

## **Report of the Office of Board Governance, Dr. Tina Owen-Moore – October 31, 2024**

Thank you for the opportunity to highlight a few of the key efforts within the Office of Board Governance this month.

### **Superintendent Search**

October has been a busy month for the superintendent search. We have conducted more than 50 focus groups, virtual and in person, and have also facilitated 25 one-on-one conversations with community leaders and elected officials. The HYA update is attached to this month's Board item. I want to thank all the people who took time to share their thoughts. One of the highlights for me was the student focus group, and tonight we have a couple of students to share a bit about their experience participating in the process.

### **Fast Facts**

This month we instituted a weekly update called "Fast Facts" from the Board of School Directors. This resulted from conversations with President Herndon, who shared that we must find a way to get the facts out there regarding the ongoing work of the Board and District. Each week, we collaborate with Administration, our Legislative Policy Manager, our communications team, and our Board President to identify what facts need to be shared. We then work with our communications partner to put these facts into a document that is quick and easy to read. We send these out via E-Notify (the city notification service), press releases, posting on our webpage, and emails to Board members and Administration so they can also share them as needed.

### **Findings Report**

I have completed the first three months in the role, and as promised in my entry plan, I'd like to share a few of my findings, progress towards urgent goals, and considerations for the next steps.

### **Meet, Listen & Learn/ Stakeholder Engagement**

Over the past three months, I have met with and/or had conversations with numerous constituents, central office staff, administrators, and business partners. I have also had one-on-one meetings with team members in the Office of Board Governance, a representative from DPI, and with all Board members to better understand the needs of this office, the district and this role. One of the key themes that I heard in those conversations was a need for increased communication and transparency. I have made it my aim to support the district with consistent and open communication, internally and externally, and to ask direct questions when there is any doubt.

I have spoken to several community members who have been feeling unheard and have been speaking about these frustrations at Board meetings or on social media. This led to some of the changes to Board meetings and to how we are sharing information.

Through the superintendent search process, the facilities meetings and the SRO conversations, I have had the opportunity to engage in discussions with several elected officials to gain their perspectives and to share some of the district perspectives.

I also learned about the changing needs of the Office given new technologies, different demands, and current political trends. As a result of these things, the number of records requests we are processing on a weekly basis has almost doubled.

The desire for increased communication and the changes in the ways people prefer to receive information have also led us to put more emphasis on this need in our staffing, planning and contracted services. We recently adopted new software that will allow us to create newsletters that integrate with email systems using HTML technology to produce beautiful, integrated emails.

We have a new organizational chart for the Office of Board Governance that reflects the needs of the office and outlines reporting dynamics. We have also identified team and individual goals for everyone in the Office of Board Governance. We are currently working on a chart that outlines the duties and responsibilities of each role so that this information is clear to the team, the Board and constituents.

### **Fill Vacancies & Adopt Quick Fixes**

The onboarding of our new Executive Administrative Assistant has improved office efficiencies and communication, and our new Planning Assistant is fast at work supporting Board members with communications, events and meeting preparations. We have also made offers to candidates for the last two open positions in the Office of Board Governance. We hope to be able to say that we are fully staffed in the coming month. A special thank you to Pepper Lamothe for her efforts in this regard.

### **Superintendent Search**

We successfully selected a firm, completed the contract, and kicked off the superintendent search. This has been a whirlwind of work, given the timeline for the search. Attendance in focus group meetings has been low, however survey responses have been better, and one-on-one conversations have generated thoughtful information for the development of a candidate profile.

### **Review of Governance Documents and Current Practices**

I have spent a lot of time reviewing and learning how the governance processes work. We made some quick changes to the scripts of meetings to improve community relations. A couple of examples include moving the public testimony ahead of the board deliberation and clarifying expectations for public testimony.

One of the challenges that had been made clear by the Board before I even started was the need to review and update policies. The Governance team and the Administrative team met with representatives from Neola to determine if their services could be a good solution for our district's policy management. That item is before the Board tonight for consideration, and if adopted, we will begin the work of updating all our policies starting in December. This partnership will also allow us to keep our policies and resolutions on an easily searchable interface, which will create greater accessibility for those who need them. While we work to make that transition, we will continue to work with the administration and our city attorneys to update policies as required by law or as needed for effective operations.

Another area of opportunity is our records retention. Most of our systems are paper-based and take up a lot of time, space and resources. We are moving to digital records retention, where possible, to save on printing costs and to create greater work efficiency. Given the number of records that are processed on

a regular basis through our office, this is a big task, but it is one that the entire office has committed to. I could not have inherited a better team!

Finally, we are working towards creating some clarity around the effects of resolutions versus policies and will bring forward some language that will clarify when and how to use each to govern over the work of the district.

### **Celebrations and Next Steps**

Some celebrations to highlight in the Office of Board Governance:

- All vacancies have been posted, interviews have been conducted and offers have been made to preferred candidates.
- We have dramatically reduced the turnaround time for records requests.
- Monthly board member newsletters are back, and we are, once again, supporting proactive board communications.
- All team members in the Office of Board Governance have been trained in how to use ChatGPT.
- We are now hosting a monthly professional development opportunity for our team in the Office of Board Governance.
- Our team has worked with the IT team to set the framework for using SharePoint as a hub for office documents and records.

### **Next Steps**

- Review policies and procedures through an equity-focused lens and develop systems and practices to center equity, inclusion and transparency in governance
- Initiate Neola update of policies and procedures (pending Board approval)
- Continue progress on records-keeping system and file moves to Office365
- Take the Superintendent search to the next phase – profile development and first round interviews
- Develop a mechanism for ongoing feedback for the Office of Board Governance
- Support the Board in the development of evaluation policy and protocols for the evaluations of the Superintendent, Board Clerk and Senior Director of the Office of Accountability and Efficiency
- Update the Board training manual and provide renewed opportunities for Board development

Thank you for your time and support.