Board of Directors Meeting  
Friday, April 12, 2019, 8:00am-4:00pm  
At The Denver Foundation

Board Members Present  
Frank Rowe  
Melissa Kotecki-Schlote  
Katie Kellen  
Ed Likovich  
Emily Wasserman  
Ethan Hemming  
Adam Burrows  
Julie Fincham  
Barbara Washington  
Jennifer Evans  
Jamaica Burke  
Kristina Campos

Board Members Absent  
Stalker Henderson

GALS Staff  
Carol Bowar  
Trace Foust  
Jon Stanley (for dashboard discussion)  
Melissa Flores (for budget discussion)

Jennifer calls the meeting to order at 8:32.

The Board approves the March minutes.

There were no members of the public present and so there was no public comment.

**Board Team Development:** Carol leads a series of activities designed to build relationships and trust amongst board members, including both oral and written exercises.

**Vision and Mission Review:** GALS Inc. developed a new vision statement to be used by all schools in the network. Each school region will adopt its own mission statement because the schools must respond to its community’s needs. Carol proposes that GALS Denver adopt the current statement of intent (“GALS Denver empowers girls and boys to Succeed Academically, Lead Confidently, Live Boldly, and Thrive Physically”) as the mission statement. Julie moves to accept the new mission statement. Katie seconds. The Board adopts the new mission statement.

**Current Strategic Plan Review:** Carol leads a discussion regarding progress towards strategic goals and priorities. Regarding strengthening the consistent definition, execution, and improvement of model, GALS Inc. and GALS Denver are working towards recording cultural, instructional, and institutional elements. The schools have also implemented a coaching systems. Ethan asked a question about how the schools are verifying that the coaching system is working. Regarding operational systems, we have hired a data analyst, and this has made a huge difference in creating a data dashboard for teachers to

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use to track student progress. Carol also provided updates about progress on refining our enrollment recruitment processes, fundraising, and shared operational and model support. Regarding growing impact and influence, we started a sustainability and growth group to look at where we are with our current schools, we are also partnering with GALS Inc. Finally, on cultural competency, Carol will work with the heads of schools to help them do this on a school-by-school level.

This plan helps the school to define organization goals and priorities.

**GALS Inc. Network Retreat:** Jennifer provides an update on the GALS Inc. retreat that happened in January. The session was focused on the work GALS Inc. is doing. Right now the biggest area of work is codification of the model and defining impact. GALS Inc. is also focused on four areas of expansion: GALS branded schools, GALS inspired schools (to be defined), package and publish the approach, and certifications and other products. The next retreat will be in June.

The Board engages in a discussion regarding the relationship between GALS Inc. and GALS Denver, and the need for clarity regarding the relationship and expectations with respect to fundraising, project management, etc.

There were several questions about the relationship between GALS Inc. and GALS Denver. Specifically the Board wanted to understand the transactional nature of the relationship. What is each organization offering? What school/academic support does GALS Inc. provide? What operational supports does GALS Inc. provide? Are they conducting research regarding the efficacy of the model?

The Board has asked to re-review the contract with GALS Inc. and perhaps have a conversation with GALS Inc.

**Board Training:** Ethan leads a discussion and training about effective charter school governance. He presented the Charter Board Partners “Standards for Effective Charter School Governance” which included six standards and led a discussion regarding what we’re doing well and what we could be doing better and need to address.

Ethan presented a proposal for monthly training sessions and suggested topics.

Questions to be addressed included: How do we structure board meetings? What is on the agenda? What is missing?

The Board agreed that academic progress, enrollment, and fundraising are three topics that should be discussed every month.

**Board Self-Assessment:** Emily provides an overview of the proposed self-assessment process. There is a discussion regarding changes to the tool.
**ED Evaluation:** Ethan leads a discussion regarding the ED evaluation tool. The goal is to make it a transparent and collaborative process. The Board engages in a discussion regarding the process and how to make the process effective.

**Denver Environment:** The Board engages in a discussion about concerns and indicators related to changing Denver demographics and DPS enrollment. Board questions included: How do we respond to these indicators? How do we, as a Board, get involved? What data do we need to chart progress?

Trace suggested that there is a lack of quality communication going out to parents and the community, and a focus for going forward will be to revamp the way GALS Denver promotes itself.

**Enrollment:** Carol provides overview of past and current Denver charter school environment and relationship with DPS. Carol then discusses enrollment trends in DPS.

Carol and Trace provides an update regarding enrollment projections.

Adam asks about why the number of kids who chose into sixth grade compared to last year.

The Board engages in conversation regarding high school sustainability. Including what why are FRL rates different between MS & HS? The Board was wondering if there have been conversations with 8th graders who are leaving. Carol explained that commonly cited reasons for leaving are a desire for a more comprehensive opportunity, a co-ed school, and wanting a bigger school.

Trace leads a conversation regarding plan for enrollment going forward for each of the three schools (including differences between schools) and Board engages in conversations regarding strategies, including how we’re going to measure our progress before choice one. Strategies include: Re-seal of reputation; re-green; intentional word of mouth campaign; Double down on what works; and Reaching out to elementary schools.

**Budget:** Carol leads a discussion regarding budget for FY19 and projected budget for FY20, including conversation about expenses for BOYS facility and long-term fundraising plans.

The Board engaged in a conversation regarding BOYS enrollment.

The Board begins a conversation regarding reserves and investment. This is a topic that needs to be discussed in a future meeting.

Ethan raises a question about why fundraising didn’t hit target?

**Board Dashboard:** John Stanley leads a conversation regarding the board dashboard and data, including what data does the Board need, and whether it’s a priority one, two, or three (i.e., how critical the data is). The Board participates in an activity regarding priorities for the Board dashboard.
The meeting concluded with everyone providing their review of the day.