

February 2018 Board Spotlight

Hello Beacon Community,

At our February board meeting, we discussed our growth plan as it pertains to next year. Just before this current school year, we voted to expand 5th grade to three sections. This was ahead of schedule and based on waitlist numbers. K-3 expanded as planned for this first year in our new school. First grade did not fill to capacity, however. We had asked Mr. Koster to look closely at all of this to see what scenario would not cause us to lose any of our current valued teachers and staff. He determined that we can keep 2nd and 5th grade to two sections next year and staff is more than willing to adjust. So this is our plan. Much of our discussion centered on how much our Beacon culture benefits from not expanding too fast. The reality is that we will grow from 550 to 725 in the next four years. And this year, our student population is about half new due to our move to Crystal. Our goal is to be responsive to both our waitlist and our school climate needs.

We hear from the Employee Retention and Compensation Committee around this time every year. Paige Roth, middle school math teacher, presented that the committee reviewed teacher salary schedules this year and determined that we are right in the range where a charter school should be. Next, they are going to take a good look at some non-monetary retention ideas.

Kris Gapinski, 5th grade teacher, gave a presentation about the progress of the Curriculum Committee. This is the year to review and select Science curriculum. In digging into the samples and consulting with teachers, the committee is recommending Foss curriculum for elementary and Sep Up curriculum for middle school. They will finalize their recommendation for review next month and the board will hope to approve the curriculum purchase in April. If you have questions about the Science curriculum selection or the process itself, please contact kgapinski@beaconacademy.com.

Enrollment is the highest it's been this school year at 551. In his marketing update, Mr. Koster said that we are honing in on several things that we know to be most effective. Postcards to certain communities near our school and posters to hang in local businesses and preschools are two of those ideas. Our new promotional video is playing before movies begin at the New Hope Cinema and Grill and we are looking into doing a similar thing at the West End movie theaters. If you haven't seen this video, you can find it on our Facebook page at @BeaconAcademyMN or on the front page of our website: www.beaconacademy.com.

On behalf of the Beacon Board of Directors,
Heidi Sheard, board secretary