



Minutes from the Annual Board of Directors Retreat
 Friday, July 25th & Saturday, July 26th

In attendance:

Patrick Donovan - Board Chair	Scott Laband - Board Vice Chair	Rich Billings - Board Treasurer
Amy Anderson	April Manzanares - Parent Rep.	Pamela Harris
James Cryan - CEO	Michael Turner - Director of Strategy & Operations	Rebecca Kisner - Director of Community Engagement

Participated by phone from 10:00am-12:30pm on Saturday, July 26th: Nick Waugh

Absent: Jessica Johnson - Secretary

Agenda Item	Discussion / Resolution	VOTE or Next Step
Call to order	The Board retreat meeting was called to order at 8:45am by Pat Donovan. The members contributed norms and goals for the retreat.	
Annual Review	Academic Report: James Cryan (CEO) updated the board with the EOY results from the school. In reading, 69% of students were on grade-level on the STEP literacy assessment. On the NWEA MAPs assessment, scholars exceeded growth expectations by 118%. While competitive from a national comparison set of the Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF), reading has been identified as a key area of focus for next year.	

	<p>In math, results were very strong. On the nationally normed NWEA MAPs assessment, scholars exceeded growth goals by 152%. The second graders would have been highest among all schools on last year's comp set from the CSGF.</p> <p>Academic Next Steps: Rich asked for data around NWEA MAPs for students eligible for FRL and minority students. Pat asked about the performance of scholars who were enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten at RMP. Amy suggested the academic committee create metrics for non-academic data such as character and 21st century skills.</p> <p>Organizational Accomplishments: James reported major accomplishments of the year including: 1) Completion of strategic plan, 2) 2nd charter and school leader Jenni Reese, and 3) Building out of the Network support team, including adding Mike Turner: Director of Ops, Naomi Jozvich: Director of Talent, Amy Zhu - manager of finance and Rose Eppensteiner for communications.</p> <p>Key Challenges: James reported key challenges for the year including a school leader transition, communication surrounding parent desire for middle school and not being selected for the Hampden Heights facility.</p> <p>Key Lessons</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Leadership depth – identify, train and support upcoming leaders - systematize 2. Quality of decision making processes – matters, a lot 3. Share our story proactively to build support with families and community stakeholders 	
<p>Organizational Priorities & Goals</p>	<p>James presented the 2014-2015 organizational priorities to the board.</p> <p>2014-15 Organizational Priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading – Complete FOCUS of the team (professional development, coaching, consultant) 2. Talent/Leadership – Launch Leadership Study, Relay Principals Fellowship, Dir. of Talent 3. Build Champions – Proactive communications & story-telling, family empowerment work 4. Quality of Systems – Finance in-house, facilities, NST support <p>Rich suggested James prioritize his time among these initiatives.</p>	<p>Vote scheduled for September board meeting to approve goals</p>
	<p>Charter Application Debrief:</p>	

	<p>The board and staff reflected on the events of the spring and RMP's application for a second charter, specifically to open in the new Hampden Heights facility under construction in SE Denver.</p> <p>Key Successes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identified influential champions for our school 2. Engaged the board and staff well in the process 3. Families demonstrated incredible advocacy 4. The community is impressed by quality of service to students 5. Raised awareness of RMP especially in southeast Denver <p>Key Lessons/Next Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-frame communication strategy 2. Develop long-term external relationships and deliberate political strategy 3. Begin collaboration with other schools on parent advocacy 4. Continue to invest in parents and capacity to build relationships <p>James and other staff are asked to present a strategic proposal for advocacy initiative ("Building Champions") to the board at the September meeting.</p>	
	<p>Facilities Discussion: Because RMP #2 was not placed in the Hampden Heights facility, the board of directors is undergoing an intensive search for a facility led by Rich Billings. This work will include a neighborhood analysis of SE, SW and FNE Denver, of both public and private facilities.</p> <p>Next Steps: Rich will present four facility options to the board by mid-August, with a commitment to financing in October and a confirmation of facility in November. The board noted that outreach and enrollment must begin in September/October, especially in a new region of the city.</p>	
	<p>Vote to Approve Misc. Business Proposals: The policies included; changing the phrase "Board Reference Book" to be replaced with "Board Handbook" (pg. 34), adding marijuana as a legal but prohibited drug (pg. 36), appointing Rich Billings to a 2-year term as treasurer, and renewing Pat Donovan & Scott Laband for 3-year-terms (2-year officer terms).</p>	<p><i>Motioned – Pat Seconded – Scott Approved 5-0</i></p>
	<p>Vote to Approve 2013-2014 Budget:</p>	<p><i>Motioned – Rich</i></p>

	<p>James presented a budget summary to the board, which included exceeding revenue targets (YTD Act Revenue: \$3.46m), surpassing the original budget of \$2.94m and revising it to \$3.44m, and managing expenses well (YTD Total Expenses \$3.16m). The net income was \$300k, the unrestricted cash reserve was \$786k, and the organization had 91 days of unrestricted cash.</p>	<p><i>Seconded – Amy Approved 5-0</i></p>
	<p>Review & Vote to Approve 2014-15 Budget: Highlights of the 2014-2015 budget proposal included an enrollment projection of 388 scholars, with 273 “fully funded” scholars; the new compensation model with tiered raises; an average teacher salary of \$45k, and school based salaries as 53% of total expenses.</p> <p>The NST growth accounted for a significant portion of salaries, including four new full time positions at 7.5 FTE: a Director of Finance, Director of Talent, Communications Associate and Manager of Personalized Learning. DPS fees for facilities and special education have outpaced revenue growth. We are continuing to invest in professional development, as well as FF&E for the second school.</p> <p>Key Risks & Mitigation Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fundraising - develop fundraising strategic plan, resurrect Advancement Committee 2. Politics - develop “Foundation” Board, Communications Strategy & Hire, great results! 3. Talent - hire 2 APs & Dir. of School Ops (future school leaders), Director of Finance, Leadership Development Program (targeted at teacher leaders) 	<p><i>Motioned – Amy Seconded – Scott Approved: 6-0</i></p> <p>Action: James and finance team to develop a contingency plan for missed revenue targets.</p>
	<p>CSSI Review - Next Steps: The CSSI team conducted a two-day visit at RMP in April, conducting extensive interviews and making recommendations to improve organizational efficacy. The team shared that it was one of the top five school visits they’d ever done and had very few suggestions for improvement. Their main recommendations led to the following next steps, as presented by Director of Strategy and Operations Mike Turner:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manager of Finance to improve language, policies, and procedures for Finance Committee. 2. Compliance of Sunshine Laws, posting meeting agendas / minutes, & committee meetings. 3. Make board documents website more accessible to public via more digestible website. 4. Strengthen and implement board committees and structures. 5. Create rules for revenue sharing between schools and NST. 	
	<p>Executive Session 1:30-2:30pm to review CEO performance and compensation.</p>	

Meeting Adjourned	The Board retreat meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.										
Call to order	The Board retreat meeting was called to order at 9:15am by Pat Donovan.										
PK-5 or PK-8 Decision Framing	<p>The board engaged an outside consultant, Diane Woodworth-Jordan to facilitate this discussion and decision. Before the board retreat, Ms. Woodworth-Jordan conducted 1-1 interviews with all board members and reviewed all communications and feedback from parents.</p> <p>Strengths Ms. Woodworth-Jordan identified the following strengths among the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong sense of responsibility to RMP families and the PK-8 commitment from original charter. ● Board feels its membership has extensive knowledge of charter schools and K-12 education. ● Agreement that board members listen to one another and are willing to speak up, be heard. ● Strong support for James in the leadership role and his guidance. ● Agreement that the Pre-K 5 / 8 decision is the most difficult you have faced. <p>Areas of concern Ms. Woodworth-Jordan identified the following concerns among the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members split about PK-5 / PK-8 decision ● Many members resonate with concerns of the parent community to meet expectations of PK-8 ● Others feel original PK-8 charter is important, but could hinder ability to achieve the mission ● Strategic planning process was not as thoughtful as it could have been related to PK-5 <p>Stakeholder Identification The board identified the following stakeholders and clearly identified students and families as their most important stakeholders. The complete list of stakeholders is as follows:</p> <table data-bbox="472 1166 1631 1279" style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Students</td> <td style="width: 33%;">DPS</td> <td style="width: 33%;">SE Denver Community</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Families</td> <td>Funders</td> <td>City / City Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RMP Leadership & Staff</td> <td>Policy Makers</td> <td>Education Reform Community</td> </tr> </table>	Students	DPS	SE Denver Community	Families	Funders	City / City Council	RMP Leadership & Staff	Policy Makers	Education Reform Community	
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RMP Leadership & Staff	Policy Makers	Education Reform Community									
PK5 / PK8 Discussion	Discussion with board										

Board members were updated by Mike Turner about discussions that had occurred since the last board meeting in March. This included a presentation to parents from Bill Kurtz, CEO of DSST Public Schools. While parents were interested in DSST as a quality option, many parents were still concerned about a guaranteed quality seat.

Board members discussed high parent satisfaction scores and parent surveys from the end of year which were very strong.

Board members discussed the benefit of focusing on providing an excellent elementary school experience. Some members believed adding the middle grades may compromise RMP's ability to deliver at high quality.

Board members discussed mistakes that were made with communication and all board members agreed communication with parents is imperative.

April, Amy and Scott advocated strongly for the interests of families they had heard from and suggested that ensuring middle school was important to the success of our mission.

James informed the board that today we serve 50% more students in each grade-level, and suggested we want to continue to offer those elementary seats which are in high demand.

The Board discussed options for partnerships to ensure that the identification and access to quality secondary schools for RMP families becomes a top organizational priority. There was a recognition that while we can not guarantee a spot we are committed to supporting families in finding quality secondary options for our scholars.

The board identified the following factors as being important to the decision:

Factors:

1. Mission
2. Academic Quality
3. Growth
4. Family support
5. Organizational capacity (talent, facility, finance, leadership desire)

	<p>6. Number of scholars served & impact on their success</p> <p>7. Quality/number of secondary seats in SE and DPS</p>	
Executive Session	At 12:05pm in accordance with CRS 24-6-402(4)(f), Pat Donovan called an executive session to discuss a personnel issue. The executive session adjourned at 12:35pm.	
PK5 / PK8 Vote	Pamela Harris moved to vote on confirming RMP as a PK-5 school and work to create a partnership with quality secondary (6-12) schools. The motion was seconded by Rich Billings.	<i>Motioned - Pamela Seconded – Rich Vote - 7-0</i>
Communication Discussion	<p>The board of directors agreed on the following goals to communicate the PK5 decision.</p> <p><u>Goals</u></p> <p>Share the decision in person</p> <p>Move forward immediately with partnership work</p> <p>Rebuild relationships with families</p> <p>Transparency / proactive communication</p>	
Meeting Adjourned	At 1:30pm Pat Donovan adjourned the meeting.	