



## Governance Board Newsletter

### December 2023

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As we approach winter break, we want to express our appreciation to all of our amazing staff for supporting our students' learning and growth. The administration celebrated the staff through a Month of Thanks throughout November, offering a variety of meals, snacks, coffee, and fun activities. A huge thanks to Jenn Roach, our Human Resources Manager, for all her work and planning.

We are almost halfway to meeting our [Giving Campaign's fundraising](#) goal! Please consider making a donation and invite your friends and family to donate to any of the featured programs, including the general giving fund.

Our **charter renewal** process is well underway. Site visits and interviews were conducted in November, and the presentation was submitted to the district last week. Our Executive Directors will be presenting to the [Adams 12 Board of Education](#) during their public meeting on Wednesday, January 17th, and the Board of Education will announce the renewal decision on Wednesday, February 7th. We'd like to thank all those who have been involved in this process and acknowledge that many hours have been spent behind the scenes working to positively represent our school.

We have many successes to **celebrate** at Stargate, including these recent student victories featured in our [Student Showcase](#). If you'd like your student's successes to be recognized on this page, please use the [nomination form](#).

In 2021, several members of the community collaborated to author our school's [Community Compact](#), which guides respectful communication among all parties. Please take time to review this document, along with our [Communication Pathways](#) to understand guidelines for addressing concerns.

Please join us for our **next business meeting**, January 10th at 7:00 pm in the secondary future center. We will receive updates from our Executive Directors, consider policy revisions, discuss development for the Strategic Plan, review progress on the Reimagine recommendations and discuss our third-party bylaw and policy review. Our business meeting will be preceded by a **work session** at 5:00 pm, during which we will be diving into our mission and vision statements and considering potential changes. Please look for future communication with more details about this process and how you can be involved.

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

Have a wonderful holiday season!

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

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## Recognitions:

- Wayne Granger, Jenn Roach and Stacy Tempas for leading the Month of Thanks
- Lindsey Paquette for her work on the Strategic Plan
- Stacy Tempas for coordinating the [Stargate School Giving Campaign](#)
- Cathy Elliot, our Adams 12 charter liaison, and members of the District Accountability Committee for their involvement with our charter renewal
- Members of the administration, staff and board for their work on the charter renewal
- Mr. Spletzer and Ms. O'Neill for hosting the annual burpee mile

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

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## Operations Report

- Mr. Jim Hinkle presented the annual audit report. He reported that the audit went smoothly with no needed adjustments to the financials and full transparency from our financial team.
- Mr. Granger, Executive Director of Operations and Finance, provided updates on facilities, safety and operations improvements:
  - The school is looking to upgrade communications with more robust radios and a stronger PA system.
  - Based on interest, vegetarian options may be available from My Kids Lunch. (See the December 4th email communication)
- The 2023 enrollment count reported 1,572 students enrolled.
- The full operations report will be available with the meeting [minutes](#) after they are approved at our next business meeting.

## Academics Report

- Dr. Greene, Executive Director of Academics, provided updates on academics:
  - The admissions team has received applications for several hundred applicants and is administering assessments to determine eligibility.
  - Professional Development focused on differentiation is planned and ongoing.
  - The elementary and secondary MTSS processes and frameworks have been updated and refined.
- Ms. Wolfer, Elementary Principal, reported on elementary programming, MTSS, differentiation, and social emotional supports for students.
- Dr. Rundquist, Director of Gifted Curriculum and Instruction, gave an in-depth presentation on the Advanced Learning Plan process, desired outcomes, and potential changes.
- The full academics report will be available with the meeting [minutes](#) after they are approved at our next business meeting.

## Committee Report

Lumakar Challa, School Accountability Committee (SAC) Chair, presented the annual survey questions for approval. Lindsey Paquette presented the September 30 KPIs. The KPI report is available in the [data dashboard](#).

The Recruiting Committee reported an upcoming staff vacancy on the SAC due to Ms. Pierre-Johnson's resignation.

## Policy Updates

The Board approved the school's Financial Policies and Procedures, which were also approved by the Finance Committee.

The Board approved a first reading of updates to Policy 2.4 Reserve Strategy.

## Board Approvals

- Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Audit
- Financial Policies and Procedures
- First reading of Policy 2.4 Reserve Strategy
- 2024 parent and staff survey questions
- Committee charters for Finance, Fundraising Allocation, and Election Committees
  - Committee charters are reviewed annually. Changes were made to clarify the confidentiality statement in each charter.
- Fundraising Allocation Committee requests

- Up to \$10,000 to support After Prom
- Up to \$70,000 for additional materials for the Robotics program
- An allocation of up to \$2,000 for Social Research Lab for potential assistance with our mission and vision evaluation process

## Board Discussions

- Strategic Plan Development
  - The January work session will focus on understanding the mission and vision and on composing any proposed changes that will be presented to the community
- Reimagine recommendations
  - Reported progress toward goals and strategies
- Bylaw revisions
  - Two board members will meet with legal counsel to begin work in December
- Training
  - SPED/Title IX training is planned for January
  - Updated report on progress for training with new modules

## Board 101

### **Annual Audit and Budget Development**

#### **From the Colorado League of Charter Schools Board Training Module 5**

#### **Annual Audit**

An annual financial audit conducted by a third-party certified public accountant is an essential aspect of strong financial oversight. Strong authorizers will require this of their charter schools in compliance with CCR (Colorado Code of Regulations) 301-88: Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers.

The purpose of an audit is to verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements that are created by the school's administration. As a result, the auditor should be hired by and reporting to the board of directors, not the school's administration. Were the school administrator to take responsibility for hiring the auditor, this would likely pose a conflict of interest. Thus the process of securing an auditor should fall upon the Board and its Finance Committee.

We recommend that charter schools use the same auditor for no more than three to five consecutive years.

#### **Budget Development**

A school typically begins budgeting in the winter prior to the coming school year. The budget development process should be driven primarily by the school's administration with input and review by the Finance Committee and Board. The Board should set an annual timeline for the budgeting process, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the budget is reasonable and that it reflects the school's mission and priorities. The Board is also responsible for approving the budget annually. The board should refer to the charter contract to understand the authorizer's requirements for budget submission. This includes when an annual budget must be approved by the board and submitted to the authorizer, and requirements around submission of revised budgets.

## Upcoming Board Events

### **Work Session:**

January 10, 2024, 5:00 pm in the secondary future center

### **Business Meetings:**

January 10, 2024, 7:00 pm in the secondary future center

February 28, 2024, 6:00 pm in the secondary future center

### **Adams 12 Board of Education [Meetings](#) (related to charter renewal):**

January 17, 2024, 7:00 pm at the Educational Support Center, Aspen room

February 7, 2024 7:00 pm at the Educational Support Center, Aspen room

## 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](#)