



Sela PCS Board Retreat Minutes

Date: August 7, 2019, 4–9 pm

Location: Mintz Levin Law Firm

In attendance: Lisa Apple, Heather Capell, Vaun Cleveland, Kiara Cross, Rebecca Damari, Deena Fox, Bryce Jacobs, Aster Patel, Josh Bork*, Camerra Taliaferro*, Markus Batchelor* [guest speaker], Barbara Nophlin* [guest speaker], Smruti Radkar* [board candidate], Michael Walker* [board candidate], Rose Benson* [board candidate]

*non-voting attendee

Opening activity: “Things in common” in pairs and as a larger group

Markus Batchelor on branding

Communications coordinator for People for the American Way Foundation young officials network 1300 members from local school boards to US congress. Member of the SBOE in DC, representative for Ward 8. Young Elected Officials network.

Communications—what you put out—dictates the quality of what you bring in (including financial and human resources)

Our students and families are our best asset. Tell the broader impact we’re having. Give specific examples. Keep stakeholders engaged (students, families, staff, broader community). Get buy-in, make them willing and able messengers about the work we do. Have consistent branding (graphics and language) across platforms. Platforms should be cross-branded: links between social media platforms. Be just as focused on being stakeholder-serving as donor-serving in branding and public messaging.

The role of branding in student recruitment: Quality education and nurturing are the centerpiece. Part of a community. Challenging students. Telling individual stories as much as you can, given privacy concerns. Convincing families that the model and experiences are unique to our community. Amplifying the things that are distinctive about our community. Demonstrating that every staff member is committed to every child in the school. Give a glimpse inside the classroom.

Set a media schedule—e.g. sending out a story about students to donors every Friday.

Who to target: families, donors, online targets via a paid service (Facebook, Twitter, Google)—pre-lottery, back to school, other targeted times.

Get board members, staff, families to help repost. Ownership is key. Hashtag campaign. E.g. #whyAna, from Anacostia HS.

Grandparent programs (Grandparent Day and other times) to raise money and awareness.

Get the community (city education officials, local elected officials, SBOE reps, leaders of civic organizations, community-based organizations) to come to Sela, get students to be tour guides/ambassadors. Encourage students and staff to “get out” to be involved in the community. ANC meetings, civic association meetings. Talk about the school in new contexts. Have students perform at local orgs’ holiday events.

Consider getting a college student as a communications/social media intern.

Train staff on communications.

Governing and Managing

We reviewed the respective roles of board (governance) and school leadership (management)

Barbara Nophlin on Governance

Poor governance is one of the main reasons charter schools fall by the wayside. Board members should not get in the middle of conflicts between staff members, or complaints from parents.

We could have a board/staff luncheon. Introduce board members, explain board duties and school leadership duties (broadly). Then informal conversations.

Initial Point of Entry Event

External Relations is planning a breakfast event to practice ambassadorship for Sela. All board members will be asked to attend and to bring one other person who might be interested in Sela. The person doesn’t have to be a potential donor or have an obvious connection with education; you can bring anyone, and they will be contacted after the event to ask if they know of anyone else who might like to see Sela. The idea is to establish a practice of outreach and cast a wide net.

Strategic Plan Review

Assessments

We reviewed assessment results from Oral Proficiency Interviews (Hebrew), Teaching Strategies Gold (Early Childhood), and MAP assessments.

Josh's takeaways on MAP: more discrepancies in achievement and growth for literacy than math. We are introducing a new ELA curriculum, which we anticipate will be more broadly accessible culturally than our past ELA curriculum. Lessons learned in terms of differentiation needs, will be emphasized in coaching moving forward.

Information about individual students' challenges with achievement and growth are being taken into account in unit planning, group assignments, etc.

Planning to implement Eureka math curriculum for PreK3 and PreK4

Consultant from Hebrew Public (Shlomit Lipton) coming in October to talk about how to better assess Hebrew proficiency.