

Board Retreat - June 24, 2024

I. Call to Order

II. Strategic Planning

A. Review of mission and vision

B. Discussion of current business model

C. Leadership Structure

1. Proposal: Transition to Executive Director model
2. Reasons for change
3. Pros and cons analysis
4. Current structure evaluation
5. Benefits of Executive Director model
6. Ensuring involvement of seat-based and online directors
 - a. Regular consultation process
 - b. Incorporating directors' input in strategic decisions

D. Staff Compensation and Retention

1. Proposal for school-wide pay increases
2. Market competitiveness analysis
3. Strategies to attract and retain high-quality staff
4. Budget implications and funding sources

E. Addressing challenges:

1. Low enrollment in seat-based 7th/8th grade
2. Overcrowded 1st grade
3. Preschool demand

F. Potential solutions

1. Expanding lower grades
2. Transition plan for upper grades

3. Possible phasing out of 7th and 8th grades in seat-based program

G. Board's role in adherence and accountability

H. Communication strategy

1. Keeping directors informed of strategic planning progress

2. Mechanism for ongoing feedback from directors

II. Open discussion: Tough questions and future direction

III. Lunch Break (12:45-1:17)

IV. Open Discussion and Questions

V. Adjournment

Board Retreat - June 24, 2024

Called to order at 11:28 am

Pledge

Present: Josef Garcia, Mindy Glazier, Jared Griffin, Clare Thompson, Colin Williams, Belinda Yurick

Emily and Mike– Please add your comments to the discussions recorded below:

Agenda:

- Welcome
- Housekeeping/review
- Warm-up questions
- Questions individual board members have
- Strategic road map
- School leadership structure
- Board elections, bylaws
- Staff compensation
- Wrap-up and adjourn

I. Warm-up:

We shared our favorite musician/movie/musical, why we joined the board, and a hope/dream for our school in the next 1 to 3 years.

Some of the hopes:

- 3M antivandalism film on windows and a more secure entryway. (Joe)
- More participation in the board, quality people involved, a finite time for those participating so they do not have to stay longer than is healthy for them. (Jared)
- Project Pencils- providing backpacks of supplies to students in need. (Belinda)
- Sustained community engagement, clubs, school actively open and involved in Crosslake events. (Colin)
- A cohesive team with good leadership which supports staff, students, visitors to the school. (Mindy)
- Partnership with National Loon Center, with active participation from online high school students, and the online platform allowing for creative teacher engagement. (Clare)

II. Questions:

-What is the chain of command/communication for grievances from parents or teachers?

It was pointed out that we can talk one on one amongst board members and can bring to the chair, but cannot as a quorum.

Many things are worked out behind the scenes, eg in finance committee.

If an illegal, immoral, or unethical complaint is shared with a board member, we are obligated

to start the process of documenting and addressing it in a formal manner.

It is important to remember what hat/role we are in when talking with staff or community members.

***It was decided that the Board will request a form be created and put in place for formal grievances. On the form will be a question as to where the individual is simply venting or wishes to take action and fix or find a solution to the issue.**

***Mindy will do this**

III. Strategic Planning

This is where the rubber meets the road, and the Board is to set an example in adhering to it, and hold the directors accountable to following it as well.

The Board asks the tough questions– the mission and vision, and how to stay on this with a correct business model. [the concern of low numbers in seat-based 7th/8th was brought up]

Lunch Break 12:45-1:17

IV. Leadership Structure

Why is a change necessary? What are the pros and cons of an Executive Director?

-Con: Teachers like and choose charter schools so they can have a seat at the table.

(it was pointed out they will not lose this with an ED)

-Pro: The Board is not supposed to be doing any management, but there is no one person responsible for the whole school or any consistency in accountability for each of the programs. We are running two schools with no unifying factor, but conflict and animosity between them. It is easier for the Board to work with one person in managing the whole school which is like a “district.” Now we oversee 2 directors, 2 assistants, and HR. The directors are doing administrative work as well as running the schools, and this will lead to burn-out. An ED can give undivided attention to a unified strategy, efficient communications, enhanced accountability, resource allocation, strategic innovation, alignment with our mission and vision, a business model with revenue streams to achieve it, so that we are not working out of a reactionary bubble.

In particular, there are some hard decisions that need to be made regarding an overfull 1st grade and demand for preschool, and a dwindling middle school in the seat-based school. We discussed possible ways to address this, with widening the funnel at the bottom and developing a transition plan to possibly phasing out the 7th and 8th grades in seat-based.

***Steps and Timeline for Executive Director**

- **Job description drawn up for ED by August board meeting (and subsequent changes to the directors’ job descriptions)**

***Joe will get in touch with Kelly and follow this through**

- **Survey on an ED to be sent out to teachers/community, and completed right away by teachers when they return in August.**

***Who will create and send out this survey?**

- **Compensation package for ED- will be addressed once we are in compliance with the new HCE compensation regulations and the discrepancies in our teacher compensations are addressed.**

***Who will (Joe?) follow through on this?**

Break 2:30- 2:35

V. Compensation

-Mindy studied the differences between pay scales of licensed teachers and SPED teachers, noting there is approximately \$10,000 discrepancy. SPED teachers are paid on par with local districts, while other teachers are far below. She studied ways to make this more equitable. The cost is formidable. We discussed ways to address this, such as lessening the steps and offering greater COLA for licensed teachers. We will bring to the financial company to see the full balance sheet and the wider lens on our financial picture. Our chair, Joe, was adamant something should be done immediately to address this by our July meeting. But a longer range goal is to unify the teacher pay scales.

Also in this discussion was the low compensation for PTO, which is less than individual teachers' hourly wages. Also discussed was the inability to carry over PTO and to only be able to be paid back for 5 days unused. ***PTO will be tabled for a future topic to be addressed.**

-A more urgent issue is the new legislation requiring new salary thresholds for exempt and Highly Compensated Employees by July 1st. Much discussion ensued regarding this information.

***Joe will communicate with Jenna, Andrea, and our financial company (also Rhonda?) regarding compliance on this issue. He will also be in touch with the financial company regarding a short-term solution to remedy the discrepancies in teacher pay scales. These should be action items at the July board meeting.**

VI. Bylaws and Board Elections

We decided the retreat is so effective that having a retreat twice a year would make the board much more efficient (June and January). In Between these times, a special topic workshop should be added in for moving forward on topics. ALL BOARD NEEDS CEUs- EMAIL TRAINING CERTS TO PAULA.

***Belinda will ask Osprey Wilds about the compliance for training (and old members leaving) with the change to August 2025 new member swearing in.**

Changes to Bylaws: PAULA**

A board member may complete his or her term (based on elected representation) regardless of change of status (of representation) during that term.

Nix: “parent must have student enrolled for one year” and change to “Parent must have a student currently enrolled in CCS.”

Add these clarifications regarding appointees (if a withdrawal):

–If a parent is elected and withdraws, then the board seat will go to the next parent who ran with the most votes- regardless of whether that parent is seat-based or online.

–If a teacher is elected and withdraws, then the board seat will go to the next teacher who ran with the most votes- regardless of whether that teacher is seat-based or online.

–If a community member is elected and withdraws, the community board seat will go to the community member who ran with the most votes or remain vacant until the next person steps up.

The appointees will complete the two years of a full term.

If no one from a representation of seat-based parent/teacher or from online parent/teacher is running by a certain date– then the field is open for any teacher or any parent to run.

Timeline of Elections:

- 1. Paula please mock up and highlight changes to the bylaws by the July or August board meeting so it can be approved.**
- 2. The faculty will vote on the change in the bylaws when they return in August. *Who will create the bylaws voting form?**
- 3. September board meeting- bylaws approved and nominations opened.**
- 4. Elections towards the end of October (must be done by Nov. 1).**

Motion to adjourn: Yurik

Seconded: Williams

Board Retreat adjourned 4:40 pm