MINUTES

Full Board of Directors Meeting

April 28, 2025
6:15 pm

The meeting was held virtually via Zoom using this link

MISSION: We exist to foster a diverse and equitable community of youth and adults striving together for academic, personal and civic excellence.

VISION: Inclusive excellence in public education.

The Board uses a series of qualifiers, where appropriate, to help clarify the nature of each presentation/report.

1. The decision has been made and updates are provided (Inform)
2. Input is needed to assist the board to make the best decision (Discussion/Input)
3. Brainstorming is needed to help identify all options (Brainstorm)
4. Input and/or decision is assigned to a Special Committee (Small Group)
5. The decision is ready for vote (Vote)

ATTENDANCE

Board Executive Committee:
Ambar Suero, Co-Chair
Katherine Casey, Co-Chair
Kaylee Hart, Treasurer
Annie Bielecki, Secretary

Board Members:
Nikea Bland, Board Member
Drew Goltermann, Board Member
Katondra Dunn, Board Member
Ramone Carson, Board Member
Kelly Fleming, Board Member
Sloane Macy, Board Member
Grace Nailing, Board Member
Kenny Smith, Board Member (virtual)
Alexander Landau, Board Member (virtual)

Highline Ex-Officio Members:
Chris Ferris, Highline Academy Executive Director
Sarah Verni-Lau, Highline Academy Southeast Principal
Vanessa Rodriguez, Highline Academy Northeast Principal
Arizona Alli, Outreach and Communications Manager
Alex Bowdoin, Outreach and Communication
Carolyn Galegos, HR Hiring Manager
Jai King, Director of Operations
Elyse Bekerman, HASE Teacher Liaison
Heather Miles, HASE Teacher Liaison
Travis Lambert, HANE Teacher LIaison
Ashlee Morris,

Other:
Monica Hazelwood, HASE parent
Scott Hazelwood, HASE parent

Absent:

Topic	*Presenter*	*Goals*	*Outcome*

Call to Order – Ambar Suero – Call to Order (6:30 pm)
Quorum Establish
A quorum of the Board was established. The agenda was adopted with no changes.

Mission Moment
Annie read aloud the mission and vision statement. She spoke about her kids' time at Highline and thanked the Board and all of Highline for helping her to raise such wonderful kiddos.

Consent Agenda – Ambar Suero – Governance – Vote (6:32 pm)
Minutes from the February meeting

- A motion was made by Ambar and seconded by Joe and Katherine to approve the March, 2025 and April 7 special meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

See BOD Packet for:
- Budget to Actuals
- HR Report
- Decision Making matrix
- Minutes from March meeting
- HANE and HASE Dashboards

Public Comment (6:33 pm)
- Alli framed the public comment.
- Scott Hazelwood - Expressed concerns regarding teaching the books Only This Beautiful Moment and Like A Love Story due to explicit sexual content. Wants the Board to set clear standards, involve parents earlier, and protect students.
- Monica Hazelwood - HASE parent. Expressed concerns regarding the sexually explicit nature of the books Like A Love Story and Only This Beautiful Moment. Asks for permission slips for books.

E.D. Update - Chris Ferris - Inform (6:39 pm)
- HR Report - Carolyn Gallegos and Sara Taylor are working on employment and employee engagement. 80% retention, which is an improvement. Lower applicants than we would like. 19 days to fill a position, hoping for 14. Within 60 days of hire teachers have correct licensure, we are at 98%. Net Promoter Score is lower than our target. 53% staff of color. Please see slides for more details. Travis Lambert shouted out the new teacher institute last summer as a big help with retention and support, and said that being in a school that lives its Mission Statement has also been important. Ramone and Heather asked some clarifying questions about the Intent to Return numbers. Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) - 9% of staff at HANE and 11% at HASE were on PIPs, and more than half on PIPs exited successfully. Joe suggested replicating the survey. Kaylee likes having an exit evaluation. Kaylee suggested exploring the idea of following up on public comments at the Board Retreat.
- HANE charter - moving forward and will be discussed at the next DPS Board Meeting. Chris recommends we put some time together to discuss CMAS data and Strategic Plan Info at the Board Retreat.
- Decision making matrix re Executive Orders.

Principal Update - Sarah Verni-Lau & Vanessa Rodriguez - Inform (7:18 pm)

- HASE- update on staff culture work - Staff Satisfaction survey was very divided. Numerical data did not match written feedback. Sarah brought this info to the staff in order to champion the team to solve the culture problem. HASE created some self-selected teacher committees, looked for trend statements and aligned them to Positive Culture Incentives, The Highline Way, and Professionalism. Sarah meets with leaders of committees to give them agendas and requesting teacher-driven plans. This Friday they will be presenting some ideas to the staff. Sarah has been having informal conversations with staff to check in on how they feel. HASE has purchased Dean's List which tracks discipline and reward systems, which will save teachers a lot of time and stress. Sarah pointed out that adding 100 kids and having a completely new admin team this year was very challenging.
- Joe asked Heather about a tough staff meeting held recently at HASE - she feels that teachers were able to express themselves. There has been tension in the building and she believes that this meeting was a first step towards establishing and naming out loud what is making this year hard. She believes a follow-up meeting would be extremely helpful.
- Grace suggested that from this difficult meeting there is now a starting point.
- Katherine asked how HASE is thinking about next steps/accountability. Sarah mentions that the Professionalism Committee decided to combine Professionalism and Highline Way committee so that the entire staff has a say in accountability. Sarah wants everyone to have humility and openness to trying new things and be ready to say out loud when things aren't working.
- Sloane asked what comes next - Sarah said most committees will continue next year. Having teachers have a voice is very important long term. Heather mentioned that the teachers want autonomy but also don't want to be doing it all. The committees will be tasked with balancing those two needs.
- Arizona added that having leaders in each committee that meet with each other has helped with cohesion amongst the committees.
- Chris mentioned that members of REACH HASE sat in on HANE morning meeting on Friday for some cross campus learning and found it very helpful.

Reach In Committee - Nikea Bland - Inform (7:36 pm)

- Board applicants - 4 applicants, still looking for a HANE parent applicant. Interviews will happen within the next couple of weeks.
- Officer Nominations - Annie nominates Nikea and Kelly for Co-Secretary. Nikea and Kelly accept.
- Ambar Nominates Katherine as Chair. Katherine accepts. Katherine nominates Ambar as Vice-Chair. Ambar accepts.
- Nikea nominates Sloan and Kaylee as co-Treasurer, Joe seconds, Sloan and Kaylee accept.
- Ambar suggested that Board Members start looking for new applicants earlier in the school year, especially for those Board Members who are planning on stepping down.
- Chris mentioned that the calendar for the upcoming year School Board has been formulated.

Executive Session: 30 minutes §24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S., Personnel matters, re Chris Ferris the Executive Director

- Ambar made a motion to enter into Executive Session, Annie seconded.

Reminders/Announcements – Annie Bielecki – Inform (8:25 pm)

- Next BOD meeting: Virtual May 19, 2025 6:15 pm here via Zoom
- Teacher Appreciation Breakfasts:
- HANE: 7:00 am May 6
- HASE: 7:00 am May 7
-

Adjournment –Ambar Suero – Adjourn Meeting – Vote (8:32 pm)

With no further business up for discussion, a motion was made by Ambar and seconded by Nikea to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.