

East Bay Innovation Academy

Interview Synopsis & Support Proposal

OVERVIEW

In preparing this synopsis and proposal, I visited with nearly each board member and the Executive Director (ED). This document provides a synopsis of what I heard in the interviews by describing areas of general consensus by Board members and areas where the Board has decisions to consider. This document also describes coaching recommendations for the Board and Governance Team based on what I heard.

INTERVIEW SYNOPSIS: WHAT WAS HEARD

What do you most want the school to accomplish and how will you measure success?

Consensus Points

- Board members expressed wanting EBIA to realize transformational outcomes for students, and the elimination of performance gaps between Black/Latinx students and White/Asian students. Board members want EBIA to move beyond being an OK or pretty good school, and become wildly successful.
 - I heard a variety of measures that may matter to the Board, including (in no particular order) state standardized tests and the CA School Dashboard indicators, graduation rates, A-G completion rates, evidence that students' skills match the EBIA graduate profile, college acceptance rates, college going rates, college completion rates, and other young adulthood life outcome indicators.
- Board members expressed wanting EBIA to thrive, with healthy enrollment waitlists and a strong staff culture. Board members shared about wanting a financially sustainable school, where along the way to high student outcomes, teachers and staff are cared for, are well, and EBIA is considered a premier employer.
 - Measurements here might include retention rates of high quality staff, surveys, number of high quality candidates for open roles, waitlist information, and staff and ED survey results and feedback. Multiple board members shared about wanting to secure a long term facility as an outcome they want the school to accomplish. One board member also emphasized the need to look at disaggregated information of students' sense of belonging.

Decision Points

- Board members want a *lot* for the school – which is understandable and laudable – while also sharing about being new and being less clear on the goals for the school. The work on creating and approving a clear set of priority student outcome goals is a top priority for the medium and longer terms. *What are 3-5 student outcome goals that EBIA wants to aim towards over the next 5-7 years?*

What do you most want the Board to accomplish and how will you measure success?

Consensus Points

- Board members want to accomplish a high level of support for Miranda, including a robust CEO evaluation with honest feedback that is supportive of professional growth.
 - This would be measured by Miranda reporting back to the Board afterwards how an evaluation specifically helped her and EBIA. Board members want to “hold up the mirror” for Miranda, and in turn, have Miranda hold it up for them.

- Multiple board members wanted to define the work of the board and align measures of success, but weren't yet sure how to do so during our conversation. Board members wanted to discuss further about goals for the *board*, particularly how those goals would clarify the school's overall unique educational offering to the community, and how those goals differ from or are similar to the goals of the *school*.
 - [Our coaching is that the Board adopts 3-5 student outcomes focused goals, and then assesses its own effectiveness in supporting progress against those goals using the SOFG quarterly and annual self evaluation.]

Decision Points

- Does the board want to move forward with the work of aligning to the SOFG Framework, including conducting an initial self assessment, and listening for the vision and values of the school community, and then clarifying that vision into an initial set of goals and those values into an initial set of guardrails?

What is the Board doing that's working?

Consensus Points

- Board members reported that the Board is engaged, members get along, and meet regularly, without issues of lacking quorum, or personality clashes. New board members are coming on, and board members engage in details and try to deeply understand what's happening at the school.
- Many board members shared that Shelley, in particular, has been "a powerhouse" and mega supporter of the board, Miranda, and the school.

Decision Points

- To what *end* is the board getting along, meeting regularly, and engaging in the details? Beyond legal compliance, does the Board want to support the outcomes of students by focusing on a few priority student outcome goals?

What is the Board doing that's not working?

Consensus Points

- Board members overall shared not doing much beyond participating in meetings, and can be a little bit passive. Sometimes board members aren't fully prepared for meetings. Board members want to contribute more, including supporting strategic planning, and helping clarify a "North Star" for the school.

Decision Points

- One board member shared that they felt the board needed to communicate better with students and families. How and how often does the Board want to directly engage with the community?

RECOMMENDED SUPPORT PROPOSAL

1. Clarify The School's Priorities

- a. If the School Board is not clear about the "why", no amount of well debated "how" is likely to make the difference. The lack of clarity about the priorities becomes the obstacle to progress for the board, the ED, and students. The School Board is the community's representative, not the ED. It is inappropriate for the Board to hire an ED and then ask the new ED what the community's priorities should be. To be clear, the

CEO may be a very helpful resource in this learning for the Board, but it is the Board's work to represent the community.

- b. After listening for and clarifying the vision and values of the school community, we recommend the Board draft a set of 1-3 SMART goals about what students should know and be able to do. Then draft a set of 1-3 guardrails describing the community's non-negotiable values that must be honored along the way to accomplishing the goals.
- c. [This document](#) describes what that process might look like.

2. Monitor Student Progress

- a. If the School Board doesn't focus its time on monitoring progress toward the goals, the goals are unlikely to happen. Getting to this work seems to be the consensus of the Board.
- b. I recommend a coaching arrangement to assist the Board with improving its governance practices and that will allow the Board to focus more of its time on monitoring progress toward its goals for what children should know and be able to do.
- c. [This document](#) describes what that process might look like.

If the School Board is unanimously interested in our support with these next steps, I am prepared to move very quickly given the need. If that is not the case, we recommend that the EBIA Board find a partner that it *can* fully agree to work with. It is highly unlikely that any Board will quickly address its current challenges on its own.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

What follows is a high level, illustrative, outline of what a coaching timeline might look like. The goal of my coaching is for the EBIA board to achieve at least 80 out of 100 points on the [SOFG Framework](#), as self-assessed by the Board. This is the time to negotiate this proposed timeline as part of our coaching agreement.

Task Status Indicators (far right column)

Not Started	Off Track	Slightly Off Track	On Track	Completed
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1. Clarify The District Priorities

- o If the School Board is not clear about the "why", no amount of well debated "how" is likely to make the difference. The lack of clarity about the priorities is driving a lack of trust on the Board. In addition, the School Board is the community's representative, not the superintendent. It is inappropriate for the Board to hire a superintendent and then ask the new superintendent what the community's district-level priorities should be.
- o We recommend the Board first draft a set of 1-3 SMART goals about what students should know and be able to do. Then draft a set of 1-3 guardrails describing the community's non-negotiable values that must be honored.
- o [This document](#) describes what that process might look like.

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- o If the School Board doesn't focus its time on monitoring progress toward the goals, the goals are unlikely to happen.
- o We recommend a coaching arrangement to assist the Board with improving its

governance practices and that will allow the Board to focus more of its time on monitoring progress toward its goals for what children should know and be able to do.

- [This document](#) describes what that process might look like.

August 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Quarterly Self-Evaluation	The Board will conduct a quarterly self evaluation during open session of a public meeting.	8.31.24	Board	
Two Day Workshop	An initial two-day workshop hosted by a certified SOFG coach, and including additional interested local board members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be done well, this workshop requires additional facilitation and participation from outside the EBIA Board, and so the timing is unknown 		Board + CEO	

September 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Engagement	The board listens for the vision and values of the community	9.30.24	Board	
Information Review	Board receives student data analysis to help understand high leverage, high need areas (root cause analysis, comprehensive student needs assessment, and/or similar research-based tool)	9.30.24	Exec. Dir.	

October 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Goal Drafting	Board begins drafting no fewer than one and no more than five SMART goals, and guardrails on the CEO's authority and its own.	10.15.24	Board	
Interim Drafting	CEO drafts exactly 3 SMART Interim Goals for each draft Goal, and 3 SMART interim guardrails for each draft guardrail.	10.31.24	Exec. Dir.	

November 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Board/Supt Calibration	The Chair and CEO will finalize alignment and measures, and draft a Monitoring Calendar.	11.15.24	Exec. Dir./Chair	
Engagement	The Board shares draft goals and guardrails with community	11.15.24	Board	
Goal Adoption	The Board adopts goals, guardrails, and the Monitoring Calendar.	11.30.24	Board	
Quarterly Self-Evaluation	The Board will conduct a quarterly self evaluation during open session of a public meeting.	11.30.24	Board	

January 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Monitoring &	60 minute in-meeting training session on Monitoring and	1.15.25	Coach	

Evaluation Training	Evaluation			
Community Training	An opportunity to train the community about SOFG		All	

February 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Begin Goal Monitoring	During board meetings	2.19.25	Board	
Plan Agenda Redesign	We use an Agenda Evaluation tool and a Time-Use tool	2.28.25	Chair/CE O	
Quarterly Self-Evaluation	The Board will conduct a quarterly self evaluation during open session of a public meeting.	2.28.25	Board	

March 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Budget Training	30-60 minute in-meeting training session	3.19.25	All	
Implement Agenda Redesign		3.19.25	Chair/ CEO	

April - June 2024

Activity	Description	Due Date	Owner	Status
Annual Self Eval	The Board will conduct a quarterly self evaluation during open session of a public meeting.	5.31.25	Board	
Annual Supt Eval	The Board will conduct an annual superintendent evaluation specific to adopted goals and guardrails during open session.	08.15.25	Board	

[Additional Reading About Governance](#)