

Highline Academy
Board Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2007
7808 Cherry Creek Drive South
6:15 pm

In attendance: Lindsey Friedman, Kim Easton, Ruth Kedzior, Jon Lowry, Peter Zina, Rodney Perry, Frank Tuitt

Guests: Jane Bulger, (Accountability Committee), Pateath Herndon (Accountability Committee), Jennifer Douglas (Accountability Committee), Lynn Davis, Diane Rogers, Tom Bulger, Larry Botnick (running for District 1 School Board Seat), Linda Botnick, Jim Griffin, Brad Beauman

Staff: Gregg Gonzales, Alyssa Whitehead Bust, Monica Hensen, Jamie Erickson, Ken Kosten

Actions/Votes Taken:

- Section VIII: Removal of Barb Casey from the board

Attachments:

- Clicker data graphs of board member responses to academic accountability questions
- Financial Updates
- Letters to the board: Jennifer Douglas
- Declaration of Candidacy: Jennifer Douglas and Tom Bulger

I. Larry Botnick and Linda Botnick

Introduction of himself and various issues for improvement within the school district

II. Approval of Minutes:

Alyssa: Section II: Add the fact that we are not in compliance because we spent more money than our approved budget, but we are in good financial standing. This is noted in earlier minutes (August Minutes) but we need to repeat this in the September's meeting minutes as an audit finding.

Move to approve minutes from September with stated revisions: Frank 1st, Jon 2nd, MPU

III. Jim Griffin: School Closures and Available Buildings

Guiding Question: How would one go about approaching the district for a closed building to lease?

The first step is gaining an understanding of the schools involved (schools that

want buildings and schools that are closing, what can closed buildings accommodate? What are the eventual requirements that the school will have at build out? Can the available schools accommodate those needs? Why is one facility a great fit for HA? We need to make the case around educational, financial, neighborhood/community benefits- a community strategy of sorts- how can this be a valuable asset to the community as well as to the district?)

Jon reminded us of our lease obligations of three more years (we will have to buy out the remaining lease payments- but may allow for subletting)
Peter wondered if there would be more closings (another round or two)
Could the charter school provide a high quality option to a closing school? -
The district has made it clear that they are not going to close schools if they displace students without a better educational option.
It could be a benefit to the district to have HA pay something close to a lease
Where do our students come from in terms of neighborhood schools? It would be helpful to have this information.
Ruth has volunteered to take a look at our boundaries dictated by our contract and see what school closures would apply.

IV. Building Lease Refund

Initially, we negotiated in our lease that our lease payments would be lowered due to the fact that we do not owe property tax. This was an agreement with Dennis Trescott. However, he is no longer the owner and our new landlords would like to just give us \$25,000 per year.
When Dennis was the owner, he went to the city assessor and obtained a number (for instance, after talking with the city assessor this year, the amount would have been \$45,000) and then sent a refund check with that number.
Therefore, \$25,000 is not going to cover what is due. Jon is willing to call the new landlords and tell them that their offer per year of \$25,000 is not acceptable and then we will determine next steps in meeting with an attorney.
The board agrees that this could be a good next step.

V. Academic Accountability and Monitoring

Highline Academy is academically about (taken from the board members/visitors, etc.):
Individual student growth
Preparation for college
Equity
Inclusive excellence
Success in different areas
Personal education achievement
College
Equitable access to college
Maximizing each students' learning potential
Global competition (staying globally competitive)
Preparing all students for academic success in high school and college

Alyssa shared student and parent reflections

Alyssa and Gregg visited West Denver Prep School and took some students to DU

Teachers (Jamie Erickson and Ken Kosten) came and talked about the list of interventions and support (RTI) that are being used- starting this year

Teachers explained that they notice:

Student growth in many different areas

Interventions are working

We are educating the “whole child” not just focusing on CSAP

All assessments provide us with useful information: performance assessments, CSAP, Stanford 10, internal benchmark reporting (internal assessment system)

Assumption: To prepare for CSAP, you would put something on hold- covering content, etc. to do drill and kill

After certain administrative team meetings, they have recurring questions:

Are our performance standards high enough? (internal grading calibrations between teachers)

Are our teachers teaching in a way that is culturally responsive?

Are our internal benchmarks aligned well enough with the CSAP?

See clicker data graphs (Ken Kosten)

Most important to the board:

1) Individual academic progress (as measured by CSAP, internal benchmarks, Stanford 10, CBLA)- finding where the disconnects exist between CSAP and the other data points that are considered

2) Performance grouping- students on certain grade levels

3) Prioritizing achievement gap based on race/ethnicity

Next steps:

Create an Academic Health Dashboard consisting of different data points the board would like updates on

Take a look at contractual goals, current data, and current annual plan to see if these goals are appropriate given the student achievement data that we now have.

If those next steps are taken, eventual outcomes would be:

- The board would be informed as to how administration plans on meeting the goals of the annual plan/contractual goals or any other plan that is derived to improve student performance (e.g. more interventions, more support, different teaching strategies, different PD for teachers, etc.)
- The board would have a monitoring plan to frequently check in and ensure progress
- This process would then revise performance expectations for the administrative evaluation process

VI. Financial Updates

Board reserve expenditures have not been entered into Quickbooks as expenditures yet- Monica will update

VII. Administrative Updates

Enrollment: Budgeted: 460 (actual 458)

Discipline infractions are representative of the number of students in our school, e.g. 50% of infractions are from white students (who are 50% of our total student population)

Data is showing that interventions are not working as quickly or as effectively with students of color

Overall discipline infractions are lower than last year

Academic updates: teachers will assign interventions this Wednesday, 10/10 based on first 6 weeks of internal benchmark data

DU partnership: growing- about 25 different students/doctoral students, graduate research assistants in our building participating in different activities

SPED Services: no longer have a nurse or social worker from DPS

Question from Rodney Perry: given the trend of re-segregation, how are we working to maintain balance in our enrollment process, ensuring that that doesn't happen at our school? So far, looking at our re-enrollment trends, this is not happening.

VIII. Board Development

Should we appoint 2 seats and then open up 2 additional seats which would be filled through an election? Alyssa's concern: make sure to bring expertise regarding cultural competence and/or closing achievement gap based upon race/ethnicity. Also diversity and representation of community members vs. parents are important.

Was the intent of elected seats to be re-elected, rather than appointed, should they want to continue to serve on the board?

The board believes that there should not be an automatic appointments and that Kim and Lindsey will need to decide as to whether to run in the election or wait until November to perhaps be appointed. Some board members have been actively recruiting other possible appointees.

The board decides that there will be an election which will fill two positions, and there should be a competitive process for appointees in November.

Jon moves for removal of Barb Casey from the board, Peter 2nd, MPU due to amount of missed meetings.

Motion to adjourn: Rodney 1st, Peter 2nd, MPU.