

F.W. Parker Charter Essential School

Minutes

Board of Trustees

Date and Time

Thursday February 15, 2024 at 5:45 PM

Location

Parker School

Trustees Present

B. Harrigan, C. Soderman, G. Penna, J. Fredericksen, M. Edgar, M. Lindsey, N. Odekirk Hatlevig, P. Gordon, S. Razzetti, S. Reinhorn (remote), T. Testa

Trustees Absent

A. Jolly, L. Hayner, M. Turnbull, R. Madamba

Guests Present

D. Merriam, M. Beganski (remote), M. McKenna

I. 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 Thursday Feb 15, 2024 at 5:49 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees on 01-09-24.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Value Proposition, SWOT and Vision

A. Value Proposition, SWOT and Vision

Brian began by framing the agenda and introducing the activities for the evening.

Mara provided further context about the strategic planning process. She shared the process is hard, but serves as a testament to the resiliency and hard work of all those involved. She described the purpose of a vision statement is to serve as an ambitious statement of where we want to be in five years that is not immediately obvious how we get there. She then stated the goal for the evening is to talk about what each possible vision statement means and what they would entail for Parker.

Tiffany read the first vision statement to the group, and then trustees read the statement individually before engaging in "turn and talk" conversations with the person sitting next to them. Mara then led the group in a discussion about pros and cons of the first vision statement.

Tiffany stated her pair identified several pros, including that Parker is open to all, that it also connects to Parker's original vision, it is asking us to rethink who our learners are and what it means to "equip" them. Tiffany identified a con that is does not speak to innovating and leading in education. Sonia emphasized innovating and leading, as well.

Glenn asked why this vision would be our vision now and if it was really a reach or aspiration.

Brian shared that he and Stefanie talked about transformative and what "value" means. They discussed whether to take it up a level.

Christina shared she liked some of the language about deep learning, but struggled with the passive voice. She wondered about how to make it more powerful and differentiate it from other schools.

Julie shared that a con is that the statement talks too much about the future and not enough about the present. She stated that Parker is about the love of learning now.

Nicole shared that it does seem fairly insular if only focused on families in the Northeast and does feel inclusive of the full scope of who Parker hopes to be valued by and influence.

Stefanie asked about whether this vision is meant to capture the dissemination work of Parker or just the work as a school with students.

Brian stated that it is ambitious but also practical.

Glenn speculated that it feels like we would need multiple visions to encapsulate the multiple aspects of Parker of school and dissemination.

Next, Sonia read the second vision statement aloud, and the trustees repeated the same process.

Matt shared that a pro of the second vision is that it presents a more outward-looking stance for Parker, but the language feels generic

Sonia highlighted the vision speaks to reaching to thought leaders and innovators.

Tiffany stated the teachers, luminaries, and funders speak to a reach for Parker.

Brian shared that "proven success" is a key phrase, but the vision is a little vague. It needs a little more specificity that speaks to student outcomes and measurable outcomes.

Christina shared that it is important to speak to the goal of what we are trying to do. It is important to have a vision that speaks to the people you are trying to reach and they will identify themselves.

Stefanie stated that vision two speaks more toward the aspiration. It speaks to the idea that Parker has achieved a level of success that it is known near and far.

Julie stated she believes the vision statement needs to be nailed down and concise.

III. Strategic Priorities

A. Strategic Priorities

Pam stated that the committee has developed eleven strategic priorities, and the goal is ultimately to narrow them down to three. The trustees then engaged in sorting activity of the drafted priorities based on their potential impact toward accomplishing the potential visions.

The trustees concluded the activity by engaging in an affinity activity to determine what the most impactful priorities may be.

IV. Head of School Report

A. Head of School Report

Brian requested that trustees examine the proposed 2024-2025 school calendar.

S. Razzetti made a motion to Approve the proposed 2024-2025 school calendar.

P. Gordon seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

V. FY25 Budget

A. FY25 Budget

Brian and Michelle updated the trustees with a financial update and preview of the Fiscal Year 2025 budget.

Michelle provided an overview of the quarter two financial dashboard. If we need to draw from reserves, we can pull technology reserves back; interest revenue could also be drawn back.

Michelle stated the difference between the budget of 370 and 390 students would be a difference of three hundred thousand.

Brian shared that we will need the forty thousand previously approved for marketing, but may not need any other reserve funding.

Michelle shared important points to remember when thinking about the FY25 budget. She then shared the estimates of the impact on expenses of changes in salary.

Sonia asked how we decided upon the size of the salary increase as part of the budget process. Brian responded that last year, there was a commitment made to close compensation gaps and these increases represent a continuation of that commitment.

Brian shared that some of the cuts for next year are by design one-year cuts and will need to be reevaluated next year. The assumption is that 370 is a one-year blip, not a long-term issue.

Sonia and Mara shared concerns about whether assumptions about returning to 390 student enrollment are realistic.

Brian shared the current proposed changes to staffing are motivated by maintaining student teacher ratios.

Michelle explained a slide on estimating the impact of budget changes. She then shared a list of operational adjustments to account for savings in the budget. Brian explained changes to the staffing model for FY25.

Michelle discussed how reserves will be used for one-time costs to address challenges and goals identified in the Strategic Plan.

Sonia asked why costs associated with operational needs are being funded by reserves. Michelle shared that the thought process is to use reserves as we try to work our way back to 390 students from 370 students.

VI. 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 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Lindsey