APPROVED

F.W. Parker Charter Essential School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday February 14, 2023 at 6:45 PM

Location
Parker School

Trustees Present
A. Jolly, B. Harrigan, C. Soderman, G. Penna, J. Saxe, M. Edgar, M. Lindsey, M. Silva-Rosa, M. Turnbull, N. Odekirk Hatlevig, P. Gordon, S. Razzetti, S. Reinhorn, T. Testa

Trustees Absent
None

Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned
T. Testa

Guests Present
D. Merriam, D. Van Patten, K. Tedstone, M. McKenna

I. Meeting Notes

A. Meeting Objectives

1. To reflect on what we learned from the students at our January retreat
2. To approve the 2023-2024 calendar
3. To provide feedback on the qualities and responsibilities of our Strategic Plan partner
4. To advance the work of the committees

B. To prepare for this meeting, please do the following...

1. Please RVSP through Board on Track
2. Read this agenda and the packet
3. Respond to Board Retreat Reflections – Students Discussions

II. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Penna called a meeting of the board of trustees of F.W. Parker Charter Essential School to order on Tuesday Feb 14, 2023 at 6:50 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

Matt Lindsey commented that the January minutes are incomplete. He will update the minutes and they will be presented for approval at the March Board meeting.

III. Reflections

A. Reflections on what we learned from students

Tiffany Testa asked Members to pair up and discuss what stood out during interaction with students at the January retreat. Tiff led the Board in a read-through of the Ten Common Principles. Members wrote down those things that stood out at the retreat and selected which principle their observations demonstrated.

IV. Self-Assessment and Membership

A. Reflections on Board self-assessment

Glenn Penna asked Members to find the Board self-assessment online and review the recommendations on their own and with their committees.

Glenn shared a quick overview of the results and said they highlight areas of opportunity. Glenn said the group could improve knowledge of Open Meeting laws, better educate new members about the bylaws, and consider whether an Academic Oversight subcommittee would be useful.

Deb Merriam commented that Parker does not collect the types of data that would typically be shared in the type of dashboard that DESE recommends. Tiff Testa said that progressive education is purposely and thoughtfully explicit about empowering teachers to do this work. Deb Merriam noted that this is state in the principles. The Board discussed.

Stefanie Reinhorn said the word "oversight" is not accurate for Parker. She suggested that the Board should not be involved with academic oversight but should build a better understanding among Members about academics at Parker.

B.

Discussion about Board membership

Glenn Penna presented Board on Track guidance, Board bylaws, and conflict of interest laws pertaining to State employees about Board membership and composition. The Board shared their thoughts about bringing in members from outside professional and social circles of current Board members and school staff. Board members determined that this is a governance matter. The Board discussed that potential members should be evaluated for what they can bring to the group and relationships should be transparent. All potential members would need to be nominated by the Governance Committee and voted on by the Board.

V. Strategic Plan

A. Strategic Plan discussion

Mara Edgar said the Strategic Plan Working Group consists of herself, Brian Harrigan, Deb Merriam, and Glenn Penna. She said the group is looking at strategic plans inside and outside of education to gain a clearer understanding of what is right for Parker. The group will present a draft RFP to the Board for approval in March and hopes to frame the project and select a consulting partner by June 2023. The new strategic plan would good into effect in September.

Christina Soderman asked about the budget for the project.
Nicole Hatlevig asked why a consultant was needed and if the work could be done in-house.

Glenn Penna said the Board will have the opportunity to interview and vote on consultant finalists. He said the work could be done in-house but would need to compensate anyone doing this work.

Mara said the RFP process provides opportunities for learning structure, scope, what "good" look like. She said there is time and cost involved in both going outside or staying in-house for this work.

Sonia Razzetti asked if anyone on the working group has experience writing a strategic plan. She said that paying an outside consultant would be paying for expertise.

Deb Merriam said if the right people are found, it is worth the money.

Brian Harrigan said the strategic plan will guide Parker for the next five years. He said it will inform committee goals, succession plans, budget goals, and will define work and be a clear blueprint for what Parker is doing and not doing.
T. Testa left at 8:14 PM.

VI. Head of School Report

A. Head of School Report

Brian Harrigan said the mid-year lottery was great. He said it was concerning that the numbers for the primary lottery were not as high as in past years . He referred Members to data in the meeting packet comparing yearly applications. Brian said the yield of this year's lottery will be known in March. He said those who do not choose to come will be surveyed to collect information on why families do not choose Parker. Brian said continued innovation is needed to:

- increase yield
- reduce withdrawal
- increase applications

Brian described workshops being offered by the Sizer Center and invited Board members to participate.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Development

Jennifer Saxe said that the Development Committee has been following up on giving to the Annual Fund. She said the committee has broken into subgroups to address participation based on constituencies.

- Alumni
- Current parents (giving has been slower in this group than in previous years)
- Graduate families

Katrina Tedstone said there are sixteen members on DevComm and the large group can do more targeted work in subgroups.

Katrina said that Charter School Advocacy week is March 13-17. She encouraged Board members to take part. Katrina said that State Representative Margaret Scarsdale will visit Parker on March 27th.

Christina Soderman asked if there are other constituencies that might be considered for giving such as friends of Parker and corporations.

B. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Sonia Razzetti said the DEI Committee met in January to discuss and better understand enrollment. She said a virtual information session had was held for the community of the Boys and Girls Club of Fitchburg and Leominster. Sonia said the committee is thinking

about strategic partnerships and looking into transportation options to Parker from certain towns to support BIPOC families.

There were no questions or comments.

C. Facilities

Martin Turnbull said the Facilities Committee met in January He said that a contractor has been selected and they are moving forward with the plans for work on the retaining wall and area in the front of the school.

There were no questions or comments.

D. Finance

Christina Soderman said the Finance Committee met just before the Board meeting Michelle McKenna presented information in preparation for next year's budget. Michelle said that the quarterly financial dashboard results are in the meeting packet. She said the dashboard does not include the recently paid bonuses; these were paid from a separate pool of money. Michelle said tuition revenue is on track.

Brian asked what FinComm information would be presented at March and April Board meetings. Michelle said the whole FY24 budget will be presented in March.

E. Governance

Nicole Hatlevig said the Governance Committee met last week and has one Board candidate ready to present. She said there are recruiting efforts for committees and the Board. She suggested looking into a tracking system for recruitment.

Nicole said GovComm would form subcommittees to address aspects of recruitment and welcoming and onboarding new members.

Glenn Penna said the governance committee is doing good work.

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. 2023-2024 Calendar

Brian Harrigan presented the 2023-2024 School Calendar. Brian said the calendar is structurally the same as previous years - the only difference is he is proposing a holiday for Monday, March 18. Brian said this would be a nice break in a long month. Brian said that winter break is shorter by one day - if there are two snow days, the March holiday would remain in place; if there are more than two snow days, the March holiday would be removed.

There were no questions or comments.

B. Approve Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IX. Comments, next steps, reflections

A. Plus/Delta

The Board did not share plus/delta, next steps or reflections.

X. Other Business

A. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

XI. Votes

A. Vote to approve a Strategic Plan Task Force

N. Odekirk Hatlevig made a motion to approve the Strategic Plan Task Force consisting of Mara Edgar, Brian Harrigan, Deb Merriam, and Glenn Penna, to work on drafting an RFP to present to the Board in March.
M. Turnbull seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Turnbull	Aye
T. Testa	Absent
M. Silva-Rosa	Aye
C. Soderman	Aye
M. Lindsey	Aye
G. Penna	Aye
P. Gordon	Aye
M. Edgar	Aye
S. Reinhorn	Aye
B. Harrigan	Aye
A. Jolly	Aye
S. Razzetti	Aye
N. Odekirk Hatlevig	Aye
J. Saxe	Aye

B. International Exchange Trip

Brian said that there is a possibility for an exchange of students between Parker and the Sophianum school in the Netherlands. Details are included in the meeting packet.

Glenn Penna asked if Parker has ever done exchange programs like this in previous years.

Stefanie Reinhorn said there is typically a third party responsible for oversight involved in exchange programs and she asked about insurance liability coverage.

Brian Harrigan said he would look into the questions raised and bring more information to the next Board meeting.
Motion to delay vote.
The Board wanted more information about the International Exchange Trip before making a determination. Brian Harrigan will provide more information about the trip at the March Board meeting.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

XII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Lindsey

Documents used during the meeting

- 2023 February Head of School Report.pdf
- BOT highlights February 2023.pdf
- Dashboard Q2 FY23 .pdf
- School Calendar 2023-2024.pdf