

Uplift Education Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 1st, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

A virtual meeting of the Board of Uplift Education was held on the date and time listed above. Pursuant to Governor Abbott's March 16, 2020 Order approving a request by the Office of the Attorney General to temporarily suspend a limited number of open meeting laws in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) disaster, governmental bodies may conduct meetings by telephone or video conference to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings (also called "social distancing") to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). In compliance with Governor Abbott's order, and in furtherance of the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings, this meeting was held by videoconference.

Access online was through TEAMS and the agenda provided the following access information:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NjlhYTgwYzMtMmZmMS00MDBhLTg3NjltZTg5MTViMTA1YTY1%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Ti d%22%3a%22c1136be9-3a18-45ff-8099-b182bfd6890c%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2226d7a1b6-9be1-4fdc-9c72-d7278ededda4%22%7d

For access by phone: +1 469-340-0751; conference ID: 574-295-783#

Called to Order: 4:31 p.m.

Adjourned: 6:32 p.m.

Board Members Present:

1. Richard Frapart
2. Cullum Clark
3. Dawn Davidson
4. John Beckert
5. Michael Stack
6. Ardo Fuentes
7. John McPherson
8. Lael Melville
9. James Stanton
10. Ed Tauriac
11. Andre McEwing

<i>TOPIC</i>	<i>DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS</i>	<i>ACTIONS</i>
I. Call to Order and Announcements	FULL BOARD SESSION R. Frapart welcomed the Board to the meeting and took attendance. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. R. Frapart explained that the full board is meeting until 6pm, and after that the Executive Committee is meeting until 6:30pm, though any member of the Board is welcome to join.	
II. Previous Board Minutes	The first order of business was to discuss and take action on previous Board minutes from November 16, 2020. ACTION ITEM: Consider and take action on minutes from previous board meetings.	Upon motion by J. Beckert to approve the November 16, 2020 Board minutes, as presented, and seconded by E. Tauriac, the Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

1. Status update on work related to Board Strategic Plan – Yasmin Bhatia, CEO.

Y. Bhatia reviewed the key planks of Uplift’s strategic plan: (1) Serve as a catalyst for our peers by offering an A-rated public education option, (2) Drive long-term success for alumni in both college and the global marketplace, (3) Serve more scholars in North TX and ensuring they stay with us PreK – HS, and (4) Grow a thriving team of school leader and teacher talent. An Executive Summary of the key planks was reviewed as well. The Executive Summary included the following questions: (1) Can we gain traction on strategic initiatives given external forces this school year?, (2) Has the world changed in fundamental ways that would cause us to change our strategy?, (3) What learnings and/or innovations have come out of the crisis?, (4) What links are we seeing between our equity work and learnings coming from our town halls?, and (5) How can the board be helpful?.

Regarding offering an A-rated district, R. Washington discussed the Network COVID-19 slide from MAP data and compared the data with a typical summer slide.

Regarding the college and career plank, administration discussed where we are (50% increase in scholars who applied to 1 college by November 1st; our new Scholar Elected Pathway has given us great data, much earlier than normal, about our scholars plans after graduation; Continued support for alumni and families through targeted, virtual programming), Where we are going (use of Scholar Elected Pathway data to create intentional actions for seniors; focus on supporting seniors in finding strong scholarship options), and Challenges (lack of clarity around current College Access ecosystem; Family and job stress for alumni has led to many feeling like they need to leave school already; uncertainty around COVID future has many current seniors considering staying closer to home).

Administration also discussed the serving more scholars and talent planks.

The Board discussed checking-in with and supporting alumni, how the 2020 graduates are doing, diversity in how post-secondary schools are handling the pandemic, how the Board can support, and in what ways colleges are trying to minimize the cost of a post-secondary education.

2. Status update on work related to Uplift’s Equity Plan – Yasmin Bhatia, CEO.

III. Information Items

Y. Bhatia reviewed the Board commitments to diversity and provided a summary of the town hall work being completed. The purpose for the town halls include (1) creating a formal space for all stakeholders to share their experiences at Uplift and what they hope for in future equity plans; (2) using perspectives from town hall to shape “short-term wins”; (3) using perspectives from town halls to shape multi-year equity plan and align priorities to those that matter most to our stakeholders; and (4) creating an ongoing platform for dialogue with stakeholders from various groups across the organization. The town halls conducted included: African American, Latinx and LGBTQ Scholars; Affinity Group Leaders; African American Leaders (x2); African American Staff (x2); Latinx Leaders; Latinx Staff; Asian Scholars; Collective Scholar Town Hall; Asian Staff; and LGBTQ Staff. In total, the town halls have included Roughly 75 leaders, 100 staff and 50 scholars to date.

Perspectives of scholars from town halls have included:

1. Perceive and don't like that different cultural celebrations are celebrated unequally;
2. Value diversity;
3. Would like more formal opportunities to get to know their classmates of different backgrounds;
4. Feel compassion for their teachers who don't know how to handle addressing inappropriate comments regarding race/sexual orientation in the classroom;
5. Feel disconnected from Uplift when teachers don't respond to inappropriate comments made by peers;
6. Appreciate having staff on campus who share their backgrounds and for Latinx scholars spoke of the importance of speaking Spanish to engage with their parents;
7. Would like to see more explicit representation of various scholar backgrounds in our curriculum;
8. Appreciate the range of clubs on their campus that have allowed them to have a sense of belonging and connect to their identity;
9. More education and awareness around LGBTQ for our communities, particularly focused on Transgender.

Perspectives of staff have included a desire for PD on a variety of issues, issues regarding the talent life cycle, and issues regarding culture and mindsets.

Y. Bhatia next discussed the action plan for continued diversity work.

3. Development Committee update – John Beckert, Development Committee Chair, and Deborah Bigham, Chief External Affairs Officer.

J. Beckert, Chair of the Development Committee, presented the Development Committee update for the Board. J. Beckert discussed how development has been historically addressed at Uplift, and while it has been successful, there is a need for our development efforts to evolve.

J. Beckert next reviewed the aim of the Development Committee: To create a culture of fundraising within our Board, Staff, and Communities by forging relationships with individuals, foundations, and corporations through the creation of an annual giving program and the launch of our 2021-2026 Capital Campaign. Subsequently, the purpose and definitions of “annual campaigns” versus “capital campaigns” were discussed, as well as Uplift’s dollar amount goals for both, support needed from the Board, “give or get,” and the Development Committee’s plan of action for moving forward.

The Board discussed expectations generally, and for new Board members, and ownership of development.

4. Advocacy Committee update – James Stanton, Advocacy Committee Chair, and Deborah Bigham, Chief External Affairs Officer.

J. Stanton, Chair of the Advocacy Committee, has organized major leadership visits, including a visit by Dan Patrick at Uplift North Hills, and a visit by Dan Huberty at Uplift Delmas Morton.

J. Stanton explained to the Board that the purpose of the Committee and Uplift’s advocacy work is to establish relationships with all political leaders and that it is inappropriate for the Board to take sides or endorse one leader or candidate. It is important for Uplift to maintain integrity in this regard.

E. Dominguez provided an update on the 87th Legislative Session and a chronology of events.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SESSION

Presentation of Targeted Improvement Plans for Uplift Mighty PS, Uplift Wisdom MS, Uplift Gradus PS, Uplift Meridian PS, and Uplift Pinnacle PS – Aurora Lora, Chief of Schools.

Aurora Lora provided a comprehensive explanation of TEA’s Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) process and

	<p>identified for the Board that this meeting is serving as the public meeting for review and comments. A. Lora next identified the district leadership team and the individual school leadership teams. Next, for each school – Mighty PS, Wisdom MS, Gradus PS, Meridian PS, and Pinnacle PS – A. Lora identified current performance grades, TIP priorities, and a review of the TIP plan.</p> <p>The Board discussed the impact of COVID-19 on these schools and their performances.</p> <p>Comments from the public were requested and there were none.</p> <p>ACTION ITEM: Consider and take action on the Targeted Improvement Plans for Uplift Mighty PS, Uplift Wisdom MS, Uplift Gradus PS, Uplift Meridian PS, and Uplift Pinnacle PS.</p>	<p>Upon motion by A. Fuentes, and seconded by J. Beckert, the Board unanimously votes to approve the Targeted Improvement Plans for Uplift Mighty PS, Uplift Wisdom MS, Uplift Gradus PS, Uplift Meridian PS, and Uplift Pinnacle PS, as presented.</p>
<p>IV. Community Forum</p>	<p>No persons signed up to speak during the community forum.</p>	
<p>V. CLOSED Session</p>	<p>At 6:21 p.m. R. Frapart retired the Board to CLOSED session at 5:02 p.m. pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.071, to consult with legal counsel about pending or contemplated litigation or a settlement offer or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the Board under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the requirement for open meetings.</p> <p>At 6:32 p.m. the Board returned to OPEN session. R. Frapart announced no decision or action was taken by the Board during CLOSED session.</p>	
<p>VII. Adjournment</p>	<p>There being no further business before the Board, R. Frapart adjourned the meeting at 6:05 p.m.</p>	

Respectfully submitted, Alexander S. Berk, Secretary.