

**MEETING OF THE DENVER LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, May 12th, 2020**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

**Mission Statement – Achieve academic excellence and intercultural competence through language immersion education**

**In Attendance:**

Board Members Lisa Peloso, Carter Davidson, Corelle Spettigue, Josh Lin, Bryan Snow, Dave Larkin, Faye Caronan, Susan Hennessy, Parker Schenken

Absent Board Members None

Non-Board Members Kathy Benzel, Doug Seligman, Robert Newman, Annie Trujillo, Babette Hudson-Tsao, Yu- Hsin Lien, Wendy Sheehan, Amanda Peng, Renee Haynes, Michelle Rotter, Marie Casa Verde, Tania Zeigler, Lori Deacon, Sharon Stacy, Katie Everth, Jessica Leonard, Camilla Modesitt, Theresa Helbach, Eva Doblaz, KT Messner, Robert Newman, Celeste St. John, Quinn Rousel, Faye Sullivan, Carrie Nelson, Declan Somerset

**Meeting Called to Order:** 6:04 pm

**Public Comment**

Michelle Rotter - Brings her concern about lack of transparency around contract renewals. Asks the board to review the current performance review process and make sure mentorship and supports are in place for teachers.

Amanda Peng - Brings her concern about teacher support for Mandarin Program teachers and about processes for letting teachers go. Expressed appreciation for joint meeting with administration and board leaders and for all the entities that help make this school the community it is.

Wendy Sheehan - Stated she is a proud member of the DLS community, but expressed her concern about teacher/staff support.

### **PTO Update - Maria Casaverde Marin**

The PTO executive members had a meeting with Bryan, Miriam, Camilla and Kathy to discuss the external bank account that the PTO still holds for the staff appreciation fund. Kathy to consult with legal about this account.

PTO working to restructure their executive team. PTO leadership will be presenting a new structure at the next meeting on 5/20. Looking at different volunteer needs and parent engagement as primary focus. The PTO will hold a vote for next year's PTO Exec Board.

### **Approve Minutes**

Parker moves to approve the minutes from 04/14/20.  
Bryan seconds. No discussion. All in favor.  
Motion carries.

### **DLS Leadership/PTO/Parent Meeting Follow Up - Corelle/Josh**

Held a productive meeting last night and created a space for collaboration. Confirmed that we will conduct a survey through a third independent party. Josh expressed appreciation for the parents who took the time to meet and for the genuineness and honesty of the parent body. He also stated that the board puts a lot of weight on the concerns parents bring to us.

### **Administrative Update**

#### **Enrollment Forecast/Waitlist Updates**

Estimated student total of 916 with waitlists 527/365/312

These numbers show that we are definitely getting the word out to the city/district that this DLS is a great option for DPS students/families. We also have great numbers for students trying to test into higher grades, giving us a good opportunity to back fill some classes.

#### **DLS Staff Support Update**

DLS leadership continues to host all staff webinars/weekly meetings to help keep staff apprised of the continuous changes. Have translation in Chinese and Spanish.

Approximately 85 attendees at these weekly virtual meetings.

Robert and Doug are also holding staff meetings at their respective campuses.

All of these meetings are intended to:

- afford dialogue and input where teachers, grade level teams, and student support teams can give feedback about curriculum and professional development.

-Support staff with year end compliance and wrap up. Kathy likens this to a “State of the Union” where teams discuss where we have been, where we are, and where we are going.

-Dialogue and staff input on priorities for DLS:

Budget

Initiatives for 2020-21

Remote/Hybrid learning

-Highlight changes early and often

-Inform of org chart revisions for 2020-21

-Clarify roles and responsibilities.

-Provide support and stability during a time of uncertainty

### **HR/Staffing - Spring 2020**

Committed to salary schedule improvements

-loyalty bonus and larger increase in TA salaries

Seeing higher staff retention levels this year

### **UIP/DLS Surveys/DPS Surveys**

Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) due to DPS 5/30/20

UIPs are due every other year as required by law

Informed by survey and school data

DLS Surveys

Staff Survey (October 2019 and May 2020)

Family Remote Learning Survey (5/20)

DLS will try to get feedback from students sometime in the fall. Will work on this effort over the summer.

Student Survey (TBD - Fall 2020)

DPS Surveys

Remote Learning Survey went out today

No family/student Survey for EOY 2020

### **Chinese Curriculum and PD - Yu-SHien/Eva**

Continue to work with our Chinese literacy consultant, Pearl

Presented our curriculum at a National Chinese conference. People were very interested in what we are doing at DLS

DLS Reading Benchmarks

- Continued coaching and reading curriculum development
- Program meeting on curriculum and instructional challenges
  - Pearl gave a webinar in April to teachers
  - K-8 teachers sitting together to discuss these challenges
- Training on writer's workshops
  - Co-teaching in classrooms
- K-1 trimester assessment redesign
  - Give support and practice to teachers
- PD on reading strategies and reading skills.
- Online class library inventory - will take a lot of time to create
- Middle School Social Studies work on Inquiry-Based Learning
  - Beginning next year
  - Start with a contemporary setting and work backwards into the history that forms decisions/events of today.
  - Cutting edge work, esp for language immersion

### **8th Grade AP**

- 2019-20 AP Chinese Language and Culture Course approved by College Board
- Online College Board Modules, Teacher Guide, Videos and Support
- Student practice and assessment
  - Integrative Chinese has been the base text book - teacher has materials for 7th and 8th grade. \$130 per student per year for online learning.
  - This year has been about acquiring resources. Level Chinese adding volumes and texts. AP supports will help round out learning tools.

### **Create standard-based trimester assessments for K-1**

- Meeting with teachers monthly to develop assessment plans.
- Observation times occurring throughout the year. Teachers come up with the lesson plans, practice them and then implement them.

### **Curriculum and PD 2020-2021**

- Adding writing components to upper grade levels
- Standard-based TL assessment for 2nd-4th grade
- Chinese early literacy program design
- Math material resource development
- Intervention support program

### **Events/ End of Year Celebrations**

VAPOW - May 1

Capstone - May 15

Kinder Continuation - May 26

8th Grade Continuation - May 28

### **Remote Learning Successes and Challenges**

Strong overall student attendance - 98% overall

Seeing strong student engagement in small groups and one on one sessions

Additional literacy supports are being offered by teachers and TA's to K-1 students/families, with strong participation in both Spanish and Mandarin programs.

Today we ran a 90% attendance record

Challenges:

Monitoring student engagement

Grading and accountability

Helping parents feel comfortable with tech needed for remote learning

Immersing students in the target language in remote learning

### **Financial Report - Lori/Bryan**

Lori is attending a weekly financial support group hosted by the League.

The Legislative session has been pushed back a week, so we may not have budget information by the end of May.

Federal Stimulus Funding - CDE showed allocations by district. DPS has a substantial amount of funding, but Title 1 schools will likely receive more of the funding, Reserve Analysis - in a strong position 1.8, but will be close to 2 million by end of year.

Top priority is staffing - salary schedule. Built a really strong model that is working well at DLS. So look at that model from three lenses:

Holding PPR flat

5% reduction

10% reduction - about ½ the amount

DLS is in a good position to deal with budget shortfalls heading into next year but there will be some hard choices coming up with our biggest expense line items.

Had expected our standard 2% increase in PPR. Lori has always conservative with her approach to the budget and has built in our own buffers.

Lori's biggest concern is health care and what that is going to look like. Also we don't know what school is going to look like. Will there be fun club? Transportation?

The current expectation is for 10-15 people in a classroom at a time - half capacity on any given day. Equity will play a big role in determining the schedule.

School always looks to have a flat budget.

## **Plan and Recommendations Moving Forward**

Budget plan includes a contingency with enrollment flexibility

Determine reserve appropriation comfort levels

Consider holding staff count and wages flat over FY20-21

Once PPR is finalized, move forward with budget approval to maintain staffing model and minimize programmatic disruptions

Corelle checked in with board members regarding thoughts about the Gilin Field in the context of district and state-wide budget shortfalls.

Bryan stated that given the long-term impact of COVID, our financial future is too uncertain to consider investing in the field at this time.

Dave states that we can't even consider what transportation plans and costs might look like. Need to wait and hear from the state before making any decisions. Josh, how soon do we brace our community for what could be coming down the pipe? Kathy thinks that it needs to start rolling out now so that families can begin to plan accordingly.

Dave states that in regards to the field, it would be 50-60K. Pro would be that no one is on the field so it would be a great time to do it. Not certain if we even have the authority to move forward.

Parker - looking ahead a year down the road to the getting DLS on the bond for improving the Gilpin field

Dave- health insurance issue - are teachers covered for COVID related issues? Kathy responded that teachers are covered under either plan staff have selected.

Student fee increases - admin understands that these are financially tough times for families. Fees do not cover the services that are provided by the school. Kathy and Lori were going to revamp a proposal and make a recommendation to the board. Board would need to vote on this.

My school bucks for summer camp - refunding families the entire amount and DLS absorbing the administrative fees. Moving forward, families will be notified that refunds will be accompanied by any administrative fees associated with it.

Lisa moves to adjourn. Bryan seconds. All in favor. Motion carries.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:21pm**