

# Hawthorn Academy

## Board of Directors Meeting

**Date:** September 11, 2024

**Location:** 9062 S 2200 W West Jordan, UT 84088

**In Attendance:** Heidi Scott, Tammi Wright, Janielle Edwards, Jamie Dickinson, Tori Williams, Donald McNeill, Meggen Pettit

**Others In Attendance:** Floyd Stensrud, Chantel Wixon, Alicia Ady, Stacey Phillips, Mandy Kartchner, Brittney Garcia, Halley Miranda



## MINUTES

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### CALL TO ORDER

At 9:08 am Tammi Wright called the meeting to order.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### PUBLIC

- LEA Specific Licenses  
There was no public comment.

Janielle Edwards entered the meeting online at 9:11am.

### REPORTS

- Director's Report
    - Mental Health Grant
- Floyd Stensrud provided the director's report. He reported on test scores from the end of the last school year. West Jordan Campus is still in TSI (targeted school improvement), they have one year left of TSI. TSI happens when students are falling below grade level consistently. Floyd Stensrud discussed that South Jordan is not in TSI but they want to take measures to prevent going back into TSI. He reported that the scores are trending down at the moment, and they would like to turn that around. The state helps with turn around, but it's still up to the school to implement strategies to help improve test scores to pull out of TSI. The school is really focusing on the academic standards that the state requires. It will be easier now that the school is no longer using the IB model that has curriculum that focuses on different academic standards. They are working strategically with students in Special Education so that they can get test scores up, pull out of TSI and stay out. Floyd discussed that Brenda Anderson received extensive training on how to pull out of TSI at the district she worked at before Hawthorn Academy. Brittney Garcia reported on Acadience, RISE and 9<sup>th</sup> grade Aspire testing for the last school year. She reported that the test scores are all over the place for grade level at the South Jordan Campus. She reported that the school improved a lot in Acadience testing. This is due to focusing on strategies for Acadience. At the South Campus, kindergarten struggled with math and 1<sup>st</sup> grade struggled across the board. They are targeting those

grades for interventions in the subjects that tested low. They are teaching students things they will need to know for the test. Last year the math test used dominoes to illustrate the concept of greater than and less than, but the students had never seen dominos, so they had a hard time reading the numbers. Now that the teachers know what the tests will look like they can mitigate some of those small things that stump the students. She discussed how the tests change throughout the year for different grades. She went over math, science and literacy tests for all grades. She discussed that they analyzed what adjustments could be made to help get student test scores up. She reported that the West Jordan campus was more consistent with their test scores. The state in the last few years has really emphasized reading and literacy scores. This year, the state has been focusing more on math scores to help increase math scores across the state. She reported that the math program they are currently using is not being utilized well, they are looking at new curriculum for next year. Right now, they use the “Everyday math” program, and the language is very different than the state tests. The teachers are noticing that it is not a very effective program, so they aren’t really using it. The board discussed how 9<sup>th</sup> grade science scores improved. They discussed strategies the school used last year to remediate the math scores in 9<sup>th</sup> grade since they had to switch teachers mid-year. Brittney discussed that the reason this school is in TSI is mostly because Special Education students are not showing sufficient improvement. The literacy specialist is really focusing on helping with strategies to help those students start to grow and progress. The state doesn’t expect the students to be on grade level, just make sufficient improvement to indicate adequate growth. Floyd Stensrud discussed that school has about 20% Special Education Students. Floyd discussed that the school wants to be able to pull students out in addition to the push in model that they currently use for students that need interventions. The board asked why they were using the push in model. The school would like to use a combination of both in order to be the most effective.

Halley Miranda presented to the board the new communication platform that the school has switched to. Froggummy already takes care of the website and lottery program. Now they are also handling communication. This includes emails, texts and calls from the school. The send a text and email for absences. This allows parents to click on a link to the text or email to excuse absences. She reported that they have had a few bugs because it’s new but overall, it has been a good switch from their previous system. Another thing this system will do is being able to relay information in an emergency system including late starts for snow. She reported that last year during the bomb scare, she had to use 3 different systems for both campuses and it took way too long to get the information out to parents. This system will allow her to send out one message through multiple platforms all at the same time. The response time will be much quicker. Halley would like to know how the board would like to be informed in the event of an emergency.

Halley Miranda also reported to the board about enrollment numbers. The school is currently at 1367. She went over the handout that she gave the board. The dark blue is South Jordan, light blue is West Jordan. She went over the difference in enrollment by grade. She discussed the grades where they lost a lot of students from one grade to the

next (K to 1<sup>st</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade). They didn't allow any new 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to enroll this year because last year most of the new students that came, left mid-year. Janielle Edwards asked if there was a program that they could add to entice 9<sup>th</sup> graders to stay at the school. She reported that a lot of people pull their kids for 9<sup>th</sup> grade in order to prepare them for high school. Heidi Scott spoke about her children's experience at Hawthorn and how they were more prepared for High School because they had already completed the general classes that were needed. It opened up their high school schedule for different more specialized classes because they already had core classes completed. The board feels that educating parents and students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade might help mitigate the drop in 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. Meggen Pettit discussed that she wonders if the number was inflated because of the struggle that the school had with 8<sup>th</sup> grade math last year. Halley Miranda reported that at South Campus there is no wait list in any grade, so they still need more applicants. At West they over-offered enrollment to account for the normal drop in students at the beginning of the school year. They did not over offer in kindergarten and now they have 4 kindergarten students in the lottery, but they are already 3 weeks into school. Floyd Stensrud would like to continue to bring students in until October 1<sup>st</sup>. Halley Miranda reported that the problem now is that most of them have already started at other schools and are less likely to accept the offer. Halley reported that the South Campus usually offers enrollment all year long, but West Campus typically doesn't offer after the October 1 deadline. They discussed the challenges with over offering enrollment spots. Halley also discussed that in the past they have taken their 6<sup>th</sup> graders at the South Jordan Campus and made them apply to the lottery to get into the Jr High at the West Campus. They are given priority above other applicants, however, school feels like this is a disconnect in the community because it's requiring them to reapply. The school would like to just allow them to register as they usually would and move to the West Campus. It is not necessary to make them reapply so they would like to do away with that. The board agrees and would like to remove any barrier for these families to enroll in the middle school. Meggen Pettit discussed that she would love a shuttle between the two campuses. Floyd Stensrud discussed that the mental health grant is in it's second of 3 years and it is being used to pay for school counselors.

- Conferences Report

The board members reported on both the UAPCS conference, and national conference that they were able to attend. Tammi Wright asked the board members to report on anything they learned. Jamie Dickinson reported that it was one of the best conferences she has been to. She reported that she got so much great information out of it. She reported that in one of the talks by Dr Vivian Ming (a neuroscientist) she said that they want to create a new generation of explorers. Not just producing the correct answers but asking questions and seeking for greater understanding. She also reported that she enjoyed talks about growth mindset, accountability, asking others for feedback, focusing on the goal, celebrating wins. Looking at what goals the school has and what is everyone's role in achieving these goals. What is the most important thing to focus on? Focusing on hiring those who are in alignment with the goals the school has, and unrecruiting people who are not in alignment with those goals. She discussed transparency with the goals. She also discussed kindness input vs

feedback and go time vs talk time. Allowing time to debrief and learn from mistakes. Who is the lead storyteller for Hawthorn. The board discussed how important accountability is as board members. Jamie Dickinson also discussed that she wants to talk to Halley about making it easy on their website to schedule a time for a tour and potentially making the times flexible such as nights and weekends. She thinks it would be a good idea to give out swag, say the student's name 10 times, have a scripted tour, shoot for 87% enrollment after the tour and being consistent with advertising and logos. They discussed a talk on AI and social media and how they reported there was an outlier that used social media as much as the other teens in the study but dug deeper and researched the stuff they saw and benefited from the social media rather than it being detrimental to her.

Floyd Stensrud reported that he liked Dr Ming's talk as well. She said we as human beings know what the problems are, it's about asking the right questions to solve them. She also said they people are turning to AI to solve problems, but it doesn't actually solve problems. It's a system and pathway that can turn you to the information, but it won't actually create the solution to solve those problems. We need to treat each other with more dignity, kindness, respect in terms of willingness to come together to solve those problems. We don't give each other enough credit for what we know. He used getting out of TSI as an example for what she was trying to say. Heidi Scott reported that she went to the UAPCS conference. The two classes they went to that were the most beneficial were about neuroplasticity and resilience. She loved that they stressed the importance of teaching our children resiliency. People think that these kids have anxiety and can't be helped, but you can teach resiliency and neuroplasticity to help them overcome these challenges. Teaching coping skills and the idea that resiliency can be taught. We need to be resilient and be able to model it for others. Meggen Pettit reported that the approach of the training was very positive. Where are you at, and how do you move on forward from there. Heidi reported that it helped her recognize some of her triggers. Everyone has peaks and valleys and the goal is to decrease the highs and lows. Recognizing what is causing them and minimizing them is the ultimate goal. Meggen Pettit reported that this goes along well with mental health and recognizing and learning to cope. Tammi Wright reported that they said the most successful people are the most resilient people. The board discussed how at national conference there was a lot that didn't apply to them as a Utah school. Tammi Wright discussed that national conference helped her be able to realize she could have discussions with Floyd as to how she can be more supportive and involved as a board member. She went to a self-care class that was super helpful for her. She loved the documents that were included in the packet that helped define what her role is as a board member. She also realized she would like to be a better ambassador for the school. They suggested having a 60 second story to be able to share with others about the school. She also learned about some of the hidden senses. She discussed some of what she learned with the board. The last thing she took away from the conference is that technology should be more effective and efficient in schools. Jamie reported that she went to all the back-to-school nights in her house shirt and be a part of the fun. She reported that the Jr high back to school night was her favorite. There was music and food trucks, and the students and families seemed to have a great time.

At 10:45 am Stacey Phillips left the meeting and joined on zoom.

- Budget Report

Heidi Scott provided the budget report. She reported that these numbers go through July 31<sup>st</sup>. This is 8.3% through the school year. She went through the Statement of Activities and discussed the ones that were higher or lower than expected. She discussed why the local revenue sources were high and reminded the board that federal sources always lag behind. She discussed why Property and Liability Insurance was high as well. She discussed the possibility of needing to true up the budget because it was higher than they budgeted. She also discussed why e-textbooks and curriculum was higher than it should be. They discussed why the dues and fees were higher than expected. This was for the annual fee related to their bonds. Heidi reported on the Statement of Financial Position. She reported that their income is up from last year. They are slightly under enrollment for where they initially budgeted. Meggen Pettit explained to the new board members that their PTIF is their high yield savings account that they put the school's savings into. They have two PTIF funds, one for normal funds, and one for restricted funds. Heidi Scott explained how Maintenance of Effort works with the Special Education restricted funds. The board discussed that they had to pay back 3,000,000 in these funds last year. The school is working with the auditors so that they can pay the funds back without having to have MOA for it and how it can't be listed as an expense. It has to be carefully documented just right, or it could be problematic for the school. The school will be paying it back as soon as they can figure out how to account for the payback. Floyd asked if Chantel Wixon if she could tell him how much interest they are making on the restricted PTIF since the separation of restricted and non-restricted funds into two separate PTIF accounts. He asked what percentage of interest the school was making on the funds. Chantel Wixon reported that the interest rate right now is at about 5%.

## CONSENT ITEMS

- Aug 21, 2024, Board Meeting and Closed Session Minutes

*Heidi Scott made a motion to approve the August 21, 2024, Board Meeting and Closed Session Minutes. Jamie Dickinson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Votes were as follows: Heidi Scott, Aye; Janielle Edwards, Aye; Jamie Dickinson, Aye; Tori Williams, Aye; Donald McNeill, Aye; Tammi Wright, Aye; Meggen Pettit, Aye.*

## VOTING AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- LEA Specific licenses

Floyd Stensrud discussed the needed LEA licenses for the school. The board received the rationale behind the licenses in their documentation packet. The following teachers need an LEA license approved: Carlie Bateman, Benjamin Crisanto, Alisha George, Michael Layden.

- Policy to Amend:

- Attendance Policy
- Background Check Policy
- Electronic Meetings Policy
- Selection, Approval and Purchase of Instructional Materials

- Student Conduct and Discipline Policy

The board was given a summary of changes to each of the above listed policies. The received redlined versions in their documentation packet. They board discussed the changes to the above policies.

*Heidi Scott made a motion to approve the LEA Specific Licenses as listed in the board packet and discussed and to Approve the above listed policies as listed in the board packet and discussed. Meggen Pettit seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Votes were as follows: Heidi Scott, Aye; Janielle Edwards, Aye; Jamie Dickinson, Aye; Tori Williams, Aye; Donald McNeill, Aye; Tammi Wright, Aye; Meggen Pettit, Aye.*

- Board Member Longevity

The board discussed board member terms and long-term plans. They wanted to talk about performance expectations for board members and if they are being met. Tammi wright reviewed the Board Member Expectations. She discussed how Janielle was concerned about having to join online and if this meets the board expectations. She discussed maybe replacing board members who may not be able to fulfill those expectations. Janielle Edwards discussed that she was concerned that she might be taking the spot of someone else that could contribute more in-person, than on zoom just because she was already on the board. She also discussed that she loves being on the board and would like to stay. She just wanted to have the discussion and make sure that the board is ok with the level that she is able to commit to. She is still going to come to events and other things at the school. Janielle is also willing to step off the board if they would prefer to have another applicant that can always join in person. The board discussed that the board appreciates the expertise as a teacher that Janielle brings to the board.

Brenda Anderson joined the meeting at 11:13am

Tori Williams left the meeting at 11:23am

- Dress Code Discussion

Jamie Dickinson discussed with the board some ideas she had about the dress code discussion that they had a year ago. She talked with Brenda Anderson, and Tiffany the secretary of the school about how they feel about the dress code. Jamie is wondering why the board is so inflexible about the dress code. She is wondering why the school isn't wearing the house colors. She would like to have a conversation about the reasoning behind the current dress code. Tammi Wright asked if it had been brought to the board in the past. Meggen Pettit discussed her reasoning about wanting uniforms. The board is concerned that the school is going to get so many variations that it will be difficult to monitor and enforce. She believes students act differently when they are in uniform than when they are dressed down. Janielle Edwards thinks that the students being able to wear house colors on Friday makes it more special than wearing it every day. She also discussed that teachers at other schools have been shocked by how kids are currently dressing. She wonders if that's why parents are choosing to send students to schools with uniforms. It eliminates the extreme styles. She also discussed that the more variety they add to the dress code, the harder it will be to enforce. Heidi Scott discussed how when they first started the school, she didn't care if they implemented uniforms or not. She feels like they were here to

educate the kids, not police what they are wearing. After becoming a parent of students at the school she loved the dress code. It was simple, it was not expensive, and there was never a fight. She loves how it's distinct and different. You know they are students at Hawthorn. She thinks it will be diluted the more it is changed. She believes that being distinct and different is part of the school's branding. She discussed that when she was in school, she researched and wrote a paper about if uniforms were effective, and she said the research is staggering on the benefits. She would like to not dilute the dress code any further. Brenda Anderson discussed that she likes the uniforms. The students are allowed to wear the house colors on Fridays with uniform pants. They have started holding dress down days on Wednesdays now so that students will wear their house shirts on Fridays. Brenda discussed that it is helpful that students cannot deviate from the expected dress code. She discussed that she does not ever worry about things like socks, but it is nice to have the uniformity of the polos and required pants. Meggen Pettit discussed that the junior high will always be a challenge. Janielle Edwards discussed that she feels like uniforms are unifying within the school. Meggen Pettit discussed that if there is a specific thing that needs considered, no to be afraid to address it with the board. Floyd clarified that Jamie is talking about changing the style of shirt not the colors. The school is concerned about uniformity if they open the shirts to other styles.

#### **CALENDARING**

- Next Meeting October 9, 2024  
The board scheduled an "as needed" electronic meeting for September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:45am.

#### **ADJOURN**

*At 11:51am Meggen Pettit made a motion to Adjourn. Heidi Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Votes were as follows: Heidi Scott, Aye; Janielle Edwards, Aye; Jamie Dickinson, Aye; Donald McNeill, Aye; Tammi Wright, Aye; Meggen Pettit, Aye.*