

Sophia Huda:

Hi, Latoya.

Latoya:

Hi. How are you today?

Sophia Huda:

I'm good. How are you doing?

Latoya:

I'm doing good.

Malik Russell:

Anyone have any insight on how many people are coming in late? I know there's some people that are coming in late. I wonder if we should get started, or wait for any particular people?

Aaron Bothner:

Good evening, everybody.

Aaron Bothner:

Let's see here. I believe we have six as of right now. Did I count that right? Unfortunately, I-

Jessica Boulet:

We have seven.

Aaron Bothner:

Seven?

Aaron Bothner:

We're at quorum here. Malik, I think we can go ahead and get started. I know Michael's not able to make it. I just did speak with Anuj who passes along his sincere apologies. He, unfortunately, has come down with COVID so he's going to have to sit tonight out. Says he hopes you all have a wonderful end of the year and a happy holidays with you and your families.

Aaron Bothner:

Otherwise, as long as we have quorum, I think we can jump in.

Malik Russell:

Sorry. Good evening, everybody. Appreciate everybody for showing up. I'll apologize in advance, I'm pretty under the weather. I've been dealing with a flu issue for this week and so really do apologize. I will try to maintain the energy and we'll rely on the people that are better at stuff than me anyway, Melissa and Kurt, to Keisha and Latoya to fill in where I cannot. And so I appreciate that. Let's get started.

Malik Russell:

Once again, want to just appreciate everybody for showing up, being present for today, and then also just make sure that [inaudible 00:12:30] are being productive and getting through this. It seems like since I've been talking to you, a very difficult time. Also, best wishes for Anuj and hope that everything is fine. Thank you for letting us know about that, Aaron.

Malik Russell:

We were going to start with Anuj who is not here. That was the plan, right? We were going to do the mission statement piece, start with that? And so now-

Sophia Huda:

Hi, good evening. So sorry to cut in, but he did ask me to fill in for him. I will turn my camera on.

Sophia Huda:

Can you see me?

Malik Russell:

Yes.

Sophia Huda:

He didn't tell me I had to read this. He said I can say what it means to me, is that fine?

Malik Russell:

The first portion is to read the mission out loud to everybody because we love a dramatic reading.

Sophia Huda:

Oh, dramatic. How dramatic would you like me to get?

Malik Russell:

How dramatic are you?

Sophia Huda:

[crosstalk 00:13:32] Academy Award?

Malik Russell:

So then we do that and then you'll have a reflection on that portion. Thank you.

Sophia Huda:

No worries.

Sophia Huda:

Am I reading this entire thing?

Malik Russell:

It's not that long. You're making me feel very wordy when you say that.

Sophia Huda:

No, no, no.

Sophia Huda:

At Nuasin Next Generation, we believe in the unlimited talent and intellectual potential of our scholars in our community. We cultivate this talent and intellectual potential through a progressive education that focuses on deep exploration, thoughtful questioning, relentless curiosity, and critical thinking.

Sophia Huda:

Nuasin Next Generation Charter School implements a progressive K through 12 educational program and an unyielding commitment to cultivating our scholars innate intellectual talents to empower our graduates to achieve excellence in their post-secondary paths and make positive impacts on the broader community.

Sophia Huda:

Every single one of our scholars have the potential to be great and change the world at Nuasin Next Generation. We prepare our scholars for that opportunity.

Sophia Huda:

With that said, I think this means, as school leadership, as a board, that in current terms, we understand the assignment. Meaning that we know what it is to live in the present, but most importantly, prepare the students and the scholars for the future. We understand that diversity, global leadership, and I say the importance of education all around, and that it can't just be a level playing field. We have to educate our scholars to be one step above the norm.

Sophia Huda:

That's what the mission means to me. I think collectively, as we move into this next year, this next phase of Nuasin, that it would be, excuse me, a time to prove what has been put forth in front of us.

Sophia Huda:

Is that good enough?

Malik Russell:

Better than good enough. That's great. Thank you so much for sharing. Really greatly appreciated this thoughtful time. I really do appreciate your words and I do want to center around the mission. I know we do the three pillars often, but I also want to get the larger portion, and I appreciate the directness of the task at hand.

Malik Russell:

Now I will turn it over to Aaron to formally get this started.

Aaron Bothner:

Great. Thanks Malik.

Aaron Bothner:

I will, first and foremost, here, just officially call us to order. It's 6:44 for the purposes of our minutes here. And then the next thing that I will do is take us through the agenda per usual just to make sure that we are all on the same page about what we're going to be covering over the next little bit here.

Aaron Bothner:

I believe we have a, more or less, traditional meeting. We'll go through our school updates in the order that we usually do led by the school staff. We will then run through finance committee updates. Run through the committee updates, starting with finance committee and then education, external relation, and then public comment. We've pushed the board governance out to a little bit later with just two items there. And then that'll be it for tonight.

Aaron Bothner:

Is anything missing from the agenda, or anything not covered here that we need to add at this point?

Aaron Bothner:

Okay, great. Great. My work here is done. Malik, I'll turn it back to you.

Malik Russell:

Great. Since I went out of order per my usual, I believe ... if I don't have an agenda right there I do things out of order. I think now we can get started with the school update and my executive update, which will be a little shorter this week, just to be upfront. A portion of it is, I've been very under weather and not been able to do as much. But will go through the executive summary now and give a full feel of where we are as a school.

Malik Russell:

Wanted to start with, which I actually think is pretty impressive, we're still, from our scholar standpoint, lower than we want to be. We're at 92%, basically. And so we're still trying to get more people in the building on a daily basis. As you'll see, nine through 12 is still a tick below K through eight. We're still trying to make sure that we are doing that on a better basis.

Malik Russell:

Obviously, I think some of our absences has to do with COVID and other outside constructs that are impacting us. With doing that, we do feel that in general, especially from a K through eight standpoint, we see kids running in school, we see a lot of investment in the school as well. And truthfully, we are seeing an increase in that in our nines through 12 as well. Hopefully we'll get a chance to see if those numbers reflect that, especially when not distorted by too many other things.

Malik Russell:

From a staff standpoint, we are doing better with teachers. The truth is, these numbers look better than what they really are. We still need to get more people all the time. I actually want to raise this goal for

our staff being in at all times. We have a lot of excuse absences and other things, and that's a lot of push on our system. We're still building more and more of that throughout the school as far as investment and being in every day. But there are also just a lot of outside reasons why people are not in and so we understand that, but still need to make sure that we are doing that better on a day-to-day basis.

Malik Russell:

Kurt, Melissa, have anything to add to that from a attendance standpoint?

Malik Russell:

I'll take the silence as a no and just keep going.

Jessica Boulet:

I was waiting for Kurt, sorry.

Melissa Alston:

I would just continue to remind everyone that we do have a lot of siblings in the school. When one person is out, normally you have the whole family out. So I think while the numbers are the numbers, I think it's good to just continue to provide that context.

Malik Russell:

Thank you. Appreciate that. It was good. I'd still rather look at it as bleak because we have to get them better. But we have to be more understandable, especially with our populations.

Malik Russell:

Next slide, please.

Malik Russell:

We had our second quarter IA data. I'm sure Kurt will go over this with much more specificity as I do. One of the things that we want to make sure that we do on a monthly basis, and hopefully you guys appreciate this, and if you want more, let us know, trying to show you the data that we have on a monthly basis. Our academic data is at the forefront of what we are doing and so we want to make sure that's at the forefront of how you think about it.

Malik Russell:

So we had our second quarter IA data. You can see the averages here. The averages range from 44% to 64%. Our pass rates range from 10% to 51%. You'll see some of the lowest numbers in third grade. That's not as alarming. The alarming portion is that the numbers are so low. It's not alarming that the third grade numbers are that low because they're newer to the system. Especially given COVID, you're going to see a lot of very new constructs in there. You're going to see a lot of kids really struggling with just the IA and assessment concept. That's something we're thinking about. Still well below the numbers that we're looking for. Even our highest number's at 51%. I'm telling you, we should be at 80% pass rate. So that's still substantially below.

Malik Russell:

I think we are digging into the data. Had a very good conversation with some of the ELA people as well as other people about how to look at the data, where we see growth, where we don't see growth, how we look at it, and make sure that we're being very specific. This is what it is. It's not where we want to be at, but I do like that this is at the forefront of what we're talking about. And it's at the forefront of Kurt's mind. It's at the forefront of Mr. Brown's mind. It's at the forefront of my mind. If you talk to teachers, you talk to our DOIs, our APs, we are all talking about data on a daily basis. I guarantee you that these numbers will continue to improve as long as we continue to do that.

Malik Russell:

Go to the next one.

Malik Russell:

For the math data, you'll also see here, we have in eighth grade, we see our lowest [inaudible 00:24:10] with a 2% pass rate. We're doing new curriculum there and need to make sure and see what that ... why that number's so low. But you'll see it in seventh grade, you really don't like to see it going down. As you saw before, third grade was the lowest in math. We actually have seen a decrease in pass rates and decrease in average as we go up. We're trying to figure out what that is. Part of that might be on the delay, the higher grades. They have more big math concepts that maybe they're missing that we need to fill in. But we are trying to utilize this data to really think about that.

Malik Russell:

One thing to just see is if you look in eighth grade, if you look at the percentage, the average collect and then you look at the pass rate, that means there's a lot of people that are in that range that could move up to a higher pass rate in a short amount of time.

Malik Russell:

Thank you.

Malik Russell:

If we look at our ELA growth rate is, from second quarter, we actually saw significant growth in a couple grades. [inaudible 00:25:32] obviously fourth grade, third grade, and eighth grade. As well as 11th, as well. We are looking into the fifth grade cohort and why we're seeing significant loss there. We haven't figured that out yet. We're looking at the specific tests and looking at the specific passages to figure out what's going on there. From our observations and looking at the teaching and the teaching, this doesn't make sense with what we would have thought to see. And so we are going to get further into data to figure this out. I had some conversations about that today and thinking about what we need to do, what we need to look at to understand why we have this loss in the fifth grade.

Malik Russell:

Truthfully, to be totally honest, I expect to see more of a gain in the seventh grade because I feel like the teaching is going up, and so we want to really move forward on that. And so we are looking at this not only as the growth rate over and over, but more importantly, looking at the data to figure out and use it to diagnose what we need to do to go forward.

Malik Russell:

Go to the next one, please.

Malik Russell:

Then, as you see, looking at the map data again, you see third grade, you have a lot more growth in it. But they're also a lot lower if you think about to the last portion of it. Also, seeing that sustained growth in the eighth grade piece, but still, the numbers aren't where we want them to be. When our numbers are so low, growth rates aren't as indicative. So I think I'm looking at them more on the third grade data and the sixth grade data than the other spaces. Myself, Kurt, and Mr. Brown have really identified math as a place that we feel we want to invest a lot more into, and make sure that we are seeing better, more dividends. As you invest, you want more dividends.

Malik Russell:

That's where we are with the second quarter IA data for math.

Malik Russell:

Melissa, can you go to the next slide, please?

Melissa Alston:

That's it.

Malik Russell:

Oh, that's it?

Malik Russell:

That's our data update. Also wanted to take some time to give you a little bit of a renewal update. Also, I'll ask for some more input from Kurt and Melissa on this.

Malik Russell:

We did also have our parent hearing portion of the renewal which I feel went really well, and wanted Kurt and Melissa to spend some time talking about some of their thoughts on that, on those hearings.

Malik Russell:

Kurt, I'll let you start.

Kurt davidson:

Sure.

Kurt davidson:

It felt really nice having the parents. We had a couple of ...

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:29:04]

Kurt davidson:

It felt really nice having the parents. We had a couple of, approaching a couple dozen, families sign up to speak. Melissa and her team, Claudia and her team did an amazing job of reaching out to families, getting hooked up with Zoom. It was a very nice feeling where there were two renewal hearings. We were the second one. The first school had a couple of parents. It was very prescriptive where ours was very authentic and true. We had a diverse subsection of families. From families who have only been with us for a year to families who've been with us approaching six, seven, eight years. Really nice to have the broad spectrum representing the entirety of the school, and feel like they did a really great job of showcasing the community aspect of our three pillars. Overall felt like it went well, and it was a good supplement to all the work that we did in the prior weeks with the renewal visit and the interviews with staff and the board.

Melissa Alston:

I wouldn't add anything. I think that was a very good summary.

Malik Russell:

Yep, so if anyone has a question on my update, please feel free to ask. Don't feel bad about asking either. Aaron, you had some questions.

Aaron Bothner:

Mike, I threw a question in the chat, but maybe more it's great to start to get consistent insight into this data. I know several of them you identified we're really trying to dig in here and figure out what's going on. Could you maybe just walk the board through what that process looks like internally? How you all are approaching, pulling it apart? I don't need every detail. Just curious how this evolves from here.

Malik Russell:

Yeah. When you see data, especially when data is surprising, you want to get a little more detailed and granular in it. You start looking closer into, okay, let's look at these passages. Let's say fifth grade, for example, where we saw loss. What we're now going to do is we're going to go take a look at the passages and think about them just in kind of an objective way as was this a very hard passage? What do we have more fiction/nonfiction? Was there a poetry passage? Was there certain things that everybody got wrong? Were there certain questions that everybody got wrong?

Malik Russell:

We could look at the data and obviously we're going to look at... Data means more things than just numbers of right and wrong answers, but also looking at the scholar work and how in depth. We're going to look at that. Also look at was annotating at the level we think it is. What do the main ideas look at? Were kids that didn't have access to certain portions of it? We will start matching that with our F and P pieces. Basically, it's a systemic breakdown further into trying to find the root cause which means looking much closer at each individual test and each individual kids score. Start to find some correlations to see where we got this data and what we need to do going forward. I know that might seem bored in a lot of words in a way, but did that make sense to you Aaron or no?

Aaron Bothner:

Yeah, yeah. It does. I think of... What I'm interested to see is just how you're thinking evolves once you get your arms around this. I know 50, if not 90%, of that battle is building a data set. Just want to start



understanding more at least from 50,000 feet. What our themes are, what we're working on, what we're developing. I think where I'm coming from on this transparency for everybody is just I think it is prudent and good governance for each board member here to keep in mind that we should be able to talk through at a high level what the school is working on and tacking strategically within the academic space. I want to make sure that going forward, board members are prepared and also understanding, actually have their arms around, what's happening with the academics of the school. More to come. As you're thinking, Malik, Kurt, Melissa it sure will evolve with you. I want to know that we can speak to it too.

Malik Russell:

Right. Just to be clear, and Kurt could talk more to this, that was more granular look at how we look at data from a larger say, from an ELA standpoint. We are still focusing on work habits. We're still focusing on meaningful annotations and meaningful instruction regarding understanding passages. Our comprehensions at the forefront of what we're doing, as Kurt talked over, the time we're pushing out guided reading to really push this better reading skills that are transferable. From a large standpoint, our data's not going to change that. Our data's just trying to get us better at tinkering what we need to do within that. We know that from ELA reading standpoint, we need to build these reading skills, and we need to build those reading skills within our instructional teams and within the students.

Malik Russell:

Additionally, when I say that we want to make these moves in math, we need to make sure that we are building this understanding from a structural level. What conceptual math looks like, and make sure that our kids are showing thinking at all times. We are pushing that in broad based terms. Those would be the ideas that would be the larger terms of what we're doing. The broad based things that we're focusing on is, from ELA, we feel like we are going the right path, but making sure that we're really getting these work habits right. That illustrated thinking and understanding and transferable skills for math. We're a little bit behind. We're trying to make sure that... As adults, we understand what conceptual math looks like and make sure that we are seeing thinking on paper so that we can then address problems that as we see them.

Aaron Bothner:

Great. Thank you.

Malik Russell:

Does anyone else have any questions? Okay, great. With that, I will turn it over to the definitely more energetic Kurt Davidson.

Kurt davidson:

All right. I will try. Thank you, Melissa. All right. I'm actually going to go quite granular and highlight a lot of the things that Malik already stamped. Hopefully, you'll get a good close look at it. What students are actually doing and where this work lives with the students.

Kurt davidson:

First, want to share culture snapshot this week is our talent shows. We have our theater teacher. Miss Ashley's been putting on for grades K through four her winter showcase. We are very excited to,

hopefully soon, have a gym with a stage where we can perform here, but we made do with our NPR. Throughout the week, due to COVID reasons, we've been having different grade levels per day. Here's just a sample where on the left side we have first grade in the center. We have on the center top, we have second, and K at the bottom right. Different groups of students who perform different holiday songs throughout this week. Then tomorrow we do have our winter dance showcase. If you do follow the school on Facebook, you've probably gotten some live notifications, and here's a plug, follow the school on Facebook and the live notifications.

Kurt davidson:

Go ahead and move on forward. I want to go through... I intentionally pulled out some work samples from last week's IA, intentionally pulled out grade levels, and wanted to share the type of work that we're doing on the leadership team. Then obviously with teachers tomorrow as we go into a deep analysis in the afternoon. Obviously a lot of this will look very familiar to Khari, but for the whole group, I want to make sure you all see how we are approaching the close reading when it comes to our students taking a reading assessment.

Kurt davidson:

You'll see the yellow arrows point to these things that we call thinking jobs. Depending on the genre, students have different thinking jobs. Among the younger students, they for fictional texts, they're looking at characters, the problem, the solution, and then the lesson learned. Within that, when we get to seventh and eighth grade, we're really looking into the deeper meaning. Throughout we're looking at the deeper meaning, but we're really emphasizing that the older scholars get. We're looking for quality annotations, and then we're looking for a really good main idea. That's the prerequisite before we even get to kids tackling the questions and our analysis.

Kurt davidson:

My work sitting with both Mrs. Culler and Ms. Ripple, who lead up the ELA teams in three through eight, has been all around the student work. We've been looking at student work. I wanted to show you side-by-side where, initial look at things, these two pieces of student work are oh wow they have great annotations. There's a lot of stuff marked up on there. However, when we look deeper, the one on the left has... The main ideas are on the next page. I don't have it in there. But has an accurate main idea, has the accurate genre thinking jobs, has quality annotations that gets the understanding of the text and leading to the main idea. The one on the right side does not have a good main idea. The main idea is not even accurate when you look at what the text is but it's there. When we're looking at the work that we're doing with students, this is the type of work that we're spending time with leaders first and then teachers tomorrow to go into.

Kurt davidson:

Traditionally, when you look at, we have interim assessments, that data analysis and action planning, you spend a lot of time diving into the numbers, diving into the standards. We are taking that step back and diving into exactly what kids are doing before they even get to the questions. While also looking at the overall growth and data as a whole.

Kurt davidson:

Melissa, you can go on. We have eighth grade in the second group. This can show you where, as students get older, you still have these thinking jobs up here. We are seeing a ton of growth in eighth

grade this year despite there being a first year teacher. He was a NYU intern last year. We saw tremendous growth in eighth grade surrounding the IA. Granted the students did start at the highest level. However, when you look at their work habits, you look at their texts, the eighth grade is at the next level as compared to other grades within the school. We're using a lot of eighth grade work as examples, for exemplars, for our discussions with teachers tomorrow in the professional development. You can see it really levels up to where it is.

Kurt davidson:

What we're trying to emphasize with teachers, specifically, is even students who are in eighth grade and even students who are reading above grade level, when they annotate, when they are really going through our process of deep understanding of the text, and they're determining the main idea before they even get to the questions, even our older students are using this to deeply understand any text they come across. We know that we've seen a lot of success here. We really want to leverage that success in eighth grade to trickle downward to lower grades.

Kurt davidson:

When it comes to ELA, what we're looking at next, go ahead Melissa, is transitioning into our strategic reading plan. What we did with this, with our analysis, we had [Pulamar 00:42:10] Consulting in this week with leaders, myself. We spent the bulk of half a day, in the morning, really diving deep into the actual student work.

Kurt davidson:

We made a theory that... In fifth grade, for example, our theory of the case... We haven't disclosed this to teachers yet because we want to lead them to get to the same point. We want to lead them to realize that. If you look at the actual types of questions, it's not the specific standards where students were making errors. Students in fifth grade, specifically, were struggling with write their questions. Questions where they refer back to the text. If they were able to really go into the text and refer back, that the answer is right there. Our fifth graders actually did quite well with inferential questions which is really helpful to know that they're able to think deeper. They're able to bring in that external knowledge that they have and background knowledge and context, real world context, into the text. That's a hard skill as itself.

Kurt davidson:

For fifth grade, our big focus, and where we're hoping to lead teachers tomorrow to, is that they need to focus very explicitly on students going back to the text. We believe that using the strategic reading plan will be really useful for this. This is a natural transition. We plan on rolling this out in January, anyway.

Kurt davidson:

This is another example of eighth graders where you notice, when we compare to math, you're used to showing work in eighth grade. You're used to showing work in math across grade levels, but you can see in eighth graders, there's a heck of a lot of work that's being shown on these ELA questions and they're employing strategies. If you look on the left side, you can see where these strategies... You have number one, the genre and thinking jobs. You have the annotations, number two. The main idea, one through three. What we're looking over here is that number four, and we're really expanding upon this throughout. This is going to be something throughout for ELA. Throughout the grade levels. I feel like we have a head start in eighth grade because of where they started which is really great.

Kurt davidson:

If we transition to math, I definitely agree with Malik. Just today Mr. Brown and I were sitting with Ms. Whitehead and our math coach and really trying to wrap our heads around many different trends that we see throughout mathematics from K through 12th. The root of everything is, and I know Malik's had y'all do some conceptual math, but I really wanted to show within an IA why we're making this move to conceptual math and why this is important.

Kurt davidson:

We have our highest performing sixth grader as a top work sample here. We have a problem that's not incredibly complex. It does require you to read and think about it, but it is more so a reasoning problem where you're having to really look at the logic. Our student on the top, she went through and did all this work. Went through, you see very procedural in nature. There's formulas. She's doing, looks like some keep, change, flip action. Things that we really don't love. The tricks of the trade. Got the wrong answer.

Kurt davidson:

We have a student who overall on the assessment did not do as well, and it's not as high performing a student. Read the problem, analyzed the problem, and created a double bar graph that was very straightforward and simple. Where visually you can see, if you look at logically and you reason through here, all it takes is doing a quick look and drawing an image there. This is the type of thing where we're getting to that concept of what are we trying to really do with math? It's not just, here's this, here's this formula. We're going to go ahead and do PEMDAS, it's cute. It's really like, what is math?

Kurt davidson:

If we go to the next one, Melissa. This is also sixth grade. We're seeing one of the big areas, as well is, we're looking at, where analyzing math is kids either checking their work or using multiple strategies to get there. What I want to see is, I want to note here is, two students who got it right on the left side. Question number 20 here. They visualized this. These were different students than the ones before. They went into this problem. They visualized the problem. You see their marking of the text. They're trying to figure out what it's actually asking. They drew a visualization of this, and they were able to get to the answer.

Kurt davidson:

Where the student on the right side, who tried to set up an old school proportion. I'm sure this X here where they cross multiplied is very familiar to many of you from middle school math. If you look here, she did a lot of mess here and ended up getting the wrong answer. There's so much room for error. While I appreciate there's a lot of work there, just like in ELA, we're looking at what the work is actually showing us and the theories that it's showing us.

Kurt davidson:

Malik, you wanted...

Malik Russell:

Yeah, I think this is great. I think this gets to the portion. If you look closely at what the problem's asking you, you can see that to the right it looks like they're doing a bunch of "math". They're doing but no understanding.

Kurt davidson:

Right.

Malik Russell:

Right. The problem is if you lead with procedures, it doesn't show understanding. It just shows procedures. Actually it shows a lack of understanding. If you just read the question and think about it, you'll see to the left both of those are people that understood the question. Thought of simplistic ways to understand it. Rather than thinking about I need to do. I think you see that in both examples in math. This understanding about conceptual math it's not some different concept. If you are decent at math, that's what you do. What we've realized is that when people learn math and procedures, large portions of people don't think they're good at math. Because they learn procedures and try to apply it to anything that they see rather than thinking about questions. They come up with strategies which is why keep, change, flip works. Somebody thought about it, and they came up with a strategy based on their understanding, not just a strategy based on a strategy. Does that make any sense?

Kurt davidson:

Yeah. Absolutely. I think when we're looking at where we are working with our teachers, we have a long way to go in mathematics. I think that is a pain point. You know, Malik, myself, Mr. Brown, we spent a lot of time thinking around just math in general. You look at teachers who have really embraced this change, when going gets tough, we go back to what we know. Our push is, even in sixth grade where we've seen so much progress with students using different strategies here, we are pushing the teacher to whenever kids are struggling with the concept to really understand it. No, no, no. The trick is not to go to the easier procedural way. That will work for most of your students who are at the highest end because they can apply that. They have that number sense, but students who are still trying to access the math, still trying to understand and just grapple with what is the question asking, that is actually detrimental to them.

Kurt davidson:

This is a big push on teacher development. We're looking at how we're presenting this work to teachers tomorrow. I just gave you a snapshot of sixth grade here, but we've embedded different grade levels as well. We're doing this analysis. Our coaching meetings with teachers are... I participated in one today with Ms. Whitehead and we went through the exit ticket for Monday's lesson. We went and took the exit ticket ourselves. We're starting with the assessment and we're working backwards as to what concepts do students really need? How can they visualize this? What are the misconceptions there? We know this with an exit ticket for them to be successful in here, how do I, as a teacher, bring that back in day-to-day with the lessons?

Kurt davidson:

Melissa, just on the last one for math here. I just wanted to put the parallel to ELA where we're implementing. We have the strategic reading plan. We also have the My Math plan here. This is the same work sample from the prior page. This one really lined up nicely where we're trying to explain what this My Math plan is. It's not just about boxing numbers and underlining. The cutesy you'll come up with a nice phrase cubes or something like that where they circle, underline, box. All of that. That's not getting to true understanding. It's emphasizing the two big questions. What is this question asking and what is my plan to solve? Then all our work right now is that use of our plan and really using our plan. Finally, checking our work.

Kurt davidson:

What we are seeing and one of our pieces of analysis so far in math, particularly in the grade levels where we've seen less growth, I think seventh and eighth grade particular, we're seeing less use of students going through and checking their work. Seventh and eighth grade, interestingly enough, they're the grade levels that have the calculators on the exam. That crutch there is something that we're diving into a lot more to see where students are making errors and not using that as a crutch and not necessarily understanding the math and diving deep and being forced to do that.

Kurt davidson:

Obviously, I think Malik shared before, and I'm in full agreement, math is... We're feeling a lot of progress with ELA and most of you, if you go down, you'll see the number side-by-side from IA one to IA two. Both on the left side is our average scores and then the percent of scores of students receive our proficiency. We're glad to see our growth of, overall fifth grade is the notable exception there, but that's where I've been spending a lot of my time with Ms. Ripple diving into the why. We feel like we have a pretty good theory of the case with that and where we're going to adjust that.

Kurt davidson:

We're really pleased with progress that we're seeing in ELA. Obviously no one likes to see anything with a 40 something. That is not what we want to be seeing, but we are as a whole pleased with the progress. Particularly in fourth and eighth grade in both proficiency and average scores. The other grades we have third grade, we do want to see a lot more growth. The first IA, the first time, last time students might have taken an assessment like this was in first grade. First grade assessments do not look like this. Third grade is not where we wanted to be, but we are seeing progress and growth there. We want to see a lot more, more rapidly. Like I said, seventh grade, that was one I was most surprised by as well. From observations in classrooms I did expect a lot more growth so we're diving into that as well.

Kurt davidson:

If we go to math, the raw numbers, we're seeing some growth. We're not seeing the growth we want to see by any means. Third grade, obviously, there was tremendous growth, but you look at the baseline of where they were. We're seeing some progress there. It is very mixed in nature. Then the fifth grade cohort as a whole is something that even in math and where we're seeing some of the most promising practices in math are in fifth grade. We're diving much deeper into that as well. This is my summary. Hopefully looking gave you all a bit of a glimpse as to how we approach the data and it's going beyond just the numerical. Really going into what students are actually doing and how we can strategically address all of that. That's it for me. Any questions? Or any additional context, Malik?

Malik Russell:

No, thanks. I think that's great. I hope that you guys appreciate and hopefully this is indicative to the board that clearly we are serious about data, and we think of data as every single space that we look at.

Melissa Alston:

I... Go ahead Aaron.

Aaron Bothner:

Yeah. I have a question, and I don't want to derail the whole meeting or dedicate it to this. This is really interesting, Kurt, to step through, so thanks. If we go back to, I'm still trying to get, candidly, trying to get my head around what this new type of instruction is. The nitty gritty of it. When I look at the examples you're showing, and you showed the two examples where the students went through the process of reading and interpreting and everything like that. Obviously all that makes sense, but...

Malik Russell:

So, real quickly. Are you talking about ELA or math? Which one?

Aaron Bothner:

Math. Math.

Malik Russell:

OK, great. OK, so let's go to them then.

Aaron Bothner:

Yep. Yep. Yep. Thanks.

Malik Russell:

You want eighth grade or sixth grade?

Aaron Bothner:

The sixth.

Melissa Alston:

Sixth. Yeah, I think Aaron and I are on the same page. Go down one.

Kurt davidson:

This slide or the next one.

Melissa Alston:

The next one.

Aaron Bothner:

Oh, the next one. The next one. My question is, what it looks like both students who answered correctly did, is draw this diagram that led them to the answer. Which is great. Then they checked their work. All of that is great. What I don't understand is how that is not a procedure, but the example to the right, however overly complicated and unnecessary it might be, is a procedure.

Malik Russell:

Yeah.

Aaron Bothner:

I don't know where my thinking is breaking down.

Malik Russell:

So yeah. So I think, Kurt feel free to jump in here as well, the difference is... I guess using the word procedure is wrong to say. The procedure role. The answer is does the work that I'm doing show an effort to understand the question or does the work that I'm doing show that I heard that if I cross multiply I get some answer. I heard if I do this thing, I'm going to do this. The procedural portion of it is you're not thinking about the question, and so you'll use some strategy that doesn't make sense in the context of question. What we want to show is show us first understanding of the question and then...

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:58:04]

Malik Russell:

Show us first understanding of the question and then you figure how you want to get there. Whatever procedure, strategy, however you want to say it is, it is, right? And so the answer also is just like, "Hey, if I take a look at this, it shows me, you didn't really understand the question. Because we have 300 and 225 and you're saying 50%, that doesn't make sense." So show me things that make sense. So I can tell you so, and what makes it also better is, if you are at least showing how you understand it and you get it wrong, I can then help you to get it right. If you are just utilizing some method that you think is supposed to work in this context, because it worked in some other context, that's not really helpful. I want you to show me that you understand the question.

Malik Russell:

The first thing is if you go to a math plan, if you go up to the math plan that Kurt was showing before? The first thing really is, what is this question you're asking me? Then my plan is, okay, now I know what the question's asking me, how do I go about answering it? Then I set on about doing it. Right? Does that make sense? Then that's conceptual piece, right? And to Kurt's point, lots of kids that good at math, you do that anyway, but when people have hit roadblocks, you'll see people hit roadblocks at algebra, pre-cal, definitely calculus it's because they stop understanding why do I care about a quadratic equation? What is calculus actually asking me? What does this mean? Right. And not the only philosophical, but like people that are good at math, they kind of think about that first.

Aaron Bothner:

That helps a great deal. And so you know Malik, Kurt, Melissa, I think when you're looking at classrooms and you're looking to see demonstration of that from students, either by reviewing work or through the conversations that you have with students as you're working with them. And that's how a lot of what we end up seeing gets measured or gets evaluated or gets broken down in the classroom and what you all do day to day.

Malik Russell:

Right. And also like to a point, if you trailed Kurt or Megan or Sophia in the classroom, I could tell you as a teacher's teaching the mistake, that's going to happen on the kids' work. Cause I hear the mistake because you already know like, oh, everybody's going to assume it's this, to watch them all make the same mistake. Right? Cause you actually hear the instruction as well. You utilize the other portion to help illustrate that this is my proof that the diagnosis was right. This is where it went wrong.



Aaron Bothner:

Yep. Okay. I appreciate that. And I think again I don't want to derail the whole meeting on this, but I think particularly for non-educator board members when you're in the school. I just wanted people to hear a little bit more there. So you understand kind of what instructional staff is looking at as they're doing their observations or working with teachers and coaching teachers. So...

Malik Russell:

Just so you know Aaron is always just trying to steal my thing. I have a buildup for this February retreat and that's going to be a lot of stuff that you guys get to see.

Aaron Bothner:

I enjoy nothing more than ruining the punchline to everything

Malik Russell:

You are good at it. Makes sense.

Aaron Bothner:

If anybody wants any movies ruined, let me know after the board meeting I'll share that too. Okay. All right. I appreciate it. Thanks. Thanks Kurt for taking us through and helping us understand

Malik Russell:

Jessica, did you have a question or until you go on unmute before Aaron

Jessica Boulet:

Thank you. I was actually going to say, perhaps this is relevant to his question in, in our discussion, but I was just going to say thank you for this. I really appreciated it. And as somebody who was very good at math, but hated math, I wish I had this kind of education, because this is exactly what I always wanted is that whereas the procedural one, as we're calling it, I feel like what you feel like your task is when you're answering it is just like figure out, can I translate this question into some magic formula instead of understanding what physically is happening that I'm measuring, which is what math is. Everything you're saying really resonates because that's absolutely where my interest in math broke down as well. So thank you for this it was a great, great walkthrough.

Sophia Huda:

So if I may jump in real quick, Melissa, can you scroll up please? My question along the same. Yep. Right here. Perfect. So for the student on the right, seeing how they did the problem and it's incorrect, I don't even know where the 1 25 comes from, but how would you approach the student so that they get the conceptual way versus a procedural way? What would be their approach so that they are thinking differently?

Malik Russell:

Yeah. I mean the answer to the question is to get them thinking differently, right? The answer would be figure out what they're thinking. So I'd ask them if we need a question. Okay. So what do you think this question's... Literally go to the plan, like when Kurt puts out that plan, what do you think this question's

asking you? Okay. So like what's your plan to figure it out and why? And then they said, "Oh, I want to do this". I'll say, "Why? Why do you think that works? What does X give you?"

Malik Russell:

Right? And so they were trying to do something that really doesn't make sense for this. They were trying to do some kind of equivalent idea of fractions saying, "oh, if 300 is 100%", then they misplaced 125, then 225 is what percent? And so that's what they're trying to do. And I'd ask them, "Why you do that? Is there another way you could look at that? When you see this question, what do you see? Show me, draw that out for me." And so then you'd kind of get to that portion and then I think that's where you get to, okay, so this works for you. And just so you know Kurt and I might do this totally differently. You and I might do it totally differently, right? That's not the problem, right? The question is I want to know what you're thinking. Not that you just went to some strange procedure.

Kurt davidson:

Yeah. And I think the only thing I will add is just around one of the big shifts that we are making is obviously we're putting student work at the heart of the work that teachers are doing. But we're also when it comes to our number of stories, our students are sharing their work samples. My coaching point for this teacher, if we were to work at but we're not going to pick at every single question. But if we were to look at this question as an example, I will say from my end analysis, looking at the data, actually the biggest misconception on this question was not, I use this for illustrative purposes, but on this question, the most often students chose D 75%. And the reason why was the question is what percent of her pay was not spent on clothes.

Kurt davidson:

A lot of students were able to get that. And then they noted that they chose D the detractor that was very obviously strategically placed. There was the amount of money that was spent on clothes. So what I would do and my push for the teacher would be, yes, I would want to be touching on this, but I would find a student who is ordinarily, who is able to articulate their thinking and display their student work and have them walk through where they did. And as a student, as a class, that student chose D instead of B, we would be able to showcase, it's a twofer. You're able to showcase like the conceptual thinking. Someone who'd be able to articulate that, but also where they made the mistake that the majority of the class made as well. I say that to say that the majority of I think a big part of our work is because our culture's in a pretty good place.

Kurt davidson:

We're able to have classrooms set up, so students are comfortable with making errors in front of their peers and showing their errors in front of their peers and walking through their work. So when I walk into sixth grade, we see students, it is not perfect. You know that teacher execution is not perfect yet. We're still making progress on that, but we're able to see students at the whiteboard at these new, lovely Promethean boards, thanks to Melissa students up there clicking through and showing their work that they're doing. And as a group to determine where the misconception is there. So along with everything like Jess said, I wanted to just stamp that this is part of our protocol, as well as our work is students sharing their work and as a team teacher's will put like snippets of work up there and kids will walk through.

Malik Russell:

I think that's right. That's a good point. I think the other portion I'd even add onto that is when we say, "Hey, we want the students to get better. We also need the teachers to get better." You want teachers to know going in that, this, you should know reading this question, what your biggest false answer is going to be. So they should actually know, even when they're doing this question a lot of people are going to misread this. And so this is an example too. And one of the great things is if you get a chance for a student to see, especially in front of the class and present, and then they made a mistake when they knew the math, they don't make that mistake again and other people don't do it. And it resonates, right. So it's like, oh, I did this, I did this. I did this. They'll be all excited. Cause they know they got it right. Can you read the question again? What's the question actually asking you, and then they go, oh, and then you have that aha moment. And everyone realizes from here on, I need to make sure I read closely what is the question really asking me.

Sophia Huda:

Yep. Thanks for that. And that makes sense. I guess I got caught up because like the subtraction up in the upper right hand corner is not correct. So I'm like what is this kid doing? And is that a major concern as a sixth grader?

Kurt davidson:

I mean, yes. But...

Malik Russell:

What Shanta one thing we don't do is we don't say that's a major concern is what you just did. That's.

Sophia Huda:

I'm sorry.

Malik Russell:

No, I'm just saying that would be part of our process, but the answer is yes. Also, you would've realized whether it's them rushing, just doing nonsense or they really don't understand. Because they give you lots of different reasons why people put things that don't seem to make sense to you on a page. And so asking is always really important.

Sophia Huda:

All right.

Kurt davidson:

If nothing else, I just hope that my math phobic friends had a little fun with this. Math can be fun. Don't forget it.

Malik Russell:

Get ready for February. Get ready Shanta. Yeah. Just joking. All right. Where are we at next, Melissa? What's the next portion of where we at, we can't see the entire thing...

Melissa Alston:

Operations update.

Malik Russell:

Okay, great.

Melissa Alston:

Good evening everyone. So we will start the operations update with the scholar enrollment. Keisha, can you start us off?

Keisha Perez:

Good evening, everyone. So for the month of December, which list is amazing, we have a total seat to fill for the lower school and the high school. We only have 10 seats with nine, the most being for the high school for ninth and 10th grade, we have haven't had any withdrawals as well. So we have a total right now of 672 first full school. We have enrolled about 15 in scholars, from the grades fifth through eighth grade. And we have a total of withdrawals only for three, which was way better than what we had a few months ago. For the current year, we have 2,011, I mean, sorry, we have 2,115 applications still for the 2021-22 school year. And we have currently right now, 183 new applications for the new current year. Thank you. That's all I had for this month.

Melissa Alston:

Thank you, Keisha. I just want to note here that the 10 to fill is to our school's internal goal, not the authorized goal. So we really only have three seats to fill and we do our budget with a cushion. So that is still why we are doing very well financially. But nonetheless, we are still looking for those 10 scholars there. The next update is from the manager of talent and acquisition and talent, acquisition and marketing. So we just have one position to hire for, and that is an addition to the org chart. So we are fully staffed. In fact, we are more than staffed. We do have a cushion with a couple of teachers. We want to make sure while it took us a while to fill a lot of seats, and we do have one, as far as the org chart is concerned, critical vacancy that is filled by an acting principal.

Melissa Alston:

We had some funds that we freed up because of those items. So we did cushion ourselves a bit in high school sped and in the K2 strategically to ensure that we are first making sure that we are supporting the scholars where necessary, but also just kind to scooping up all the great talent. We don't want to let anyone go because we're fully staffed. So if we come across anyone that we feel will be a great addition to our team, we are being obviously fiscally responsible about that, but making sure that we don't pass them by or say, "Hey, come and apply for the next school year," because another school will probably by then have hired them. So that is the update there. Additionally, in regards to that, the Authorizer Lori, she was very, very impressed that our numbers looked this way. She said most schools are struggling to even at this point, so she was very impressed that we were able to acquire all the talent that we've had in this short runway, where we have been fully in charge of talent acquisition.

Melissa Alston:

The next thing is an update on marketing specifically. So a lot of these items are the same. They take a long time. They take a lot of love. They take a lot of attention. So these items are still on here, but one things I want to call to your attention that are new is we are in the process of posting up a billboard,

very close to the school in an area with super high traffic. So that's one of the items that we are working on right now, marketing wise, we are also working on brand ambassador programs. So those are going to be scholars that we feel mostly aligned to students in the high school and student council. And those that can really advocate for us, even if that's on a zoom and just kind of helping us, not only see the teacher and adult perspective, but the scholar perspective as well. We want to make sure that we're doing everything to be unique and ensuring that we are able to market the school in that way.

Melissa Alston:

And then the last thing is a 3-D tour. So it's hard. Now we used to say, come on in parents, you like our school, you want to apply, come and have a visit. So because of COVID protocols, it is something that we haven't been doing. So just very quickly, I just wanted to give you all a preview.

Melissa Alston:

If you are interested, I can share out this link, but I just wanted to give you a little bit of a preview to show you what we have been doing with our 3-D model here. So you can see that we went through the entire school and this is actually already posted on the website. You can also just click it from the banner on the website as of today, and you'll be able to take a tour of our school. We think it's really important. We have a really beautiful school. So I think it's important to kind of add that touch. And when we are talking about marketing, I think this is something that really takes us to the next generation. So just wanted to make sure that we were doing everything we could and things that other schools are not doing. One thing I just want to slide on over towards the end here.

Malik Russell:

Show that Promethean board.

Melissa Alston:

Oh, I have pictures as well of the Promethean board. It's very, very long. Like I said, if you would like to go, you can go right to the banner. I can also share this out, but just taking us up from outside first floor, all the way up to the sixth floor. But we are super excited about this project that we have just completed here that Claudia headed and made sure was a success. The next thing is the academic operations update. So we continue to heavily advertise our wellness program. The wellness program is going very well. Teachers are appreciative of the wellness days. We also have our comm sessions that leaders are heading and we continue to do those. We also had our Promethean board installation. Finally, they finally arrived.

Melissa Alston:

We did purchase those in July, but with shipping, obviously we've had multiple setbacks there, but they are up and running and all staff has been trained as well. So Latoya has really headed the process of the planning and logistics around those items so that it is complete at this point. And we will have a bit of a more detailed Promethean training once the teachers are able to use it, the kids are using it. And then in January, we'll pick that back up and kind of get honed in on those skills there to ensure that we're using them to the best of their abilities. And then we just have some, all of these ongoing things are just continuously ongoing, nothing new there. So in regards to the facility, these updates, as I said in regard to roof, at this point, there was a... something not drawn on a drawing and the F-D-N-Y kicked it back.

Melissa Alston:

And we are in the process of, so that has been resubmitted being processed over again in regards to the F-D-N-Y so we're waiting for that in the meantime, because this has extended way longer than any of us would have imagined. We have requested that the expediter file the TCO. And we're hoping that once that comes back, that it comes back where we're able to open the gym with Fire Watch. And at that point we would have to hire Fire Watch until we're able to fully get the certificate of occupancy and everything is all approved. So we're trying to kind of do a work around there to ensure that we're able to use the gym as soon as possible.

Malik Russell:

And the only thing I want to add on that is that Melissa and I have weekly meetings. If you ever want to get to look at an adversarial meeting, you can tune into that meeting. And it's just a ridiculous situation regarding this gym portion now. Maybe Aaron can talk more to this being in the real estate course of real estate business. I don't understand how we get rejected for something that's basic. Like we're not building a pyramid that floats in the out sphere, but it has been pretty ridiculous. And so it's a real point of contention for the entire school and we kind of really need this win. And so hopefully if we can get this TCO with the Fire Watch, it's more than worth us doing that, just to do it.

Aaron Bothner:

Yeah. I think, I think that makes total sense. And the only explanation I have on that is welcome to commercial real estate. It's a lot of fun.

Malik Russell:

Outlandish. Yeah. It's outlandish.

Melissa Alston:

So here just previewing our new lobby furniture, just so you can kind of see what it looks like, that we have another thing we ordered in August and it just arrived. So just kind of getting those things together, as soon as possible once they arrive, these are pictures of our teachers learning how to use the Promethean boards during their PD. And then these are pictures of our scholars utilizing the Promethean boards.

Melissa Alston:

The next thing is our expansion update. So we are fully engulfed in the spacing program. We are now going to... we just received, what the preliminary spacing program will look like. I think yesterday. So now we are going to kick back into site identification. So there have been some more sites. Since the last time we looked at it, there have been some new sites that have come up. So we have a meeting every Friday. So this Friday we will be picking back up on site specific identification so we can continue the process, especially now alongside the spacing program now that we have it.

Malik Russell:

Yep. And then just one thing to add, as we're looking at the spacing program.

Malik Russell:

One, give shout outs to obviously Melissa has been kind of really integral in that portion, but also to Kurt, his team, Mr. Brown, and really thinking about what we want the next generation to look like from

a space utility standpoint and making sure one thing I think that hopefully you guys have heard is I want everything to be consistent. The way that we look should be the way that we sound should be what we're about. And so like really thinking that about our space has to do a lot with design and thinking about what we want our design to look like in the next generation. And so a lot of thought and time, and multiple meetings have been given to thinking about what we want our K through four to look like what we want our pre-K to look like, what we want our nine through 12 to look like what we want our five to eight to look like, and what spaces need to do that, how we want our teachers to interact, how do we want our students to interact and read together and like really thinking about that.

Malik Russell:

And so a lot of thought was put into thinking about what the optimum space would be for the next generation school in the expansion.

Melissa Alston:

The next thing here is compliance. So we have submitted a few more grants that Eugene I'm sure will be reporting on in the coming months. And then we also submitted our PD 6 actually early, we submitted it a month early and that one is a special services report. So we were able to complete that. And then our CRDC. I'm sure you all are very tired of seeing this on there. It's been on there for months. We are going to be submitting that next month. So that should be completed. And ahead of schedule, that's actually done February.

Melissa Alston:

The next thing is COVID updates. So I did not update this as of today. Just today, we actually had a second case. So there is actually two confirmed cases. The one here that is reported is a scholar case. However, a staff member today did test positive for COVID. So in that we obviously take all precautions. Keisha has a great sense of urgency when it comes to these items. And there's lots of layers here, protocol wise, as well as just making sure that we are making the staff and the parents and the scholars feel safe. So there's lots of items to do whenever there is a COVID case. So thankfully there has been no spread. We also out of caution while we have the mandate for staff vaccinations, we still take an abundance of caution there. So we do not have any spread to report, which is great. In regards to new staff, we do have Ms. Gunderson, her resume is in the documents, and you're in your documents on board, on track for December, this December meeting, as well as Mr. Barrows. He's in addition to the high school sped team and.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:27:04]

Melissa Alston:

Team in regards to my priorities, these are all pretty much the same. All of the items that I've been working on are really long projects, so this is just a recap of everything that I'm working on. And one thing that I can say in regards to incentives for employees, we did increase the percent match for 401k, that has come with a lot of staff satisfaction, a lot of staff are super excited about that. It is at or above what most other charter schools are matching and that was a huge win for us. Not only are some of the staff going up to that 6%, if they were at 4% which was with our previous match, there's also a lot of our staff members that are newly signing up. So I guess that gave them some motivation so that is great.

Melissa Alston:

And then something else that I'm spending a ton of time on is the talent program for next school year, so building out what that looks like. It has now been a full year since operations has taken over talent acquisition, we were really running, there's a spot let's fill it, and obviously responsibly, but we didn't have time to build out what talent really looks like. So we're taking the time to really do that and make sure that we roll out a really robust plan, inclusive of onboarding, because it's not just getting the right person in, it's making sure we keep that person and what that looks like. So Claudia and I have really been working very hard to roll that out for January when we come back from break.

Melissa Alston:

Lastly, the win's over for operations, although we did have some COVID cases, the response to COVID continues to be a win for us as well as our wellness program and all of those incentives and staff feel goods. We have a care squad, which is part of the wellness program, so it is something that teachers really appreciate, so it's really something that is a great win for us.

Melissa Alston:

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that as of right now, the January board meeting is set to be in person. We do know there's gatherings coming up for holidays, Omicron is a variant now as well, we don't know what that will look like. If there's any updates and if the emergency order is extended, I will communicate that. But as of right now, please be ready to have our board meeting in January in person, from the information that we have right now.

Melissa Alston:

Additionally, the parent hearing is in your inboxes. If you would take 30 or 40 minutes, if you have spare time, you can view our hearing yourselves in your email, which is great. I also sent the link in the chat for the 3D, I will also send that via email as well so you have it. And then I just wanted... If you can put in the chat selfishly, because you are all here, if February 5th for the board retreat is a good day for you, if you could just put in the chat yes or no if you know, that would be super helpful to help us in our planning. I know a lot of the board members do have children and I want to be mindful of those weekends before and after the winter break, as I'm sure that you probably either just want to spend time with your family or are going away. So I think it seems like that day is probably the best out of all the days in February. So just if you could, so I can get an idea, that would be great. That's all I have. Thank you.

Malik Russell:

Alright, thanks a lot, Melissa, that was great, really do appreciate that. Also, Keisha really appreciate that, and everyone that put so much work into that. Does anyone have any questions, thoughts, comments, clarifying orations? Alright, safe thought, appreciate that and so I think we'll go to the next portion of the agenda, which I believe is the finance committee.

Shanta Pressley:

Yes.

Malik Russell:

And so we'll go to the wonderful Shanta and have her do the finance committee update.

Shanta Pressley:



Good evening, again, really no update from the finance committee. So I will turn it right over to Eugene to take us through the November financials.

Eugene Ward:

Evening everyone, thank you. These are the financials as previously presented to the finance committee. As we can see through November 30th, cash is \$8.9 million, which obviously is \$70,000 is always restricted. The market value of the investments are \$5.265 million and that is up about \$13,000 from October. As we see in our statement of financial position, our net assets are steady at \$10.9 million, a little bit up about \$110,000 from the previous month. Our year to day metrics, including the current ratio, is great as always because we keep low liabilities our current ratio remains very high. We see as well as our debt service ratio is in great shape also because we keep a very low current liability line in the balance sheet, we pay bills immediately, always timely as we also see that we have enrollment. Now, this was as of the most recent billing, \$658,000 versus the budget of \$662,000, obviously Keisha and Melissa have been very diligent in getting those numbers up and they will be reflected in the next financials with a much higher number in the enrollment. But we see our net surplus year to date is \$882,000, almost \$883,000, which is a significantly higher than our forecasted surplus of \$670,000 and that is significantly higher than our budgeted surplus of \$354,000.

Eugene Ward:

We can move to the next slide, yes. So if we look to our right, we see revenue versus expenses we are going to run fairly even revenue versus expenses, a little bit above revenue, obviously higher, but there has been a lot of spending on capital purchases so the school is definitely investing into the infrastructure and into the technology of the school. All of the other ratios are well above DOE benchmarks and that includes days of cash, again, current ratio and debt to asset ratio. A little further down, we see a little bit a breakdown of the enrollment and one of the big numbers is the sped students greater than 60%, that's 16, we do not budget for the sped students above 60%, so anything there is a benefit to us. That number was 12 in October so it's up four in the month of November. So that has given us a significant increase in revenue that was previously unbudgeted.

Eugene Ward:

Go to the revenue versus expenses. See right here, the income statement and we can see that the sped, the increase in sped, is giving us a significant increase in our income and our forecasted income. The \$268,000 additional funding just from sped has given us an overall increase in our revenue forecast of \$217,000. All the other numbers are in line, pretty much in line with the budget. We are receiving the federal stimulus funding, we've received \$500,000 so far, which is the initial down payments that we receive and we're going to begin billing for additional funding in the coming month or two. And salaries, as stated, we are fully staffed at this moment, at this time, which is great, but we also received some savings as a result of earlier in the year, not being fully staffed so that has accounted for about a \$99,000 savings in the salary expense and the salary and benefits expense line. So overall we expect, and we have re-forecasted to receive about a \$316,000 increase in our net surplus by year end.

Eugene Ward:

And if we move to the balance sheet, the final statement, we see that again, strong balance sheet strong in current assets, again, we've increased our spending in fixed assets, spending on infrastructure and furniture and technology. So our fixed assets are up over about \$900,000 for the year, which is great. And the current total assets are \$12,800,000 for the month of November, up about a little over a million

dollars from June 30 and our liabilities, again, are extremely low, accounts payable is low, \$131,000 in accounts payable. I mean that is extremely low. We pay our bills timely, early, and we do not let bills stay on the books long. We have a December deferred revenue of \$1.1 million, and as the per people revenue that we received in October, which is allocated over two months, we've allocated one month, November, to revenue and that \$1.1 million will be allocated to revenue in December. Our equity is a strong \$10.8 million and it is increased by the \$883,000 in current net income resulting in just about \$11 million total equity line. And that is my report. Shanta?

Malik Russell:

Oh sorry. Alright Eugene, thanks, I appreciate that, Shanta?

Shanta Pressley:

Yep. Can you hear me?

Malik Russell:

Yeah, we can.

Shanta Pressley:

Sorry about that. Alright, any questions from anybody? Eugene, thank you for that great report. Also, Malik, I said this during the finance call, but with that update, we learned that there were some extra gifts I'll say, given to staff. So we appreciate that, understanding that retention is important and we want to keep the best of the best in our circle. So with no questions, I move that we accept the financial report as read.

Kamaria Brisseau:

I second.

Shanta Pressley:

Thank you, Kamaria. I'm ready for the question, I'll start with Aaron.

Aaron Bothner:

Aye.

Shanta Pressley:

Jessie?

Jessica Boulet:

Aye.

Shanta Pressley:

Constance?

Shanta Pressley:

Aye.

Shanta Pressley:

Tim.

Tim Bryan:

Aye.

Shanta Pressley:

Khari? Khari? Aluta?

Aluta Khanyile:

Aye.

Shanta Pressley:

Thank you. Khari? Alright, and I'm an aye as well. So thank you all so much.

Malik Russell:

Right, thanks a lot, appreciate that. And let's move on to the ed committee update is Alan on?

Speaker 1:

I believe Alan was unable to make it tonight and I don't have anything specific that was passed onto me from her, so I think we're set.

Malik Russell:

Sounds good, makes sense, appreciate that. And then I will go to the external relations committee, Aluta, any updates?

Aluta Khanyile:

Good evening, everyone. Sorry for my late arrival. I do not have an update at this time.

Malik Russell:

Thanks, appreciate that. And then we can go to the public comment portion, Aaron?

Aaron Bothner:

Great, thanks Malik. I believe that we do not... I don't believe we have anybody registered to speak tonight for our public comments policy and I'm not seeing any members of the public present anyway, so I think we're good there. I'll just remind everybody that we do have a public comment policy, and that's in board on track and I believe also on the website as well, or if not, we should get it on the website. So if anybody needs to refer to that in the future, they can. So we'll move ahead seeing no public comments here.

Malik Russell:

Right, thanks a lot Aaron, I appreciate that. And then we'll go to board governance and Jessica I'll let you take that away.

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Jessica Boulet:

Cool, thank you. So, first item is I move to approve the minutes from November 2021 board meeting.

Shanta Pressley:

I Second and Aye [crosstalk 01:42:13].

Jessica Boulet:

Thanks, Shanta, thank you, and I'm an aye also. Let's see here, Tim? I think I heard an aye.

Tim Bryan:

You did hear an aye.

Jessica Boulet:

Awesome, great, thanks Aaron?

Aaron Bothner:

I will abstain, since I was not present.

Jessica Boulet:

Aluta?

Aluta Khanyile:

I will abstain.

Jessica Boulet:

All right, Constance?

Shanta Pressley:

I can't remember if I was there on the 21st before I vote, can you come back to me?

Jessica Boulet:

Yeah, sure. Kamaria?

Kamaria Brisseau:

I'm pretty sure I was there, so I'm going to go with my aye.

Jessica Boulet:

Thank you, we might not be able to finalize these given... Khari? Alright, Constance, any conclusions?

Keisha:

You were present Constance last month.

Shanta Pressley:

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Thank you, Keisha.

Keisha:

No problem.

Shanta Pressley:

Aye.

Jessica Boulet:

Alright, and Keisha, if we don't have enough votes on that, I don't know if that was enough votes, we do need, I believe a majority vote, then I think we can just move it to next month.

Jessica Boulet:

Yeah, let's see here. Item number two, individual goal setting review, oh, so this was especially, I guess, for people who weren't with us at last month's meeting, last month we kind of announced that we had a individual goal setting table set up it's available for everyone, I can send it around again, but I took a stab at working, thank you, I took a stab at working on this this week and or this month and thinking about it. And it was an interesting experience for me because I was going to just go ahead and just pick one of these ideas that I had come up with and just be like, "okay, let me work on this, I think this is interesting," but what ended up happening is actually my individual trustee development journey continued much more organically, which was really cool.

Jessica Boulet:

Well, one thing that I had to do was for the open meeting law audit, I sort of informed myself a little bit more on open meeting law, best practices around audits, so that was going to happen anyway. But I also happened to, while I was at a wedding, speak with somebody who'd been an educator for a very long time, kind of heading up a stem program in his school, and he just was sharing with me some really interesting ideas that I'm like starting to... This was just last week actually, so I'm ruminating on them and thinking about how this can inform my understanding of how our approach compares with other kind of innovative things that people are doing.

Jessica Boulet:

He had some really interesting things to say about critical thinking that perhaps in a future ed committee meeting, I may bring up, or may look up myself ahead of that. So that's kind of what I was working on, or I learned this month and bounced some of my other ideas off of him as well. And it gave me a couple ideas that perhaps will come to fruition about other things that we could do as a board as well in the future in terms of learning from, or in terms of learning more about whatever goals we may have as a school. So I'll leave it at that just because it's all very undigested still, but I wanted to share that was a nice experience for me.

Jessica Boulet:

And then lastly, I know this isn't on the agenda.... Oh, actually, to wrap that up, I would like somebody to share next month in January, any individual trustee development goals and what they've been working on for the month to come. So if you have any personal plans and you would like to volunteer, definitely let me know in the chat, otherwise I'll reach out and ask someone to do it. And then, oh....

Aaron Bothner:

Jessica, just to reiterate for those who were there and then for those who weren't there, the reason we're now doing is because we as board members really need to dedicate time to improving our practice as board members. This is something we identified as a strategic priority back in last January and I personally feel strongly that it's something that we do so that the kids that we are teaching are exposed to how adults go about continuously improving and continuously learning, even when they're outside of school. So Jessica took a lot of time to actually design a resource here that is aligned to the organization, the board level organizational strategic priorities so folks have a good jumping off point if they need it.

Aaron Bothner:

Obviously the point here is that personal development should be self-guided, no one's going to ask you to do it so the expectation for the adults here is that we're doing it on our own, but it is also something we've all talked about to be able to hear a little bit more about what we're all working on and understand better what's going on across the board. So that was the thinking, I think, behind all this, so just a couple minutes each month dedicated to somebody talking about what they've been working on, but otherwise the expectation is that each of us is taking this on each month and making sure that we're teaching ourselves how to be better board members.

Jessica Boulet:

Thank you for that, Aaron, that was beautiful. Yes, so unless anybody has any questions or comments on that, I will move forward to something that I didn't let you know was going to be on the agenda, but just a quick open meeting law update. So the way that we are going to do this audit in the coming month and a half, is that there's going to be little surveys for each board member that will be very short, like sub 10 minutes, less than 10 questions, that I will send around probably early January and you'll have a week, week and a half, everybody will have a week, week and a half to complete that and we will digest that information and it will inform our annual open meeting law refresher course at the PD day, so expect those early January. I will aim to wait until after we're done being hungover from New Year's. But yes, those are in the finalization stage with Susan right now.

Jessica Boulet:

Oh, and yes, just reminder again, that now's the time to, if you have any questions or you do want to go back, especially for committee chairs, if you do want to go back and correct anything now, you're welcome to. This is going to be an internal check-in for us as a board so there's no need to be too stressed out about it, but it will involve some thorough going back, especially for committee chairs, committee chairs will fill out both the general survey and the committee chair survey, so that will be a little bit more for chairs. So that's all on that unless anybody has any questions.

Malik Russell:

I'll take that as a no, thanks a lot for that, Jessica. That was wonderful, appreciate that. And I believe that we are now going to our closing items. I would like to start those closed items before I hand it off to Aaron to close out by thanking everybody for our participating, engaging and being present, and really do appreciate that, especially during this time and just want to really know that it's greatly appreciated and I appreciate our time together talking about this thing that we are all so engaged with and love. Alright, thank you. And so with that, Aaron, I'll let you go to closing.

Aaron Bothner:

Great, thanks. Thanks Malik. So we are to the end of 2021, another end of a calendar year, which for a lot of us is a natural break point. So just want to wish everybody a happy, wonderful holidays with your families and friends, even with everything that's going on right now health wise. Let's make sure we come back to 2022 with the same energy and dedication to details that we have brought throughout 2021. So let's make sure that we're showing up on time for meetings, that meetings are starting on time, that meetings are ending on time, and that we show up to meetings prepared as I think we've really started to do the past couple months. We want to hit the ground running to start 2022 and close out this first school year and have a really strong second half.

Aaron Bothner:

So that said, both for board members, both Anuj and I are going to be making efforts to reconnect with each of you individually over the course of the next month or so, give us a chance to get through each of you so wanted to share that, so you can expect to hear from one of us, and then also maybe gather your thoughts on what you feel good about, what you want to think through more and through the second half of the year, and we will do that, just wanted to give people an opportunity to have that conversation with us if they want it. And otherwise that is all I have, so I just wish everybody a very happy, healthy, and enjoyable and fulfilling holiday season and look forward to kicking off 2022 together and motion to adjourn.

Jessica Boulet:

Second.

Aaron Bothner:

Great.

Jessica Boulet:

Happy holidays, everybody.

Shanta Pressley:

Happy holidays, enjoy, see y'all in January.

Aaron Bothner:

Have a good one.

Shanta Pressley:

Okay, bye.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:54:22]