

Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 21 March 2018

Attendance

Bethany Zeyer Josh Cummings Rob Ninow Todd Bingham Andy Lavin Jeana Bonner Eric Christensen

Also Alan Anderson Jeff Gunther Jarom Arhardt Ryan (CEO Athlos HQ)

Standing Items

Called to Order: **6:09pm**

Approval of Virtual Meeting: *N/A*

Motion to *Approve of Meeting Minutes* by **Eric**: Seconded by: **Josh** For: **4** Against: **0**

Public Comments

None

Board Development - Charter Goals

by Jeff Gunther

Jeff trained the board on the major roles that it plays in helping the school achieve its charter goals. He went into detail about what it means for the board to ensure appropriate execution on governance, finances, and academics.

Part of the discussion surrounding performance on state assessments, and Bethany asked what consequences there were if several parents from the school opted out of state exams, to which Jeff explained that there used to be school-level consequences, but now there are only state-level consequences.

Jeff also explained, reflecting on other board questions, about an accountability score that the state issues as well as an accompanying letter grade for the school.

Bethany requested that we do a quarterly check-in on how we as a board are doing with our role to oversee governance. Josh offered that the Governance Committee head that up with Jeff's help.

Committee Reports

Director's Report

by Jarom Arhardt

Jarom Arhardt gave a report on events that the school held, including those events held specifically for recruiting purposes. He explained that turnout was good for the Try It On event and the Literacy Night.

Eric asked what is typically drawing parents to the events, and Jarom answered that athletics was the biggest attractor. Jeff added that the school keeps a record of parents' motivations for enrolling or expressing interest.

Jarom brought up teacher recruitment, sharing a flyer with the board and going over some of the points that it emphasizes.

Eric asked about retention of existing teachers, and Jarom explained that retention is a challenge given the current teacher shortage. Ryan added that it is typical in the first year of a charter school to attract more transient teachers and students and that the third year is when a school really starts to take off.

Jarom detailed the board on the Literacy Power Play that the school has been executing on.

The board discussed how to increase parent support with the power play, as Jarom explained that it has been hard to achieve alignment with parents on the importance of daily reading. Some thoughts from Ryan included publishing or recognizing parents that are doing a great job with their volunteer hours.

Athlos HQ Report

by Jeff Gunther

Jeff accounted for HQ's efforts over the last month in supporting the school. He spent some time talking about chronic absense awareness and then moved to teacher recruitment where there were again questions about what and how the school is recruiting.

Also covered were HQ's efforts with processing enrollments and conducting and tallying a survey about changing the start and end dates of the 2018-2019 school year.

Monthly Financial and Enrollment Reports

by Jeff Gunther

Jeff went over the enrollment reports, noting that the school is still tracking as expected with predicted retention rates.

The board raised various questions about seat allocation per grade that Jarom and Jeff helped the board understand the school's strategy.

Bethany raised the concern that by 8th grade, will enough electives remain for the student to select from. Jarom answered that it is a problem that the administration is still trying to solve while ensuring that each class that is offered is high-quality and has a well-developed curriculum.

Jeff went on to present on Athlos's financial position.

As a side note, Jeff's chart which accompanied the spreadsheet was absolutely phenomenal. The board asked that he make it a staple of the financial report in future meetings.

Specific highlights from the report that the board discussed were additional burden for special education that started in February due to increased enrollment and the benefit take rate being a little high. Jeff hypothesized that the increased enrollment in special ed is due to word getting out about the success of the program so far.

Also discussed was the Other Purchased Services category which is currently accounting for a new expense to transport a student daily to and from a special facility. The board discussed how to account for this in the upcoming year and whether such an expense would continue to be necessary and would grow from its current level.

Overall, Jeff demonstrated that the financial position of the school is still good with 64 days of cash on hand and having a 11% fund balance.

Finally, Jeff represented the January Financials to the board, now that the discrepancy identified last month had been corrected.

Motion to *Approve the Corrected January Financials* by **Josh**: Seconded by: **Rob** For: **4**
Against: **0**

Motion to *Approve the February Financials* by **Rob**: Seconded by: **Eric** For: **4** Against: **0**

Finance Committee

No Report

FACE Committee

No Report (did not meet)

Academics Committee

No Report (Jeana not present)

Govenance Committee

Defer to discussion and action items

Discussion Items

Student Performance

by Jeff Gunther

Jeff presented some student performance data to the board which centered around the rate at which students are progressing towards competency. Specifically, English and Math performance by grade level.

The board asked Jeff about what intervention strategies were being employed and which appeared to be effective. Specifically, Jeff explained that Athlos is currently using iReady test, but not its intervention component due to cost.

Jarom reviewed the assessment process of teachers administering SAGE-centered checkups to the students, then meeting as teachers to do a data dive, then taking action. He explained that they are consistently looking for new ways to teach things to students who didn't grasp the concept using previous methods. He also explained that they combat "teaching to the test" by focusing on rigor, making the teachers' expectations higher than the test.

Then, the board entered a discussion, prompted by a question from Bethany about remedial electives, about how students in need of remediation are receiving more one-on-one time from teachers. Jarom explained that the school has a Griffin Hour where students get help directly from teachers on the subjects that they are struggling with. Jeff added that there may be options to create electives that are focused on reinforcing core principles from a different angle, like using a Finances class to reinforce Math class. Ryan added that there could be value in recognizing students who achieve.

Jeff pointed out that while 2nd and 3rd grade appear to be making progress with the school's current efforts, K and 1st grade's poorest performers are falling further behind and we need to find more effective ways to help them.

Policy Revisions

by Josh Cummings

2008 - Signature Authority Policy - No changes 7104 - Procurement Policy 5201 - Attendance Policy

The board discussed concerns that parents have been raising about how parents are being notified about chronic absence. Most of the discussion was whether or not the specific student's situation was being taken into considering and whether or not the policy should be changed to include additional nuance regarding things like doctors' notes.

Rob added that the messaging could possibly use some softening. Josh added that electronic communication might be cheaper as well as more effective so that parents have a clear way to communicate back to the school. The board also suggested that the FACE committee could take a look at the letter and offer some guidance as to its content, insofar as the FACE committee is comprised entirely of parents.

The question was raised about whether or not the campaign has been effective. Jeff shared some numbers indicating that the chronic absentee rate has dropped by about 25% this year from last year.

Discuss Budget Timeline

by Jeff Gunther & Alan Anderson (in lieu of Esther)

Jeff reviewed with the board the anticipated timeline for setting the budget for the upcoming year.

Alan reminded us that, as we approach budgeting, we should remember that federal funding lags up to as much as nine-months behind enrollment, meaning that for a growing school like Athlos, we will have a budget for about 950 students with an enrollment of around 1050.

Josh raised the concern that right now most of the board is not well-educated on what is a good value for each budget line item. The board discussed ways to remedy that, and Jeff offered to take a couple of line items and break them down next meeting in sort of a “how-we-got-to-this-number” way.

Board Size

by Jeff Gunther

The board discussed recruitment to the board, noting that we, as a board, don't to date have an established pipeline other than an application online and the occasional table at a school event.

Bethany suggested that the board do a retreat this summer and it should be our goal to have new volunteers on the board by then so that they can participate. Josh suggested that we have a goal for each board member to reach out by next board meeting to one individual who they would consider a candidate.

Whose Terms Are When

by Jeff Gunther

Jeff dug through our bylaws to resolve whose term was up when:

- August 2018: Rob and Todd
- August 2019: Bethany and Jeana
- August 2020: Andy, Josh, Eric

Start and End Times

by Jarom Arhardt (in lieu of Esther)

The board discussed the results of a parent's survey regarding moving the start and end dates up by one week. Generally, the discussion centered around whether enrollment was enough of a concern to move the calendar given the impact to families, the traffic analysis, and to teachers.

Action Items

2018-19 Calendar

by Jarom Arhardt (in lieu of Esther)

Motion to *Stick with Option 1 (align with JSD) and revisit if enrollment is bad next year* by

Eric: Seconded by: **Rob** For: **4** Against: **0**

For the record, will state that both Josh and Eric leaned heavily towards 'no', but ultimately voted 'yes', Josh due to the accommodation that Bethany made in the motion to include the option to revisit next year and Eric due to overcoming his fear that his wife would kill him.

Policy Revisions

by Jeff Gunther

Motion to *Approve changes to 5018* by **Josh**: Seconded by: **Eric** For: **4** Against: **0**

Closed Session

by Bethany Zeyer

Motion to *Move to Closed Session* by **Bethany**: Seconded by: **Rob** For: **4** Against: **0**

Motion to *Close* by **Eric** @ 9:25pm: Seconded by: **Josh** For: **4** Against: **0**