



Date: June 18, 2019

To: Board of Directors

Submitted By: Kirsten Carr, Director of Engagement & Partnerships

Subject: Growth Update **Agenda Item Type:** Informational, Discussion

Objective(s):

- 1) To provide the Board with a current status report on growth opportunities and updated greenlighting metrics to achieve the board approved strategic plan.
- 2) The Board will provide feedback to modify the strategic plan to reflect the areas of largest need and revised timeline.

Overview

As we shared at the April 29 meeting, Navigator has been and will continue to consider and explore key questions to achieve the board-approved impact statement of growing to five schools. The current political climate in California and the concerted effort to open Watsonville Prep in August necessitates staff to revisit the strategies projected to achieve our goals. Below is an update of the information shared at the 4/29 meeting if applicable as well as a couple of scenario based next steps.

1. Status of Greenlighting Plan

- a. The board-approved greenlighting plan included detailed plans to reach the goal of five schools. As shared with the board in previous reports, staff will be recommending modifications to the metrics to reflect the need to intensify our vetting process. Staff, however, is aware of the need to remain vigilant with current schools and their performance. The organizational priorities for 2019/20 ensure this sharpened focus on academics is highlighted as a strategic impact.

2. Timing of Schools 4 and 5

- a. The green lighting process includes a 24-month pathway which will be triggered when the board approves a specific community. As we did not launch the efforts for school four in time for a 2020 start, the 24 months would currently work for a 2021 opening. As discussed at the April 29th board meeting is the importance of maintaining strong relationships and staff is aware of the need to remain vigilant with current schools and their performance. The organizational priorities for 2019/20 ensure this sharpened focus on academics is highlighted as a strategic impact.

3. External Forces Impacting Growth

- a. Current political climate - The package of extremely damaging bills targeting charter schools made it out of the Assembly Education committee last week and will be headed to the assembly floor soon. These bills, if passed, could make growth incredibly difficult without a clear pathway for local authorization. Neither of the charter moratorium bills made to floor for a vote so the cap on charters will not take place this legislative cycle. AB 1505 (which curtails a charter school's ability to appeal a denial, for either an initial approval or renewal) passed the assembly and will go before the state senate when they return from recess. It is currently located in the Senate Education Committee without a scheduled date to be read. At the end of this memo you will find scenarios based on the status of the legislation.

Growth Scenarios:

Scenario A: AB 1505 passes as is and the right to appeal is eliminated for both renewals and new petitions. Authorizing districts can require renewals every two years, and WPS would have to go through PVUSD for its first renewal.

Navigator's top priority immediately becomes ensuring continued solid relationships with our current authorizers in Gilroy and Hollister and establishing a relationship with current and potential board members in Watsonville.

Activities will include:

- Outreach to current board members, local businesses, community members, and in Watsonville, county board members and educational advocates.

- More proactive approach to engagement with authorizing districts, such as annual formal updates to the board and occasional public comment addresses on activities at the sites.
- More targeted opportunities to share best practices with authorizing and local districts.

New growth opportunities will need to be focused on areas where there are boards interested or we have an opportunity to help seat new board members. The runway for authorization will be longer to ensure strong relationships with high certainty of a local approval. The geography will become less important than the interest and ability to be successful.

This scenario also includes more creative opportunities to grow, including but not limited to:

- Adding a high school to one of our communities
- Working with current charter schools in the state which are struggling to explore opportunities for merging

Scenario B: AB 1505 passes with amendments which protect current state authorized charters from being denied at the local level with no recourse to appeal.

While we will still need to stay active with WPS and PVUSD, including many of the items listed above, the immediate threat to Watsonville Prep is less lethal. Our local focus will be to continue to ensure strong relationships with GUSD and HSD with the activities listed above.

Additional growth opportunities remain the same as Scenario A.

Scenario C: AB 1505 is defeated at the Senate level or doesn't make it to a floor vote.

This doesn't mean the threat has been eliminated as we have experienced the power of the teachers' bargaining units as it relates to their perceived threat of public charter schools. Navigator will need to remain dedicated to strengthening relationships with all local districts (as described above) while also focusing on reaching the impact as laid out in our strategic plan.

Growth activities will begin in earnest for districts highlighted in the expanded geographic regions while also still exploring opportunities for relationships with

struggling charters across the state. Staff will also continue to explore growth opportunities as outlined in scenarios A & B.