



Board Update - January / February 2019

Dear Stargate,

In addition to the usual recap of recent and upcoming board meetings, this update includes a summary of our renewal process to date as well as an important notification regarding a change to our admissions policy.

I hope the information below is helpful and please feel free to reach out with any questions!
(Governance@stargateschool.org)

Sincerely,

Calley Herzog
Stargate Board President

AD12 Charter Renewal Process

I am excited to report that last night the Adams 12 Board of Education voted unanimously to renew our charter for a three-year term with the option to request two more years without a formal renewal application. The full resolution can be accessed [here](#).

We want to thank each and every parent or community member that supported us in this process. And a HUGE thank you to all of the Board members, administrators, staff, parent volunteers and students who relentlessly step up and sacrifice their personal time to help our school shine.

I would also like to take a moment to correct a few misstatements of fact that have been made at the AD12 meetings during open mic over the past several weeks. We continue to be perceived as a school and community divided. Therefore, I think it is important to communicate clearly and openly about these items to prevent rumors and encourage a culture of honest and open communication.

- The Executive Director job description was approved by the Board on January 23, 2019. It can be accessed [here](#). The posting was listed on numerous Colorado and National sites on February 8, 2019 and will remain open through March 1, 2019. The information gathered through the community survey on the qualities for our next Executive Director will be used by the Ad Hoc committee and the Board for the screening and interview process.
- Each and every time a concerned parent, staff member or community member contacts the Board we respond timely, with respect and professionalism. We make every effort to address concerns and open a collaborative conversation about how to resolve the issue and move forward. We continue to encourage all members of our community to reach out to us with any concerns and questions. I can assure you that we own our mistakes, we apologize with sincerity and we make corrections when we find a problem.
- Transparency regarding the OCR complaints, investigations and resolutions is something we take very seriously. It is a delicate balance of keeping the community updated while preserving the integrity of the investigation process and the confidentiality of the



involved parties. We review the OCR status at every board meeting and a written report is made part of the minutes. You can find these approved minutes [here](#).

As a recap, there were three main events related to our charter renewal process:

- 1) The District Accountability Committee (DAC) appoints a subcommittee to review our application, attend a school tour and then provide their findings and recommendation to the Adams 12 Board of Education (BOE).
- 2) The AD12 Staff reviews our application, attends a school tour and then provides their recommendation to the AD12 Board of Education.
- 3) The AD12 BOE votes on our charter renewal. We then have 90 days for contract negotiations to finalize the contents of the authorizing agreement.

The DAC provided a summary of their review and recommendations to the AD12 BOE on December 19, 2018. The full report can be accessed [here](#). The AD12 Staff provided a summary of their review and recommendation to the AD12 BOE on January 9, 2019. The full report can be accessed [here](#). The Stargate Board and Administration were given time on the January 16 BOE agenda to provide responses to the Staff's report. Based on the feedback we got from the AD12 BOE at the January 16 meeting, the Board held an executive session on Jan 23 to receive advice from our school attorney. The Board then delegated Brad Schoenfeld and Teresa Walsh to continue discussions with the AD12 Staff and BOE, including providing a written response to each of the AD12 Staff recommendations. Our full response can be accessed [here](#). The Adams 12 BOE was scheduled to vote on our renewal application on February 6, 2019. Due to the weather, the meeting was rescheduled to Feb 11.

If you have questions about the charter renewal process please contact Teresa Thomson Walsh (Teresa.Walsh@stargateschool.org).

Revised Admissions Policy

On January 23, the Board approved the 1st reading of a modified admissions policy. The modified policy can be accessed [here](#).

The policy will be up for second reading and formal approval at the February 20 Board Meeting. The delay between first and second readings of policies is intended to provide transparency and opportunity for community engagement when the Board is considering new or modified governance policies. If you have questions or concerns about this policy change you can email us at governance@stargateschool.org or attend the February 20 meeting and sign up for public comment.

One of the concerns raised by both the DAC and the Adams 12 Staff in their review of our charter renewal application was the use of an IQ test to determine whether a student was identified as intellectually gifted. The full scale IQ test can be cost prohibitive and is not the only method for determining intellectual giftedness. Because there is a risk that students who do not perform well on the test could be excluded, both the DAC and the Staff recommended Stargate review its current admissions policy. After gathering input from numerous psychologists (testers), our lawyers and reviewing best practices nationwide, the Board and administration worked together to modify our admissions policy to allow families to submit a body of evidence in order to demonstrate a child is intellectually gifted and qualify for our admissions lottery. This allows families greater flexibility while ensuring that Stargate remains focused on its mission. We are a charter school dedicated to providing a



differentiated program designed specifically to meet the needs of identified intellectually gifted learners in order to challenge each student's academic abilities, support their unique emotional needs, promote individual character development, and encourage a life-long love of learning.

January 23 Highlights

- The Board reviewed and approved the revised budget for 2018-2019. The revised budget includes staff raises, enrollment adjustments, revision to rent payments and hiring of additional personnel required for OCR compliance and the Special Education (SPED) department. The revised budget includes a revenue adjustment for additional Mill Levy Revenue approved by voters in November 2018. It also includes an authorization to spend the remaining Bond Project Funds from Adams 12.
- The Board reviewed and approved a change to our High School Graduation Requirements which moves the required 1 credit Adroit-Specific Requirement into the General Elective Requirements category. This change is applicable to the 2019-2020 school year. The Adroit program will still be written into each student's academic plan as a yearly requirement however the credit will be applied as a General Elective.
- The Board approved the Staff Survey questions for the annual survey conducted by our School Accountability Committee.
- The Board approved the Executive Director job description.
- The Board approved a Committee Handbook designed to give our Board committee chairs and members guidance for consistency and expectations.

Coming in February

The next regular Board meeting will be held February 20 at 6:00pm in the Performing Arts building.