

**Denver Language School
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2016**

In Attendance:

Board Members Carter Davidson, Kate Blanas, Rebecca Rogers, Kenneth Ho, Lisa Peloso, Josh Lin, Doug Elenowitz, Barbara Medina, Corelle Spettigue

Non Board Members Kathy Benzel, Doug Seligman, Sarah Heim-Smit, Ann Konieczny

Absent Board Members Randy Jeffrey, Matt Wagner

Meeting Called to Order: 6:10 p.m.

Minutes Approval of the October 18, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes.

- Kathy moves to amend minutes to include names of Pam Campos, Moose Mamet, and Karen Klein in the Nominations Update. Lisa seconds; motion passes unanimously.
- Doug moves to approve minutes. Josh seconds. Motion passes.

Approval of the October 23, 2016 Strategic Planning Meeting Minutes.

- Kenneth notes that minutes should be amended to reflect that he called in at the very end of the meeting. Kathy moves to amend accordingly. Kenneth seconds. Motion passes.
- Lisa moves to approve minutes. Kenneth seconds. Motion passes.

Public Comments None.

PTA Updates

Apres Ski Direct Giving Party

Event was held on Nov. 12. Everything was essentially paid for through donations. Event raised about \$10K. Overall, PTA has raised \$42K for the year, which is not bad.

Bingo Night

Will be held on Thursday, Nov. 17.

Colorado Gives Day

DLS is included in Colorado Gives day on Nov. 6. The PTA is pursuing a big push to encourage people to donate.

Money “Gap” Discussion Per Student

Last month someone asked about \$700 gap and where it came from—the number was revised to reflect a lower number. However, because transportation costs will be skyrocketing, as well as other costs, any difference may be offset and, in fact, it may be higher. Kenneth encourages

the group to seek a dashboard to keep track of these costs that vary year to year that might have an effect on that figure.

Special Recognition

Kathy Benzel wanted to take a moment with the Board to recognize Sarah Heim-Smit (DLS' student support coordinator) for her efforts focusing on positive behavior, restorative justice, righting the wrongs, etc. She has been an invaluable resource in training teachers, students, and parents. She has touched hundreds of people at DLS and the team is going to miss her dearly. She is moving on to another district wherein she can pursue a part-time schedule that will allow her more time with her family. The Board wishes her the very best in her endeavors and thanks her for her dedicated service to DLS.

Board Updates

Financial Update – Laurie Deacon (Contracted CFO for DLS)

Rebecca reported on behalf of the Finance Committee. The big variations in the financials are attributable to the inclusion of the Daniel's Fund donation. DLS is currently on target for everything else. Any variances are related to how things true up throughout the year, for example DPS Mill Levy funding, PTA Funding, employee benefits, etc. DLS is projecting a \$22-22K annual surplus. The Board discussed having 3-6 months of cash on hand in reserves for any unexpected emergencies. Right now, DLS has \$2M in cash available.

Bond Update

Kenneth reported on the Bond Update. The Bond passed! Doug and Kenneth met with Liz Mendez, Jennifer Holladay, David Suppes from DPS to discuss long term facilities goals. At the meeting, a number of middle school options were discussed, including shared facility, a facility where an existing school is removed based on their performance, land to build our own facility, and co-sharing a facility with an underperforming school. At this time, there is no concrete direction and will likely be none until at least January because that is when DPS will be having discussions around school performance and action plans. Kenneth and Doug plan to meet with this team from DPS again in January, as well as keeping a regular meeting schedule going in order to ensure that DLS is being considered regularly as planning proceeds on DPS' side. Kenneth also suggests having someone volunteer to be on the Bond/Mill Levy Oversight Committees to assist in facilitating these relationships on behalf of DLS.

Facilities Update

Kenneth provides Facilities Committee Report. Concerns around sufficient kitchen space in the cafeteria were raised and whether architecture plans had taken such concerns into account. Kenneth notes that we have not gotten to that level of detail yet. That said, once the planning process begins, DPS has a formulaic approach to how they expand buildings for school accommodations. However, we can ask when the time comes. When DPS budgets for these projects, they do account for changes/issues that may come up. So, these are the types of

requests that we should communicate to DPS as the process goes forward. We have eliminated the expansion of the auditorium, but hope to do other types of improvements there.

DLS West Elevator Construction

At DLS West, the elevator is ready to go. We are just waiting on the fire department to inspect it. Issues related to security and whether a code or other access restrictions will be imposed are being discussed. More to come.

Board Recruitment Update

None.

School Accountability Committee (SAC) Update

SAC survey was sent to parents regarding perceptions of safety measures at DLS. Overall, the results were fairly positive. SAC will be creating and sending out another survey in the future focusing on academic satisfaction of parents.

Strategic Planning

Carter gave update on Strategic Plan. The meeting on Oct. 25 was productive. The goal is still to have the strategic plan completed by the end of the year. The Board will be meeting again in early December to complete the process. The Board discussed how best to deliver; it was agreed that a strategic plan summary would be posted to the website.

Governance Committee Update

Josh Lin reported for Governance Committee. Board conducted first reading of the proposed amended bylaws. One major focus is to highlight within the Bylaws that the Board does not get involved in day-to-day operations of the school. The Bylaws will now be submitted to DPS for comments/edits. Then, they will be posted to our next agenda for approval.

Principal's Update

- PARC Test Paper/Pencil Waiver

Waiver submitted to DPS for 3rd and 4th grade PARCC Test. We are waiting to see if waiver will be accepted. DPS has a typing curriculum that is free and teaches students to type for test-taking purposes. Long-term, that is the goal.

- Academic Goals - Measuring Literacy in Three Languages Using New Tools

- iStation Literacy (English and Spanish)
- Level Chinese - Literacy (trying to implement as new READ Act Measure for SPF purposes)
- STAR - Math

- Positive Behavior Support

Doug mentions that overall in the last year the number of referrals have dropped drastically; there seems to be minimized angst/tension during transitions from recess and after lunch, which may have something to do with the new Play Works programming. DLS is employing more

restorative methods on the opening end, circles in classrooms, working with Whitney Steele at lunch on Fridays to help students learn how to handle conflict. Anecdotally, the situation seems much improved.

- Instructional Leadership

Principal Kathy is diving into data with Staff and teaching staff how to use the big data for DLS to drive improvements. Staff are starting with big picture and looking for root causes. Next Staff sessions will provide grade level data in small, grade level groups with coaching around growth for students in subgroups. DLS plans to return to regular coaching with teachers by program directors.

- School Cultural and Equity Leadership

Principal Kathy is working with Rosslyn Washington from discovery link about ideas on how to implement projects and initiatives around equity. The District is interested in having Discovery Link programming incorporate some educational concepts about equity, and DLS is brainstorming with leadership as to how to do that.

- Human Resource Leadership

UNC teacher interns at DLS - Chinese Teachers from Beijing Royal School will be arriving through the UNC program. DLS families will be hosting the teachers. DLS will partner with UNC education school on their new Master's in Education for Chinese teachers. We are also adding a literacy support teacher for 3rd-4th grade classes. We added this position in response to scores and our model. That individual will be running reading groups and meeting with students in a smaller setting.

- Measures of Student Learning

The final School Performance Framework (SPF) did not include a response to DLS' request for error correction on early literacy data. DLS is in the green based on other corrections requested for middle school data. However, additional corrections should be made and Principal Kathy is utilizing all her resources and contacts to communicate this effectively with DPS.

Executive Session

Kate moved to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Motion seconded by Rebecca.

- Executive Session began at 8:27 p.m.
- Kate moved to adjourn the Executive Session, Kenneth seconds the Motion.
- Executive Session ended at 8:49 p.m.

Kenneth moves to adjourn the Board Meeting, Doug seconds.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:50 p.m.

