

Governance Council Minutes
Verona Area International School
VAIS-LMC
Monday, September 12, 2022

Attendance

James Kokalj, Sally Parks, Grace Flores, Teresa Mueller, Kelly Gibson, Steve Kean, Patty Immanuella

Virtually: Sarah Shaw, Brandon Braithwaite, Charles James, Joanne Mueller

Also attending: Katie Bhandare

Absent: Evan Henderson, Darlene Berkowitz

Meeting called to order at 6:33 p.m.

Approval of August minutes. Teresa moved to approve the minutes, Kelly seconded. Motion carries- minutes are approved.

Director's Report

Professional learning: Yumeng and Yingying attended developmental designs, a workshop focused on using strategies for social skills and being culturally responsive.

In house: The teachers have discussed building relationships between NCS/VAIS staff, and helping students get to know staff from the other school. They also focused on learning about our staff and their "why" for being in education, so they can work in a way that meets with their desire to be educators.

Positive Culture and Climate discussions:

- "Two schools, one community"- expectations in each school are the same for behavior and problem solving in the hallways and on the playground.
- The staff has been working on culture and climate goals. The teacher leadership team reflected on the VASD equity statement, and Ms. Reiter was willing to provide a mandarin translation. The statement now reflects all of the immersion languages taught at VASD.
- Goals for continuous improvement include:
 - Building rapport and trusting relationships among students and staff;
 - Establishing universal behavioral routines and procedures PBIS and engaging in universal SEL.
 - "Fab Four"- be respectful and kind, responsible, safe, a problem solver
 - Teachers are discussing what each of these behaviors means in different areas of the day (classroom, playground, hallway, etc.)
- Leading up to a both school-wide celebration on October 14th to celebrate being a community together. This will be to celebrate working through these SEL goals.

- Ms. Parks is working to spend time in each classroom to emphasize these lessons- she does introductions, rights/rules/responsibilities, and restoring harm/fixing mistakes.
- They have made some adjustments around the cafeteria now that we have fewer social distancing requirements.
- “Glows and Grows” are shared in classrooms, to help students learn what they are doing well and some things they need to work on.
- Bus arrival is being adjusted- students are waiting with their school and grade level. They will now be allowed to come into the gym or hallway, or outside using the playground, so the students can burn off some energy and relax after being on the bus.

Upcoming events

- Supply drop-off was changed to allow for a meet the teacher component;
- Teachers engaged in family contact time;
- September 29th will be back to school night.
 - We can do some presentations to discuss committees and the GC and solicit involvement.
- October 14th will be our first community gathering
- PT conferences are coming up in October.

Enrollment is currently 125.

Make-up of GC

- Cindy Grady resigned and we need a new vice president.
- Dave Kassa used to handle our website and tech responsibilities. He needs someone to take this over now that he is no longer on GC.

Review of committees and strategic plan

- Several committees are no longer serving a useful purpose, and/or their goals have been achieved, so we discussed streamlining some of the committees.
- Brandon Braithwaite moved to strike the Middle School and High School Committee, the Teacher Retention Committee and the Student Achievement committees. Steve Kean seconded the motion.
 - Student achievement will be taken care of within the staff continuous improvement plan that is already taking place.
 - Teacher retention work is also already a core mission of the school and if needed, the director can bring specific requests to the GC.
 - If an actual K-12 mandarin group were to come into play, that would be great, but it is outside of our domain. We will focus on alumni relations for fundraising and include them in some social activities moving forward.

Budget committee

The committee met and discussed how expenses will be recorded. The budget document is being reworked so it's easier for the treasurer going forward.

Fundraising committee

- The committee met and set their fall schedule. They will be doing a tri-charter school event, which will be a color run on October 8th.
- Bucky books will come home soon.
- Spirit wear will be available soon.
- They are considering bringing back euchre and/or bingo night.
- Giving Tuesday is also planned.

Outreach

- The committee will meet on October 2nd at 6 p.m.
- The story time at Kismet was successful, and included both VAIS families and families in the community.

School Climate

- No updates. Sally will run our idea to combine committees by NCS at their GC meeting.

Parent engagement

- Welcome back wishes was highly successful.
- The HS mandarin teacher will lead the homecoming parade.
- Parent Social is on Wednesday at the Verona Hop Haus from 6-8.
- We will be working on getting background checks done.
- Karen Reed will take on planning school parties again.

Other business

- We would like each committee to have one or two goals that they would like to prioritize for the year. We would normally do this in the summer so we're ready to hit the ground running in the fall.
- We will plan to review the Charter agreement as a GC in the coming months.

Sarah Shaw motioned to adjourn. Steve Kean seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.