from their school leader.
- At our Northeast campus, 70% of teachers responded saying they receive specific feedback on how to improve their teaching practice, that feedback improves student outcomes, and that leaders encourage continued learning around DEI. Only a third of teachers said there is a common vision for what effective teaching looks like, and that leaders have modeled lessons where students are doing the majority of the learning.
- At our Southeast campus, over 75% of teachers said interactions between students and adults are respectful, the school is a good place to learn and teach, and school leaders promote a safe and productive learning environment. 38% of teachers said the school assesses whether the professional development provided helps improve instruction, and 52% said families regularly receive useful updates about their student's progress.
- We can use the national top performing school's scores to determine goals per campus.
- We can target specific strategies based on areas where we want to grow and then see if our work was impactful.
- Insight will give us a method to measure the impact of school initiatives such as DEI P.D., changing the teacher evaluations, or changes in the salary scale.

Promise54 Program

- Highline received a scholarship to participate in Promise54's Talent and Equity Consortium (TEC) program. TEC is a year-long experience (April 2020 - May 2021) for organizations in the same region (Denver for this cycle) to work together to strengthen talent and Diversity and Equity Instruction (DEI). They help leaders assess their talent lifecycle including strategy, structures, and culture; determine the effectiveness of current DEI initiatives; and identify gaps in experience and perceptions that drive talent acquisition, performance, and retention. New HR Director, Teresa Fraiser, has joined Chris Ferris and Brittany Joyce in the project prior to her start date.
- The goal: More diverse, equitable and inclusive organizations attract and retain talent from a large range of backgrounds. More diverse organizations are linked to improved student learning and stronger community connections.

Remote Learning Policies

- New employee and student policies for remote working conditions were recently created. Policies were created under the guidance of our lawyer. The policy includes the need for staff to have reliable Internet to be able to work from home. The policies were sent the week prior to the start of remote learning, which began April 7, 2020. Teachers share a weekly plan with parents by 8am on Monday so they know what to expect for lessons, assignments, etc.

Principal Update - Sarah Verni-Lau and Guerin Gray - Inform (6:59pm)

Highlight about remote learning

- Teachers have done an amazing job. They are being creative in approaches in connecting with students. Students are learning and motivated. Plans have been made accessible at all different grade levels. Engaging independent work happening in the middle school, with strong critical feedback for projects.

- Each campus sent out a survey last week to parents and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive about the amount of support being provided for students. Teachers are working upwards of 15 hours a day to support students.
- Providing intervention services for students, special education, mental health via counselors and social workers, providing ELD instruction. Continuing to provide in-school supports remotely.
- One change made early on: heard from teachers that they were overloaded and not having time to plan and record until late in the evening. Created a planning/catch up day for students and teachers on Friday. Lessons are provided by video and not live sessions, keeping equity in mind knowing that not all students can join a class at a set time. Students can opt into office hours and meet with their teachers/interventionists.
- Students have an opportunity to interact with one another each week. Set the expectation that students should not meet on Google hangouts outside of set class times. Students are holding themselves accountable to complete quality work and participate.
- Staff have willingly taken on new roles to support students and fellow staff members, doing work they have never done before.

Enrollment update

- The Southeast campus is over enrolled at 543 students (budgeted at 520). This was a choice due to struggles with enrollment last September, so this provides a cushion. We expect some students to drop and believe 520 is still realistic.
- There is a strong waitlist in Kindergarten and 6th grade, with small waitlists in other grades.
- HANE is over enrolled at 535 students, with 26 additional ECE students expected (budgeted for 531). There are small waitlists in each grade. The district seems to regularly add students during the year, so the struggle will be to not over enroll by too much. There are two large housing complexes slated to open in the coming months; expecting to gain new students as the result of this.
- Considering doing videos to welcome new families and introduce staff, the program to families ahead of the next school year. Brandon Hellwig mentioned some other schools are allowing parents to guest into current virtual classrooms to get a feel for what things might be like next year should virtual learning need to continue for parts of next year.

Hiring update

- Staff retention at both campuses was strong this year, with 90% at HASE and 80% at HANE. Teachers who are leaving are moving out of state or making personal life choices. Zero turnover of homeroom teachers at HANE, which is a first and adds extra stability heading into next year. This is a strong retention rate given the current circumstances with COVID-19, as well as the national and regional teacher shortages.
- We are considering potential ways to use staff differently. For every person offered a position next year, we want to make sure we are not cutting staff and instead move things around in other places should budget adjustments need to take place.

Finance Committee – Eric Neumann – Fiscal Oversight – Inform (7:23pm)

Budget to Actuals

- At the end of March, not much changed from February.
- Revenues are spot on, expenses are a bit under what was budgeted for both campuses.
- Total expense per student is \$11,555, over the DPS benchmark of \$10,500.
- \$113k in contributions and donations. Budgeted \$120k. This is impressive considering the HASE auction was cancelled due to COVID-19.
- May have to make budget cuts given the expected shift in the state's fiscal outlook; principals should look to purchase items this year (hand sanitizer, supplies, chromebooks, etc.) that they know will be needed to be used next year.
- Currently we have 80 days of cash on hand forecasted for year-end June. Per the terms of the loan we are

required to have 60 days of cash on hand. We have \$3.7M in cash today.

- There are 4.94 months of unrestricted fund balance on hand (DPS benchmark is 2 months).
- Under budget for all capital expenditures by \$83k.
- HASE has reached 74% of revenue to budget and HANE 75%. Both campuses have reached 70% of budgeted expenses.

Auditor

- For the last 5 years we have used the same audit firm. It is best practice to change firms every few years. We looked at two proposals for this year and chose the smaller firm with the lesser cost, who also came recommended by the school's business services provider as they had worked together before.

Statement regarding Budget 20-21

- We have approved a tentative budget for next year. COVID-19 is likely to cause a decline in Per Pupil Revenue (PPR). DPS believes it will be a 5% decrease. We should be able to use cash reserves to help offset budget cuts. We will make adjustments to the budget as needed depending on the percentage for cuts. If there is any direct aid to states from the federal government, that may help provide funds to schools too.
- There are staff members at Highline that are worried about their jobs and position. The Board chair drafted a statement that will be shared with staff this week to address budget cuts and help ease anxiety.
- Highline did not apply for the paycheck protection grants because we did not have enough revenue loss to justify from April -May.

Reach Up – Gwen Maurello – Academic Oversight – Discuss (7:47pm)

- STAR Assessment: Will have vertical alignment from one year to the next, with beginning and mid-year data points.
- Writing Assessments are being created in-house, and this was the first year rolling out to students. The data is very insightful at the teacher level; however, not quite helpful to share out trends at a high-level.
- ACCESS (for English Language Learners 9 ELL): This test took place mid year, and is expected mid year next year. So we will have year on year comparison data to analyze.
- Lexia: Campuses can request a report to see which students started below grade level, their growth, their ending position, etc.
- For 2020-21, thinking about more detailed assessments at the start of the year, knowing students have not been in the traditional classroom environment since March.
- Setting new goals: Long-term through strategic planning. What are realistic goals for next year, in light of all that has changed and remote learning? The REACH Up committee will be exploring this.
- In lieu of year-end report cards, teachers will be providing feedback for student performance to help families see how to support their children over the summer, if there is capacity.

Reach Out – Drew Kent – Fundraising Plan - Decide (7:58 pm)

- Initially planned to host a Board-led fundraiser in September. However in light of the economic outlook, the committee is seeking to scale back and start with a solid plan for long-term support rooted in relationship building. Proposing a Board tour plan for the 2020-21 school year where Board members can bring in their network to learn more about Highline and see our program in action. This would provide an opportunity to cultivate prospective donors, strengthen ties with existing donors, and establish a base of supporters that can become evergreen partners and prospects for future events. Board was in agreement to cancel the gala in September and proceed with Board tours.
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Building Corp - HASE Facilities - Ben Garey - Inform (8:06pm)

Hollis and Miller and Ratio Architects were the two finalists. The committee selected Ratio due to their ability to articulate what makes Highline unique. The committee had a kick-off meeting last Thursday. Facilities assessment will commence once the letter of agreement is completed. We are coordinating with CDE after their current BEST

cycle, which ends in May. DAG meetings and master plan work will begin in August.

Reach In - Brent Baribeau - Governance - Vote (8:11pm)

Open Nomination for Board officers for 2020-21

- Marc Furton and Anna Rodgers both attended Board meetings and attended campus tours.
- The committee proceeded to undergo the formal interview process with each candidate. Both come with auditing and finance experience, and have other personal strengths. Anna has experience in security, IT, and is an immigrant and native Russian speaker. Marc is also a parent, has been volunteering on the Finance committee, and has ideas of where he would like to further serve as a member. Eric is scheduled to roll off at the end of his term in January 2021. As we were looking to recruit new Board members, it was important to consider individuals who possessed finance skills.
- Drew Kent's term expires in June 2020.
- Gina encouraged the Board to consider Northeast community members who could serve on the Board in order to balance (Marc and Anna are both Southeast).
- Brent Baribeau made a motion to nominate Anna Rodgers to the Highline Academy Board of Directors effective May 2020 for a 3-year term. This was seconded by Gina Schlieman. The motion passed unanimously.
- Brent Baribeau made a motion to nominate Marc Furton to the Highline Academy Board of Directors effective May 2020 for a 3-year term. This was seconded by Eric Neumann. The motion passed unanimously.
- In the May Board meeting, we will nominate Board officers. The vote for 2020-21 Board officers will take place in the June meeting. Board members are encouraged to nominate officers or indicate self interest.

Review Board Policy

- Board members were encouraged to send questions or recommendations to Gina Shlieman or Brent Baribeau. We will share an updated version for adoption during the May 26th Board meeting.

DEI Board workshop

- Planning to host a DEI workshop for the Board in May via Zoom. Alesha Arscott from Unleashed (Highline's school leadership coach) will bring in Jen Bacon, DPS Board member for Northeast Denver. Will provide an opportunity to learn important concepts about the climate in DPS, history and current considerations impacting students from a DEI lens. We will plan an evening or weekend workshop - a poll will be going out.

Old Business - Chris Ferris - Inform (8:35pm)

- Teacher appreciation week is May 4th-8th
- Friday, May 8th is a non-contact day.
- Admin teams are working hard to collect recorded messages from students to show appreciation, as well as other nice surprises to thank them. In lieu of the traditional Board breakfast for teachers, considering Amazon gift cards to be used for entertainment and recorded greetings. School buildings are not permitted to allow in-person meetings or gatherings.
- Chris Ferris suggested having a committee brainstorm ideas for teacher appreciation and execute a plan.
- The Board was in agreement to proceed with using board-designate funds to purchase a gift for each teacher.

Reminders/Announcements - Brent Baribeau - Inform (8:52pm)

Next BOD meeting:

- Tuesday, May 26 (online)

Adjournment - Brent Baribeau - End Meeting - Vote (8:53pm)

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