



Inspired Teaching
Demonstration School

Board of Directors Meeting
January 5, 2022
12:00 - 2:00 p.m. ET (via Zoom)

In attendance: Andrea Browning, Morris Clarke, Maureen Ingram, Joanne Irby, John Leibovitz, Aleta Margolis, Lucy Newton, Sundai Riggins, Pete Weber, Rusty Wilson

Absent: Michelle Lerner

Staff: Kate Keplinger

Minutes by: Joanne Irby, Board Secretary

Called to Order: 12:03 pm

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to Approve the Minutes from the 11/1/21 Board Meeting.
Approved without objection.

Committee Reports

- **Executive Committee**
 - The committee discussed the RFP for an equity audit and the selection criteria and process.
 - The working group will make a recommendation to the Board on which firm to select, and the full Board will vote on the recommendation.

- **Finance and Business Oversight Committee**
 - The DC Council has approved a lease extension, after advocacy from the Head of School, Board members and the charter school incubator. The lease will be negotiated and then come before the full Board for approval.
 - Our construction loan, which became due December 1, 2021, has been extended to December 1, 2022, to allow time for the lease extension and loan refinancing.
 - The Board expressed thanks to the finance committee and the school leadership for their efforts and stewardship through this multi-year process.
 - The committee discussed the relationship between the lease extension, loan refinancing, and the potential buyout of Building Pathways. Now that some of those issues are resolving, the committee will analyze the financial impact of a buyout.
 - The Board discussed moving forward soon to lock in rates before they rise in the coming 4 to 9 months.
 - Audit was distributed to Board members last month for review. No questions or concerns were expressed.

- The Board discussed other financial issues, including additional COVID-related expenditures and a smaller number of enrolled students, which impacts per-pupil funding.
- **Nominations and Governance Committee**
 - No new updates, but the Committee feels the urgency of moving in 2022 and has reached out to Education Board Partners.
 - EBP has made connections with some potential board members, but so far there has been nothing finalized.
 - The Board discussed outreach to the school community for additional parent Board members, including using the school LinkedIn group or listservs, as well as other methods of outreach to avoid potential bias. There was discussion of the importance of making clear the criteria we are looking for in new members: we want voices representative of the entire community. There was further discussion about supplementing any email outreach with fliers in backpacks, personal outreach by staff, and other intentional ways to encourage people who may not see themselves as Board members.
- **Demonstration and Fundraising**
 - With guidance from Dr. Riggins, the Committee came up with shorter and longer term goals. The goals are structured around three pillars of practice:
 - Teacher Residency;
 - Showcasing our Learning (internally and externally); and
 - Inquiry for All (teachers as learners themselves, ongoing professional development)
 - The goals of the committee are to balance the immediate and urgent (covid; keeping kids in the building) with maintaining focus on our mission.
 - The framing: We're not demonstrating *perfection*, we're demonstrating *practice*.
 - The committee intends to identify instances where something in our practice is compelling enough to share that we can get resources (funding, grad students to do case studies, perhaps OSSE) to amplify it, without being an additional burden to the teaching staff. The committee also noted that capturing our practice on video or similar media, which can then be amplified via blogs and other means, would also be minimally burdensome to staff.
 - The committee also noted that the goal is to be focused, rather than a little bit of this or that, so that the rationale for the work is clear.
 - The school has secured grant funding to start this work, using this year as a foundational year to define what we want to capture.
- **Academic Committee**

- The committee has started the quarterly cycle to meet with staff to discuss data and what it means. The data collection is time-intensive right now.
- The committee discussed the RFP for a data vendor. Four proposals were received, and the working group is meeting this week to review and make a recommendation to the Board.

Head of School Update

General School Updates

- The school moved to all-virtual instruction at the end of December, due to covid cases among staff and students quarantining. Staff holiday gathering was cancelled, but IFA distributed teacher gifts.
- The school leadership has focused on quality hybrid learning, for students who are at home, quarantining, asymptomatic.

COVID Mitigation Strategies

- As of this morning, school has distributed 255 tests to families in preparation for return to school tomorrow.
- School has ordered KN95 masks to be provided to staff weekly.
- School-based vaccination clinics are running for covid vaccine, flu and booster shots.
- School plans to continue symptomatic and asymptomatic testing, and there is an open testing clinic at the school for the community as well.
- Dr. Riggins thanked Kate and staff team for keeping all of this moving.
- Test-to-stay is not an ongoing option at this time due to DC Health requirements, a CLIA waiver is required beyond this return to school window, but school leadership is hopeful there will be a shift; will communicate those limitations to the school community.

Academics

- The school leadership has been planning hybrid schedules in response to the covid surge, probably for 2-3 weeks. The schedules balance synchronous and asynchronous learning and include live time with a member of the grade level team. Teachers are doing contingency planning at the start of each week.
- Dr. Riggins does monthly walk-throughs with Principals, including attending classes, looking at trends, asking questions about classroom practices such as engagement, the balance of student and teacher talk, etc. One of the recent middle school walk throughs included discussion of options for alignment across curricula, eg. aligning ELA reading with a social studies module. Dr Riggins views sharing this approach with families as a retention vehicle, being able to share what kids are working on in the middle grades, capturing the unique Middle School experience at ITDS that's different from other schools. It's answering the question "What do the 4 I's look like at the Middle School level?"

Equitable Access Lottery Preference

- Committee will meet on January 12, looking at survey questions, planning outreach, analyzing historical attendance trends among at-risk students.
- We haven't had any further communication from PCSB.

Parent Engagement

- Staff started doing parent workshops in the Fall/Winter.

- School will begin listening sessions starting at the end of January or early February; these will be open conversations about what parents are experiencing, and will amplify what we're already doing. These will be 6-7 consecutive weeks.
- Admin staff have had coffee chats, parent workshops, connecting with families.
- School leadership thanks the IFA, who wrapped 100 gifts, despite cancelled party, and held gift sharing outside, which was a much needed distraction given the stress of the covid context. Ms. Squires sent a message to teachers that was wonderful.

Student Exerience

- Dr. Riggins did a student intersession, "Project Runway," working with 6th graders who constructed fabulous designs; their fashion show was cancelled in December, but will be rescheduled. Amazing to see them supporting each other, helping each other with techniques and ideas. Kids just need a bit of a launching pad, and they go off and create. They were funny, honest and had agency and voice. She was grateful for the experience.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:44pm.