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**The Valley School of Southern Oregon**

857 Valley View Dr. Medford, OR 97504

**Agenda and Minutes**

Date and Time: March 13, 2024 - 5.00p to 6.30p

Location: The Valley School or Join Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85955229508> Meeting ID: 859 5522 9508

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Rainy Tilton, Kaitie Warner, Matt Whitmer, Dan Akita, Amy Maukonen, Kim Parkerson, Stacy Fields

**STAFF:** Lily Reishman, Academic Director - Kris Von Wald, Executive Director

**MISSION OF THE BOARD:** *Provide direction and leadership for The Valley School by shaping the vision, mission and goals, by developing a series of policies and frameworks for how the school runs, by establishing good working relationships with the director, staff and community, and by supervising and protecting the fiscal interest of the school to assure that our mission is sustainable.*

**MISSION OF THE VALLEY SCHOOL:** *The Valley School changes middle schoolers’ lives by fostering a culture of curiosity, creativity, and community.*

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** Rainy Tilton, Kaitie Warner, Matt Whitmer, Dan Akita, Amy Maukonen, Stacy Fields (on zoom)

**Absent:** Kim Parkerson

**Staff - Present:** Lily Reishman, Kris Von Wald

**ESTABLISH QUORUM:** Yes

**GUESTS:** Jared Doshier

**PURPOSE:** This meeting will focus on questions and guidance around the strategic direction.

**AGENDA:**

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| **Time** | **Item** | **Item Owner /Presenter** | **Purpose** |
| 5.00p | Call to Order and Roll Call | Rainy | Connect |
|  | Consent to Agenda | Rainy | Decision |
|  | Approve Minutes of past meeting:  February 14, 2024  Special Meeting February 28, 2024 | Rainy | Decision |
|  | Information and Announcements:  Academic Director Update  Update attached | Lily | Information |
|  | Content item 1: Strategic Discussion | Kris and Rainy | Discussion |
|  | Content item 2: Finance Committee Report: Operating and Construction | Matt | Discussion  Decision |
|  | Public Comment | Rainy | Discussion |
| 6.30p | Adjourn | Rainy | Decision |

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Request to include the Fundraising Social to the agenda. Kaitie made a motion to approve the agenda with change; Dan seconded - **Agenda approved with change**

**MINUTES TO APPROVE:** Minutes for the 2.14 and 2.28 meetings were presented for review and approval. Kaitie made a motion to approve both sets of minutes; Amy seconded - **Minutes of both meetings were approved.**

**Content Item 1: Strategic Discussion**

The current iteration of the strategic framework is attached. This was developed with the strategic planning committee and in consultation with staff. It is a high level view that must be supplemented with strategic priorities for each of the 3 years and action plans that spell out goals, targets and milestones (achievement aim, quantifiable measure, timeline) for the school. All individual staff members will have goals and action plans that are aligned with the strategic framework and within the scope of their job descriptions. The Board is responsible and accountable for organizational performance, and individuals are responsible and accountable for individual performance.

Strategic Development of the school needs to include a review and reallocation of resources and FTE in advance of the annual budgeting process. Guidance is sought about changing the current administrative model. In addition, guidance is sought about the appetite for more formal collaboration with others.

Kris described the process used for gathering information, discussing and gaining input from the Strategic Planning Group, staff and others to form the strategic framework as presented. The full plan will be developed to identify priorities in each of the next three years and to create action plans for the staff, board and parents that will align with the strategy and fulfill the requirements of the continuous improvement process. That will come to the Board for final approval.

Attendees discussed the framework as presented with particular attention paid to the Mission and Vision statements (which are both revised from the last approved versions). Question round and reaction round (sociocracy style) were completed to get input and possible recommendations for changes. Following discussion, the Mission statement was revised (subject to stakeholder consultation) to be as follows:

“Mission: The Valley School cultivates an environment of curiosity, creativity, and community where every child feels a sense of belonging and is supported to experience academic success and personal growth.”

Following discussion, the Vision statement was revised (subject to stakeholder consultation) to be as follows:

“Vision: Our school influences middle schoolers' lives through real-world, engaging educational experiences, offering challenges tailored to meet each student's unique learning journey. Every Valley School student is empowered to take ownership of their success and realize their own potential. Valley School students make meaningful contributions to the community and are prepared for the future as responsible, accountable citizens and life-long learners.”

The discussion then covered the elements of the strategic framework and invited input and questions. The Strategic Priorities fall into six buckets and will be developed into three-year priorities that will guide each year’s action plan and staff work plans. Most important is to be sure the strategic approaches are the educational philosophies we aim to employ and/or are doing as these will be the guide for the future.

Kris highlighted the point that in order to achieve any strategic priorities The Valley School must be a well-governed organization. Discussion around this point confirmed that Board development is a priority. Since this is a missing element in the current version, Kris will add something to encompass that ideal.

Kris also brought up the intention to look at different structures and systems that will allocate resources to the places where they have the most impact. The current structure creates a high administrative load for a school of 120 students. She asked for input about how much appetite the Board has for exploring options to change the structures. The main points in the discussion were that while there is an appetite to be creative and come up with solutions, there isn’t a big appetite for more change in the next year since there has been so much change over recent years. Kris and Lily are in discussions about collaborating more closely with other charter schools and this is being met favorably by the District. The board expressed support for continuing with those discussion and to feedback and/or involve others as needed and more formally at the next meeting.

It was also noted that the school’s approaches to behavior and school culture must be part of the educational philosophies discussions. Kris and Lily confirmed this is underway.

The next stage in the strategic planning process is to put the two-page strategic framework out to the stakeholder community for further comment and input, with the aim to have a final version of the framework and initial year-on-year priorities before the Board for final comment and approval in April.

**Content Item 2: Finance Committee Report - see attached.**

Due to the length of the other discussion, the finance committee report is noted but was not discussed. With the strategic discussion as the guide, the budgeting process for next year is well underway and is intended to be brought before the Finance Committee prior to the next Board meeting. The full February month-end report is in the Board folder.

**Annual Fundraiser:**

Kris drew the Board’s attention to the annual fundraiser event to be held on April 26 at The Urban Cork in downtown Medford. There will be a strong push in the next couple of weeks to get auction items and to create a list of needed equipment and supplies for the new building and kitchen. She also pointed to the fact that ticket prices for the event will be $50 this year instead of $75 with the intention of gaining more bids for the auction items and/or donations. Kris asked the Board to be responsible for ‘hosting’ a table of 10 – this means inviting 9 other people to participate and/or provide donations. Board agreed.

**Public Comment: None**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** April 10, 2024, 5.00p to 6.30p

**ADJOURNMENT: 7:08 pm**