

**SOAR ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

1-888-204-5987

Passcode: 9220108

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order 5:03pm**

Board Members: Thelma Jackson, Beverly Grant, George Meng, Andy Ferrera, and Sam Dinning participated by phone.

Other Participants by phone: Sasha Tyshler, SOAR Principal; Lihi Rosenthal, Executive Director of SOAR; Kate Walker, Executive Director of Seneca Washington.

**II. Agenda Approval 5:03pm**

**III. Approval of March Meeting Minutes 5:04pm**

Motion to approve by George, seconded by Dr. Thelma, no additions or deletions. Minutes stand as approved; there was a quorum on the call but only two members were present at the last meeting. Item passes 2-0.

**IV. Correspondence 5:06pm**

a. WISM Review Report

Special Education Report specific to OSPI SOAR did well and there was no corrective action. This is a huge success given that it is very rare for any school to not have corrective actions. The only note was that one student with an IEP had delayed service; but it was delayed due to a family hardship.

b. Commission Financial Accountability Framework Report

Findings were aligned with the financial decisions that the Board made in deciding to close SOAR.

c. Audit letter of engagement

Letter of engagement received for the audit for the current school year. This audit was sent to SOAR early due to future school closure. George has approved, and we are still working with WA Charters for further approval. WA Charters will need to review and approve since there will be costs associated post school closure.

**V. Public Comment 5:10pm**

No public present to comment.

**VI. Executive Reports**

**5:11pm**

a. Board Chair Report

Correspondence between Dr. Thelma and Lihi continuing on a regular basis.

Dr. Thelma is supporting teachers with letters of recommendations.

No urgent or other high priority news to report.

b. School Leader Report

i. Staffing, enrollment, operations (Lihi)

Current enrollment is at 155. SOAR met our April goal of 158 students at the April 1<sup>st</sup>. Our May goal is 154 but two students may be moving out of the country.

Support Counselor has transitioned out and staffing has been reassigned. Some of the staff have already secured jobs and accepted positions in the future; to best support the staff in securing placements, SOAR will be continuing to reassign responsibilities.

State audit is scheduled to take place for six days; beginning April 24<sup>th</sup>. SOAR will be following-up with another charter school who recently had their audit to make sure that we can be as prepared as possible.

ii. School updates (Sasha)

Teacher observations, focused on student data and looking at scope and sequence to ensure that SOAR is on-track for the end of the year. A big emphasis is on building student stamina. Looking at assessment data and noting improvement in the STAR scores. It was reported that 75% of students are at or above grade level. A big push is to increase this number. Many of those students that are not at grade level are SOAR's ELL or students in Special Education.

SBAC coming up for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. SOAR is focused on test preparation, student needs, and ensuring access to technology is sufficient for the testing needs. A particular emphasis on the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade since they had teacher disruptions in the middle of the year.

**VII. Committee Updates**

**5:22pm**

a. Finance, George Meng & Lihi Rosenthal

With staff changes, SOAR finances have shifted in the positive with a forecasted cash balance of \$17,000 which is an improvement from last month's projection of (-\$22,000); both of these projections still include Board member contributions.

On-going effort to get an understanding of costs associated with school closure and

post-school wind down. Not included in these estimates are items SOAR can sell like Chrome books and curriculum.

Seneca CEO, Ken Berrick and WA Charters CEO, Patrick D'Amelio will be connecting soon to discuss how best to support the post-school closure. Lihi will share this information with the Board as soon as they are able to connect.

b. Governance, Lihi Rosenthal

PDC Reports have been submitted.

c. Development, Bev Grant & Lihi Rosenthal

No report.

**VIII. Items for Board Discussion**

**5:28pm**

a. Board Fundraising Updates

Dr. Thelma has asked that any Board members declare what they will contribute this year so SOAR can proceed with budgeting for the remainder of the school year. Dr. Thelma committed to donating \$250 by 1<sup>st</sup> of May.

George thanked Dr. Thelma for financial contribution and her on-going leadership. George will be making a financial contribution and is in discussions with Lihi to finalize details.

Dr. Thelma encouraged others to follow-up with Lihi if they are planning to make a contribution. Lihi thanked all members for their support over the years and reported that the SOAR leadership team has pledged an additional \$1,000.

b. Dance Invite Updates

Dance recital is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup>. Board members are encouraged to share the invite with others and to encourage others to donate. Commission and WA Charters are excited to help us fundraise for the upcoming dance.

c. Charter School Convening on June 24, 2019

Lihi and Kate connected with Josh Halsey, the ED of the Commission to share that the SOAR Board was interested in sharing reflections and lessons learned. The Commission would like to have SOAR Board members represented on a panel post-lunch at the convening to share reflections.

Dr. Thelma is interested in participating and welcomes the chance to follow-up with Josh further to discuss next steps. Kate will follow-up with Josh.

d. Parent Appreciation Event

Several end of year events are being planned and SOAR would like the Board's

help with a Parent Appreciation Event to express appreciation to the families who have stood by the school. Request for Board members to attend, suggest available dates and/or share additional ideas. Dr. Thelma requested that all dates be put in an email with the end of the year activities; Lihi will follow-up.

e. Close-down planning and next steps

SOAR working closely with Commission.

Dr. Thelma inquired about when the Board would be dissolved. Josh has suggested end of November. We know that November would be the earliest that the financial audit would take place. WA Charters is recommending that we dissolve the 501c3 at the end of December 2019. Lihi will know more after the next meeting with Josh.

**IX. Items for Board Review and Approval**

**5:45pm**

a. Check register for March 2019

Motion to approve by Sam, seconded by Andy, no discussion. Item passes 4-0. Note: George had left the call at 5:40 and was not present for the final vote.

**X. Adjournment**

**5:47pm**

**Next Regular Board Meeting:** May 15, 2019 from 5:00-7:00pm at SOAR Academy, 1301 E 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Tacoma, WA 98404; Dial-In: 1-888-204-5987; Passcode: 9220108