



Governance Board Newsletter

October 2023

We hope you all had a wonderful fall break and were able to participate in teacher conferences. Thanks to our teachers for the extra hours spent at school to engage in conversations about our students!

October was a busy month for our board with two business meetings, a Strategic Planning session, and the annual Stakeholder Presentation. We appreciate Lindsey Paquette for leading our Strategic Planning session and directing our efforts as we continue development of our long-term focus and objectives. She also prepared and directed the annual presentation, which introduced our objectives for the current school year, featured student success highlights, and introduced the initial elements of our **3-year Strategic Plan**, which will be further developed throughout the year based on Reimagine recommendations and other data. The **Stakeholder Presentation** can be accessed on our [governance site](#).

Several staff members and board members were able to attend the annual **Colorado Association of Gifted and Talented Conference** last month. We'd like to recognize Dr. Greene, our Executive Director of Academics, and Dr. Meryl Faulkner, board member, for presenting at the conference. We appreciate their expertise in this area, as well as the opportunity for members of our community to participate.

The Recruiting Committee is pleased to announce the **appointment of Amy Pierre-Johnson to the School Accountability Committee**. She will be serving a one-year term as a staff member. Amy is the elementary school counselor and has been a member of the Stargate staff for two years. We welcome her perspective and appreciate her willingness to serve.

Next Tuesday, November 7th, representatives from the district and District Accountability Committee (DAC) will spend the day at the school conducting interviews and participating in tours as part of the **charter renewal process**. Several board members will be in attendance at 1:00 for interviews, but no official business will be conducted.

Please join us for our **next business meeting**, November 29th at 6:00 pm in the secondary library. We will receive the annual audit report from our auditor; hear updates from our Executive Directors; receive a report from the SAC on the quarterly KPIs and approve questions for the annual surveys; review Financial Policies and Procedures and committee charters; discuss progress and plans for the Strategic Plan and Reimagine recommendations; discuss initial plans for the third-party bylaw and policy review; and update board members on training progress. Our charter liaison from the district, as well as a representative from the DAC will be in attendance as part of the charter renewal process. We hope to see you there!

If you would like more information regarding our decisions beyond what is included in this newsletter, please reach out via governance@stargateschool.org.

Lisa Hosfelt
Stargate Board President
On behalf of the Stargate Governance Board

Recognitions:

- Lindsey Sims for all her work on the Multicultural Fair
- Lumakar Challa for stepping into the role of SAC Committee Chair
- Ms. Mallick for her work on the presentation for the elementary prospective parent nights
- Ms. Krill, Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Nerz, Mr. Williams, Ms. Walsh, Mr. Granger, Dr. Greene, and the senior class leadership for their planning and assistance with senior parking spots
- Lindsey Paquette for her work on the Strategic Planning session and the Stakeholder Presentation
- Danielle Fox for writing over one hundred personal thank you notes for staff
- Maggie Anderson for taking meeting notes and assisting with the front office duties
- Ms. Pierre-Johnson for being willing to fill the vacant staff seat on the School Accountability Committee
- Mari, a Stargate parent and translator for the meeting with the Ministry of Japan
- Ms. Sivarajah for coordinating the meeting and collaboration with the Ministry of Japan
- All teachers for their participation in conferences in a new format
- Therese Morin and Dr. Greene for their work on the Unified Improvement Plan

Please [email us](#) if there is someone you would like us to publicly acknowledge.

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Operations Report

- Mr. Granger provided updates on facilities, safety and operations improvements:
 - The new scoreboard was installed, and bids are being sought for new field house sound system
 - The Emergency Response Team structure is being revised to streamline communication and improve effectiveness in an emergency

- The lunch system continues to be evaluated for improvements, including discussions with the vendor regarding the possibility of vegetarian options
- Ms. Whitney presented the financials and updated KPIs. With the completion of the parking lot, finalized expenses have come in around \$80,000 less than expected.
- The annual audit was completed with no major issues.
- Ms. Roach, Human Resources Manager, shared plans for increased recognition and appreciation of staff. November will be a Month of Thanks with activities and treats planned to celebrate staff.
- The full operations report will be available with the [approved minutes](#) after they are approved at the next meeting.

Academics Report

- The Unified Improvement Plan was submitted to the state.
- Dr. Rundquist is leading Elementary Professional Learning Communities, focused on differentiation.
- The admissions process is underway with prospective parent nights, testing, and advertising to area preschools. Flyers have been produced in English and Spanish.
- Administration is working to provide requested documentation for the charter renewal and preparing for the district's official visit on November 7th.
- Dr. Greene will be meeting with administrators to discuss improvements in team culture and decision matrices.
- The full academics report will be available with the [approved minutes](#) after they are approved at the next meeting.

Committee Report

The board voted to appoint Amy Pierre-Johnson to a one-year staff term for the School Accountability Committee.

Policy Updates

Current policies will be reviewed in connection with the planned evaluation of the school bylaws.

Board Approvals

From the meetings held October 11th and 25th

- Staff Handbook
 - Update to performance evaluation and dispute resolution sections
- Recruiting Committee Charter
 - Simplified language for term definition, scope of responsibilities, and confidentiality agreement

- Engagement of Carleen Clark to provide legal services for bylaw and policy revisions
- Engagement of Social Research Lab to conduct and evaluate the annual parent and staff surveys
 - Questions will be prepared and submitted by SAC
 - Surveys will be conducted in early 2024
- Revisions to Board Calendar for mid-year evaluations
- Unified Improvement Plan
- Revised Admissions Policy
 - Removed language regarding priority status for incoming 9th grade students from Hulstrom. This will be revisited in the future after a comprehensive analysis of data.
- Executive Director evaluation rubrics

Board Discussions

- Reimagine
 - This year's objectives were covered in the Stakeholder Presentation.
 - Two board members will work on creating a system of tracking and reporting progress.
- Strategic Planning
 - The board will hold a work session in December focused on the 3- year Strategic Plan and alignment with the school's mission and vision. Community members will be invited to participate and details will be shared in future communication.
- Projection of board meetings
 - Mr. Granger will seek out school resources and staff to assist with future broadcasts of public board meetings.
- Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented Conference
 - Board members who were able to attend the conference shared highlights.
 - Dr. Faulkner and Dr. Greene shared core ideas from their presentations.

Board 101

Strategic Planning

From the Colorado League of Charter Schools Board Training Module 10

One of a board's key responsibilities is to ensure effective organizational planning to intentionally progress the school toward its grand vision. A thoughtful strategic planning process is the key way boards fulfill this responsibility. Simply defined, strategic planning is the school's process of defining its strategic direction, and then allocating resources appropriately to pursue this direction. It involves simultaneously acknowledging the school's current reality and its ideal vision for the future; with those two pictures in mind, the strategic plan then charts the course for bridging the gap between the two. The process of developing a strategic plan identifies clear goals and strategies that can be followed by the board, staff, parents, and other stakeholders, holding accountable those assigned to accomplishing each task by measuring their progress toward each goal. The key components of a strategic plan include development or revision of the following:

Vision & Mission: One of the first and most important roles of the board is to establish a vision and mission for the organization. The vision states how the charter school will look once it is operating (the big picture view). The mission states how the school intends to make that vision a reality. An easy way to understand the difference between the vision and mission is that the mission focuses on the school's present state and day-to-day fundamentals of the school, while the vision focuses on the school's future. The vision and mission statements should be succinct, easy to understand, and easy to remember and defines your school for potential students, parents and staff. It is important for these statements to be clear and straightforward so that they can easily be implemented over the life of the charter school.

Core Values: These are the key beliefs that are shared among the school's stakeholders. They provide rationale for why the school operates as it does. They should drive the school's culture and provide a framework for decision-making at all levels of the organization.

Goals: After doing a situational (SWOT) analysis, reviewing data, and gathering stakeholder input, the strategic plan articulates the school's strategic goals for the future. The school can determine the length of the goals (for example, one year, three year, or five-year goals). The goals section of a strategic plan also includes indicators, measures, and metrics, which define how exactly the school will know when it has achieved its goals and offer time-sensitive benchmarks for monitoring progress.

Strategy: This is the meat of the strategic plan; it defines how the school will reach its strategic goals, ultimately fulfilling its mission and vision. The strategy section includes activities or tactics for reaching the identified goals, people or groups responsible for different activities or tactics, and the timeframe for accomplishing the activities or tactics.

Upcoming Board Events

Business Meetings:

November 29, 2023, 6:00 pm in the secondary library
January 10, 2024, 6:00 pm in the secondary library

Work Session:

TBD December 2023

Informal Meetings:

Charter Renewal Interviews (several board members present): November 7th
Coffee Chat (1 or more board members present): November 9th, 8:30 am in Secondary Library

Helpful Links

[Board Dashboard \(includes minutes, agendas, and recent newsletters\)](#)

[Important Board Documents \(includes Reimagine report and Stakeholder Presentation\)](#)

[Meeting Calendar](#)

[Community Compact](#)

[Past Board Communication](#)

[Communication Pathways](#)

[Current Strategic Plan and Data Dashboard](#)

[School Calendar \(for meeting link\)](#)

Stargate School Social Media Page