



FirstLine Schools Board Retreat Minutes
January 25, 2013
12:00 – 5:00 pm

In Attendance: Lawrence Kullman, Darleene Peters, Gregory St. Etienne, Alison Hartman, Paul Pechon, Christian Rhodes, Brian Egana, George Freeman, Monique Cola, Kim Henry, and Stephen Rosenthal

Staff in Attendance: Jay Altman, Joseph Neary and Rebekah Cain

Public in Attendance: Della Hasselle

Absent: Catherine Pierson, and Charleen Blache

Larry Kullman called the meeting to order at 12:25pm

1. Larry welcomed everyone and gave opening remarks.
2. Brian Egana and Greg St. Etienne led a discussion regarding Wheatley. The Wheatley community has invited John Dibert Community School to move into that building, once it is built, likely for the 2014-25 school year.
 - a. Greg St. Etienne moved that that the FLS Board of Directors authorize the Chief Executive Officer to sign a sublease agreement for the Wheatley School property once the terms and conditions of the lease are final and have been reviewed and approved by Firstline general counsel and the Chair of the Board. Brian Egana seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Jay led a review of the board goals and progress toward those goals
 - a. Review of goals set last January:
 - i. By the end of the 2015-2016 school year, the AI of all FirstLine schools will be 100 or higher (this will be adjusted for the equivalent in the new accountability scale).
 - ii. Reserve Fund Balance for the four (4) K-8 schools that FirstLine currently operates will be equal to 10% by the end of the 2015-2016 school year (i.e., FY 2016).
 - b. Stephen Rosenthal led a discussion of FirstLine's financial sustainability and progress toward that goal
4. Jay led a discussion of the FirstLine Schools mission and primary objectives (vision)
 - a. The board engaged in a College Readiness discussion: is this a primary objective of FirstLine? Does it need to be broadened to include college and/or career readiness for the high school students?

- b. Jay introduced the idea for a Career/Technology school that would include: Career Tech classes, internships, apprenticeships, life skills, therapeutic services, and a differentiated academic program.
 - c. Jay confirmed that we would first need to analyze the financial viability of such a program, which the FLS team will do and then report back to the board.
 - d. A working group will form to bring suggested language changes to the mission back to the board. This group will consist of: Larry Kullman, Darleene Peters, George Freeman, Alison Hartman, and Jay.
5. Jay led a discussion of the network size of FirstLine Schools
- a. Steve is not convinced that adding another school to the network will make us more financially sustainable. This led to a discussion of how to make high schools financially sustainable.
 - b. Many board members voiced support for waiting to add another school until the student achievement and financial sustainability goals are much closer to being met.
 - c. Consensus of the discussion was to not grow for the next school year, with the exception of exploring the possibility of the career/tech high school as mentioned above.
6. Jay and Larry led a discussion of the Board, Staff and Committee Goals for 2013-14
- a. Board and Staff Goals:
 - i. Jay reviewed the Student Achievement Goals for 2012-13.
 - ii. Financial goal for 2013-14 is to add at least 2% of operating expenses to the fund balance for all schools (except Clark Prep).
 - iii. Finance committee will discuss if this will be a lower target for Green and Dibert next year, as they are projected to each have over 9% total fund balance by the end of the current fiscal year. If so, they will need to build a contingency to ensure that they maintain a 10% fund balance.
 - b. Committee Goals:
 - i. Jay led a review of the 2012-13 committee goals
 - ii. Governance Committee has made progress in achieving their goals
 - iii. Rebekah to add 100% board giving to the Development Committee goals
 - iv. Facilities Committee will present goals at the next board meeting, including a multi-year (3-5 year) Facilities Plan with annual updates.

Alison Hartman moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:25pm. Monique Cola seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

FirstLine Schools Board Retreat Minutes

January 26, 2013

8:00am – 12:00pm

In Attendance: Lawrence Kullman, Gregory St. Etienne, Alison Hartman, Paul Pechon, Christian Rhodes, Brian Egana, George Freeman, Monique Cola, Kim Henry, and Stephen Rosenthal

Staff in Attendance: Jay Altman, Joseph Neary and Rebekah Cain

Public in Attendance: Della Hasselle

Absent: Darleene Peters, Catherine Pierson, and Charleen Blache

Larry Kullman called the meeting to order at 8:12am

1. Larry welcomed everyone back to the retreat and challenged the board to come up with some ideas on how to measure “college readiness” in a cost effective way by tracking our 8th graders.
2. Alison conducted a Board Self- Assessment
 - a. Need to create additional training for new board members
 - i. Technical training including acronyms, how the accountability system works, financial overview of the organization
 - ii. Also a module on governance and management including some case studies. An example is the role of the board in parent involvement, curriculum, specific vendors, etc.
3. Alison led a discussion on committees
 - a. As a best practice, we would like to have each committee chaired by a different person, currently Brian Egana is chair of both the Advocacy and Facilities Committees.
 - b. Christian Rhodes, once he feels more knowledgeable about the organization longer, is interested in becoming the chair of the Advocacy Committee. Jay will work one-on-one with Christian in the coming months to increase his organizational knowledge, as well as the overall charter landscape.
 - c. Brian Egana asked for additional diversity on the Advocacy Committee and we may need to decrease the overall size of that committee, as it is larger than the best practice of five board members per committee.
 - d. As a best practice, the Chair should not serve on any committee except the Governance Committee, so Larry will step off of any additional committees.
 - e. Committee chairs along with the Board Chair and Vice-Chair will make up the Governance Committee, except that Paul Pechon will represent the Finance Committee.
 - f. The committee changes will be finalized at the next Governance Committee meeting.
 - g. Larry asked for board members to speak with Alison about which committee(s) they may be interested in serving on.
 - h. Larry and Stephen led a discussion of the role of the board in increasing parental involvement at the schools (as well as general board involvement in the schools), reaching consensus that the board is here to assist school leaders as needed/requested.

- i. Alison requested that each committee chair put the board meeting agenda items calendar on their next agendas and get back to Alison with any edits.
4. Rebekah Cain and Darcy McKinnon gave a presentation and led a discussion on branding
 - a. Jay will workshop the idea of adding "FirstLine:" before each school name and will report back to the board.
5. Larry expressed his thanks to the staff for the preparation that went into the presentations over this board retreat. Additionally, he noted the importance of governance vs. management at the board level and always respecting the boundary.
 - a. Larry asked that every board member send him a personal email with thoughts about the retreat, focusing primarily on the constructive criticism and including if this should be done annually or not.
 - b. Larry thanked the board for participating in the retreat and to Alison for spearheading this retreat on behalf of the board.

Christian Rhodes moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:50am. Monique Cola seconded. The motion passed unanimously.