

Henderson Inclusion School
Governance Board Meeting
September 20, 2023

The Meeting was called to order by Eva Clarke at 6:01 PM

Agenda

Attendance:

Administrators: Mweusi Willingham (Head of School), Sheneal Parker (DOI Lower Campus)

Parents: Jess Butler (K0-1st), Michelle Carmell (6-8), Courtney Feely Karp (2-5),

Community Partners: Nicole Daley, Eva Clarke

Teachers: Brett Nadan-Buresh (9-12), Mary O'Brien (2-5), Stephanie Okwudi - *late* (6-8), Kathleen Powers - *left early* (K0-1 alternate)

Students: Bamari Davis - *late* (12)

Guest Presenters: Joe Cahill (Henderson DOI 2-5), Emma Patton (Henderson Director of Special Education), Noel Green (BPS Director of Family-School Engagement), Eugene Roundtree (BPS Region 8 Superintendent), Keyona Aviles (Co-Chair Henderson Parent Council)

Attendance Note: Vilma Silva, Allison Mulkerins, and Danielle Tierney resigned from the Board prior to this meeting.

Approval of Minutes from Prior Meetings

6/26 Minutes: Mary O. motioned to approve and Brett N. seconded. The notes were approved with 9 yes votes and 1 abstention (Willingham).

7/5 Minutes: Courtney F. motioned to approve and Sheneal P. seconded. The notes were approved with 9 yes votes and 1 abstention (Willingham).

8/9 Minutes: Brett N. motioned to approve and Sheneal P. seconded. The notes were approved with 7 yes votes and 4 abstentions (Willingham, Kathleen P., Mary O., and Nicole D.)

8/17 Minutes: Brett N. motioned to approve and Sheneal P. seconded. The notes were approved with 6 yes votes and 5 abstentions (Willingham, Kathleen P., Mary O., Stephanie O., and Nicole D.)

Review Mission and Vision

Eva C. read the mission and vision of the school and had committee members contribute what resonated with them in the chat.

Head of Schools Report ([slide deck](#) - slides #1-8)

Principal Willingham opened the Head of Schools report. Parts of the report were led by other Henderson administrators since Principal Willingham was on leave for bereavement at the start of the school year.

Emma Patton updated the Board on the Inclusion Planning Team (slides 6 & 7). The IPT will expand this year to include the entire school. Last year, the IPT was in operation only for the high school. The BTU will vote on membership for K-8 on 9/22 and parents and caregivers can be nominated through a google form until 9/25.

Principal Willingham updated the Board on requested operational items concerning the school (slide 8). He gave some context to the school start times. The change was essential to meet instructional minute requirements by the state. Sheneal P. gave some context on the playground at lower. They are hoping construction will be finished by 10/24. There was a delay resulting from a problem with a shipment of equipment internationally. She also stated that the after school program is continuing to look for partners and will begin operation October 2nd.

Innovation Plan Renewal Process ([slide deck](#) - slides #9 & 10)

Joe Cahill updated the Board on the Innovation Plan renewal process. There is some concern about meeting the timeline and Joe C. stated the Henderson administration is looking to see if extensions will be granted.

Quality School Plan ([slide deck](#) - slides #11-28, QSP is linked slides 3 & 4)

Eugene Roundtree updated the Board on the Henderson's 90 day Quality School Plan (QSP). All schools in BPS are required to complete a QSP and have the option of creating a second 90 day plan in February of the academic year. To create the plan ILT and school administration analyzed climate, attendance, and instructional data. Schools need to create goals for equitable literacy (Priority #1), culture and climate (Priority #2), and attendance (Priority #3).

Mr. Roundtree elaborated on the Henderson's strategies for addressing the QSP goals this year. In terms of instruction, the Henderson is focusing on refining Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices in order to foster increased academic independence. ILT will be doing instructional rounds to monitor teacher's progress throughout the year and will be aligning their observations with the DESE rubric.

In terms of culture, the Henderson will ensure all staff are trained in de-escalation practices. Administration will also be focusing on building and maintaining strong Student Support Teams (SSTs). The school has recently partnered with BAM (a program for middle and high school males) in order to support our black and brown young men.

Questions were taken about the QSP at the end of the presentation. In response to some questions, Roundtree clarified that all Henderson staff are trained in bullying. He also described forming a partnership with Suffolk University around restorative justice training.

Board Composition and Elections

Noel Green, director of Family-School Engagement Practices, gave a presentation focused on parent council and BTU elections and how these groups can recruit and elect new Board members that are ethnic and racially diverse. A goal for these upcoming elections should be to create a more diverse Governing Board that is more representative of the students we serve. Currently BTU and parent representation on the board is 3/4 and 3/3 white respectively.

Noel recommended we work on the bylaws of the Governing Board to ensure a diverse representation. Other boards in BPS have included specific language around the diversity of membership. Governing Boards are required to be diverse, but provisions around diversity vary based on the size and the diversity of the school itself. He recommends that the Governing Board work with the School Parent Council and engage parents to audit the part of the by-laws that would have language around the diversity of members. BTU elections for School Site Councils have provisions for racial diversity, as long as members of these racial groups run in the election. Noel also recommended that in a case where we cannot identify people that are racially representative, we pause actions of the Governing Board.

A question was asked about if bylaws are created around diversity and the governing board is in violation of those bylaws what are next steps that could be taken? Noel described the process:

- Document and try to resolve with the school first.
- If that does not work, get in touch with the Joint Steering Committee - Noel can put someone in contact with this group.

For the upcoming BTU and SPC elections, Noel suggested we should identify the top 2 demographics in the school and recruit on that end. The Governing Board should also look at what support we are giving parents that are elected to the board. Also, when

revising our bylaws, revisit term limits and number of terms.

Henderson Governing Board Priorities for the Year ([slide deck](#))

Brett N. and Eva C. presented the Governing Board priorities and schedule for the year.

The four main priorities are:

- 1) Cultivating and developing a functional decision making team grounded in the school's mission
- 2) Updating our Bylaws
- 3) Hiring and Supporting Staff
- 4) Program Monitoring

During this portion of the meeting, the Personnel Subcommittee was amended from what is described in the slide deck to include 1 Head of Schools, 2 family members, 2 BTU members and 1 student. Courtney F.K. motioned to establish the subcommittee with this membership and Michelle C. seconded the motion. 10/12 members voted in favor of establishing the committee with Kathleen P. and Bamari D. not present at this portion of the meeting. Members on the subcommittee were encouraged to attend the BTU training on hiring practices.

A Bylaws Subcommittee was established during this portion of the meeting. Brett N. motioned to approve and Michelle C. seconded. 10/12 members voted in favor of establishing the committee with Kathleen P. and Bamari D. not present at this portion of the meeting. Eva C. volunteered to chair this subcommittee.

School Parent Council Report ([slide deck](#))

Keyona Aviles, co-chair of the Henderson SPC gave the report. She highlighted objectives for the year (slide 2), recent activities and upcoming events (slides 3-5), and current parent concerns (slides 6-8).

Principal Willingham and Gene Roundtree addressed the parents about concerns. Principal Willingham stated that he will always listen and had ideas for additional resources and connections to support the school climate. All teachers go through anti-bullying training. Gene Roundtree said he will reach out to bus transportation and said the Governing Board should discuss lengthening the school day and formally change school start and end times to alleviate issues with buses in future years.

Student Report ([slide deck](#))

Bamari D. gave the student report. Fall sports are up and running and October is when students start Winter sports. Student elections will also be held in October, date to be determined.

Community Partners Report ([slide deck](#))

Nicole D. presented for the community partners. Much of the work the partners are doing centers around writing and acquiring grants for the school. They want to solicit input from the community about what their greatest needs are.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Governing Board Training
- Bylaws Subcommittee Updates
- SPC report
 - Title 1 funds decision
- Head of School Report
 - Check in about caseloads for OT and PTs at the Lower Campus due to addition of another K1 class

To request additional items to the agenda for the next meeting, email Eva Clarke directly.