



DENVER LANGUAGE SCHOOL

MEETING OF THE DENVER LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 18th, 2019

Location: DLS Whiteman Campus

Time: 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Conference Call (303) 557-5869 Pin 1234

Mission Statement – Achieve academic excellence and intercultural competence through language immersion education

In Attendance:

Board Members

Lisa Peloso, Carter Davidson, Josh Lin, Bryan Snow, Corelle Spettigue, Shawna Mounsey, Parker Schenken (attending by phone), Faye Carronan Chen (attending by phone), Dave St.John-Larkin (attending by phone)

Absent Board Member

Rebecca Rogers, Susan Hennessy

Non-Board Members

Kathy Benzel, Doug Seligman, Robert Newman, Katie Evereth, Rachel Posedenti, Camilla Modesitt, Julie Feeney, Jennifer Malchiodi, Leo Perez

Meeting Called to Order: 6:16pm

Public Comment

Leo Perez - Reading for Ann Konieczny

Ann is a parent of 4th and 7th graders in the Mandarin program at DLS. Active parent in the DLS community, including serving as PTA President for SY 2017-18.

It has been a difficult second half of the year, starting with the mid-year dismissal of her 4th grader's teacher followed by the end-of-year dismissal of her 7th grader's math teacher. Ann feels that there needs to be greater transparency in the DLS hiring policy

and selection process surrounding the hiring of the new math teacher. Her intent is to seek to understand and have confidence in the level of rigor in this process.

Ann met with Kathy and Parker on June 7th to seek to understand steps to ensure a qualified teacher is selected for this position. If the teacher lacks qualification and experience with teaching middle school, then how does the school plan to support him/her.

Leo Perez - While she is not in support of the letter that Ms. Guo sent 7th and 8th-grade parents, the situation raised concerns. She is interested in the personnel policy currently in place. What kinds of performance reviews are in place? Given her long history at DLS, Leo wonders why this is happening so often? What kinds of resources are available to support our teachers? Leo expressed concern about the cultural piece to this. Teachers from other countries need extra support to learn/adopt professional ways to understand better and to have their voices heard.

Jennifer Malchiodi - Jennifer is the parent of 5th and 7th grader at DLS and was a co-author on the letter from the parents to the administration. She reiterated what was in the letter. She expressed both respect and appreciation for the board and the school administration. She states that she has confidence in the administration's decision, however, with the information that surfaced, she has some concerns.

Corelle closed public comment by stating that the board has no authority to make personnel decisions and has no retroactive functions.

Approval of Minutes

Corelle moves to approve minutes from 05/21/19. Shawna seconds. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carries.

Bryan moves to approve minutes from 6/12/19. Shawna seconds. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carries.

PTO - No Report

Executive Director Report - Kathy

Equity Initiative - Equity Front and Center

GALS and Highline Academy

300 staff members from 3 schools

RFPs have gone out nationwide, with the intent that we will have leading experts from Denver and beyond.

Restructuring for Shift of 4th grade to Whiteman

This past year DLS almost had a 50/50 division in student count between the two campuses. With the shift of 4th grade to the Whiteman campus, this coming year will become imbalanced and resources will need to shift accordingly.

Summer Strategic Planning

- Instructional planning

- Materials/Resources allocation

- Network and ED Strategic planning and goal setting

- Principal sp, support and goal setting

Gilpin Campus - Robert

- Asbestos abatement from under the building is currently underway with an estimated completion date of 7/22

- Expecting AP results July 5th 44 students took the tests

- Middle School classrooms will be arranged by subject

Two things bringing to both campuses next year:

- Rolling out a new software package called Atlas

 - used all over the world in universities and immersion programs

 - curriculum development software - has Spanish and Mandarin

 - translation, lessons plan to keep forever. Eva and Yushen did a lot of work to bring this program to DLS.

- Working with the student support team to support teachers in their classroom management

Whiteman Campus - Doug

- MileHi Scholars - 2 kids celebrated with the mayor in attendance

- Chinese Writing Pilot Program for 2019-20

 - Instructional team working hard to provide a slow rollout of writing program

- Summer Camps at Whiteman

- Huge change to IStation data reporting that will provide more specific, relevant school data for parents, teachers, and SAC

Director of Advancement - Camilla

- The big news is the donation from the class of 2019 of \$20,019

- Funds will support the Center of Excellence in Language Immersion Education which will be aimed to provide professional development opportunities for participation from the larger language community, create/build partners, teacher/leadership support

- Funds will also support alumni - linking them to supportive resources beyond DLS

- Annual Fund - Working with Susan on a 6-month plan for the annual fund

-Gala to be held on November 16th. Camilla is asking for continued board support. Momentum for the event will begin to build in August. The theme is "One Team One Dream"

-Student Action Projects (Capstone Project)

How can we do the project moving forward

How to work projects into the curriculum, get kids and staff involved sooner

Human Resources - Rachel Posedenti

-Heading into SY 2019-20, we have retained 82 out of 93 employees

-Hired 8 new staff members for next year. Looking to fill a few more positions

-handbook for staff and parents in draft form. Almost ready to submit to the DLS legal team and DLS Board Governance Committee.

Kathy - International Travel: For the kids who didn't participate in travel abroad, Eva and Robert came up with meaningful projects for them during the 2 weeks.

Financial Update - Bryan

-The DLS 2019-20 budget was submitted to DPS. Awaiting any questions or comments.

-Need to schedule future Finance Task Force Committee meeting.

Facilities - Parker/Dave

Parker and Kathy met with DPS and covered a variety of facilities issues that were mostly related to the Gilpin campus.

Elevator: Considered by DPS to be a "Premium Project" - not much as been done so far, but the project is currently in the design phase. Construction to begin in the summer of 2020, with a goal of finishing by the end of summer. DPS has reportedly allocated \$2M for the project.

Gilpin Field: Not really a focus/priority given to the field by DPS at this time. They are doing a safety evaluation of many school fields. We fall into a few of the safety categories.

-Keep pining Liz Mendez to see where are we in assessment line

-Doing own assessment of the field - scope and pricing

-Using a DPS resource to work on the field

-Fundraise around field improvement

-First Call - report that we have safety concerns about the field. At least fill the small holes/divots.

-Facilities committee to contact a few outside contractors to potentially obtain information about the scope and potential cost of the project.

-Robert reached out to Mario about artificial turf who in turn reached out to the FM at Cole. Mario was told that it was extremely expensive to purchase/install.

Gilpin Heat Mitigation: Certain measures are currently underway. Potentially down the road may be consider a comprehensive pipe replacement.

Pest Control: Will continue to monitor and treat as needed.

Water Coolers: DPS allocates for two water-filling stations. DLS would have to pay for the desired third filling station.

Water quality: Report circulated in 2016-17 that a few faucets tested showed higher lead levels than EPA standards allow. DPS says no lead problem at the school and that outside studies were not accurate. The district tests water quality regularly. Facilities committee will continue to monitor and work with administration and facilities management.

Spare Space: DPS inquired about spare space at the Gilpin campus. The administration replied that DLS is currently all available space at the Gilpin campus.

Governance

Response to Public Comment

-Discussion about coming up with a more defined policy around public comment and response to public comment.

-Lisa and Josh to draft preliminary policy and will return to the board for review and further discussion.

Committee Report Structure

-Question if we should rely more on combined written committee update with verbal report.

-Each committee should have a focus/clear purpose through the strategic plan. The focus might change throughout the year.

-Push committee work to make referrals to board for action

Standing Meeting Meeting Change

-Corelle moves to move the monthly board meeting to the first Tuesday starting in August with the location to be of every month with an alternating meeting site between the Gilpin and Whiteman campuses. Carter seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.

-Bryan suggests throwing \$50 in a pot to purchase group dinners.

Projection of Documents

The pro's and con's regarding the projection of documents during open board meeting. Josh solicited feedback from DLS legal counsel, DPS/Lori Deacon, and the Colorado League of Charters. The consistent recommendation is to *not* project *all* board documents, citing that sharing all documents could engender a culture of scrutiny within the DLS community.

Lisa and Josh to work on drafting board policy.

Executive Session: Dave moves to enter executive session to discuss personnel issues **§24-6-402 (4)(f), C.R.S.**
Shawna seconds. All in favor.

Board enters executive session at 8:07pm.

Josh moves to end the executive session.
Corelle seconds. All in favor. The executive session is adjourned at 8:40pm.

Josh moves to approve a payout to the Executive Director for the requested 42 days of unused PTO prorated by year. Deferring to Lori Deacon and the Finance Committee for the method of payout.
Carter seconds. All in favor. Motion carries.

Lisa moves to adjourn the meeting. Corelle seconds. All in favor.
Motion carries.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:43pm