



GOVERNING BOARD AGENDA Strategic Planning Board Retreat Minutes

Meeting of Saturday, November 3rd, 2018 09:00 AM
Iftin Charter School Library
5465 El Cajon Blvd. San Diego, CA 92115

“Providing a strong educational foundation to all students who are in need of direction and support in learning English and finding their way in a new culture.”

Mission: Iftin Charter School provides students in grades K-8 an academically rigorous, common core aligned curricula, supplemented with a technology intensive program in a student centered, safe and caring learning environment. ICS addresses the needs of a diverse group of students, their families and communities by building on the strengths of the students’ cultural heritage and life experiences. ICS students are educated and enlightened to become successful, lifelong learners and valuable members of the global community.

BREAKFAST: 9:00 – 9:30 am

WELCOME GUESTS / CALL TO ORDER 9:42AM

Roll Call

Abdulkarim Warsame _____	President present
Joe Udall _____	Secretary present
Mulki Hersi _____	Treasurer present
Rahmo Abdi _____	Member present
Faisal Ali _____	Member present
Ibrahim Hassan _____	Member present

51 community members, teachers, staff, and students present.

RETREAT SESSION

Introduction: Principal Ali Hori 9:30 - 9:45 am

Mr. Nur: We would like to welcome you, and present the national anthem.

Mr. Warsame: We welcome you to our meeting!

Mr. Hori: Welcome to our Iftin Charter Board Retreat. It is my privilege to welcome you all here today. We are honored to have distinguished guests with us, and honored they are here today. We are here to insure our children reach the best possible result in life. We want them to be active learners. We continue to seek diversity, have smooth operations, and collaboration with parents. We started with 68 students in 2006, and today are close to 400 students. We are increasing our network with SDSU, and San Diego Unified. Our plan is to work together to reach our goals, and thank you to our team to work together and head into the right direction.



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I. Iftin Financials & Honored Guests 9:45 – 10:15 am

- A. Delano Jones, Charter School Management Corp
Strong Financial Foundation into the Future

Mr. Jones: We contract with Iftin Charter School for back office role, such as payroll, accounting, etc. For the retreat, I was tasked with a 360 degree look at the financials, analyzing how we performed in the past, and how we may perform into the future. Staffing and Benefits, Enrollment and ADA, and Educational Program, and Operations will be featured in the presentation. For the past 5 years, the range of students varied from 487 to 320, with an average of 95% ADA. The revenue per student in 2013 were about 8K, and last year was about 11,500 per student. 5 years ago we had 1.5 million in savings, and last year were at 1.9 million. Salaries and benefits account for nearly 75% of expenses. Iftin also has 2 retirement systems, and the matching contribution is significant. Moving into the future, we have a slow walk back with enrollment currently at 356, and five years from now we are looking at 373. The most important task is to figure out what resources our students need, and how to tie in the dollars with the LCFF. Iftin is doing rather well financially, and with 6 months of reserve, it is stable and successful. Stakeholder engagement is a must, and aligning our budget to LCAP goals will bring the ultimate success.

- B. Dr. Johnson, Executive Director of National Center for Urban School Transformation
The Best Urban Schools

Dr. Johnson: It is a pleasure and honor to work with the stakeholders in the room. As Mr. Jones talked about in the projections, I will argue that success is up to us. I say us because I truly feel we are partners ensuring the success of Iftin Charter School. Success doesn't just mean financials, but the impact on our children in their grade levels. You want also want the kids to be successful when they go to high school and college after. At SDSU, we study schools from across the country that serve low-income communities, and diverse populations, and ELLs, yet achieve outstanding academic results. We've learned a lot studying those schools, and it is our pleasure and opportunity to support Iftin by replicating these successes. It is not easy, and there are some elements we need to overcome to achieve the high standards. Students learn more when teachers expect more. Instruction needs to be encouraging of students, and engagement is based on connections and relevance from students. The students and staff feel valued and respected and appreciated at the very best schools. It is our hope to work with the principal, the staff, and teachers, to ensure rigor, powerful instruction, and we hope to work with everyone to ensure everyone feels like they are at home.

Mr. Hori: We are presenting an award to Dr. Johnson for his leadership and service to our organization.

- C. Dr. McQuary, San Diego Unified Board of Directors
Honored Guest Remarks

Not able to attend this morning.



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II. Strategic Planning 10:15 – 10:45 am

- A. Dr. Guthrie, Education Synergy Consulting
Renewal, LCAP, and Beyond

Mr. Nur: Our guest was my teacher, who helped train us on the School Site Council.

Dr. Guthrie: I've been with the school since its inception, and have been presenting at the school the last several years. If you had unlimited resources, would strategic planning be necessary? And how do you plan for passion and will? What are your aspirations? Strategic planning should be fun, and though planning can be technical, we want to realize our vision. Strategic planning is where you are, where you want to be, and how you want to get there. You then prepare the organization for change, clarify the goals, resolve key issues, improve services, and determine ways to organize success. Charter schools are the most accountable organizations due to your need to receive renewal every 5 years.

How do you measure successes at a school? 4 phases to strategic planning. Vision into reality, and is there an action plan to prioritize the issues? Is there value added by prioritizing those issues? Develop measurable objectives, and move forward with a systematic approach.

At the 2014/2015 retreat, we projected in 2019 we would be at 3.7 million fund balance. Current projections at 2.9 million. What does it mean when enrollment falls? Priorities need to change. Is it feasible to fund priorities with declining enrollment?

Our current priorities involve Charter Renewal in June 2020. There is a checklist involving 16 elements, MOU, visitation issues and responses, and evidence and renewal justification. Everything you do here needs to be documented.

Our local control accountability plan is a 3-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities. Iftin prioritizes Pupil Outcomes, and look at data to bring them to proficiency. Outreach and School Climate is another goal where Iftin fosters a learning-centered culture dedicated to academic rigor, cultural literacy, and compassion built on the core values of the organization. Conditions of learning is the 3rd goal that maintain a safe and healthy environment.

The technology plan involves components of hardware/software, maintenance, training, and a multi-year budget.

Mr. Mohamud: As IT coordinator, we implemented this plan in 2008, and we need to focus on upgraded a couple classrooms and the bandwidth to ensure network stability.

Dr. Guthrie: 3 priorities, but other priorities are emergent and pending. We will seek opinions from the community, and determine how to fund it. You need to maximize your performance.



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III. Educational Vision 10:45 – 11:15 am

- A. Cara Riggs, National Center for Urban School Transformation
The Importance of Leadership

Ms. Riggs: We are so thankful to partner with Iftin Charter, and NCUST looks to award programs throughout the country, assist with a national symposium, and partner with urban schools. What makes a “best” school? Proficiency rates in ALL demographics. Also we seek non-selective, high graduation rates, high rates of access to challenging programs, demonstrated success for English learners, low rates of suspension. 3 stepping stones are needed: effective and engaging instruction, access to rigorous curricula, and positive transformational culture. If everyone believes they can get better, this will bring transformation. “Indeed there are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around in the absence of interventions by talented leaders.” Every result is intentional, and results are inevitable. Leaders persist, set expectations, identify and minimize barriers, build capacity, measure and monitor progress, and acknowledge and celebrate progress. Our conversations with this school’s principal involve creating, articulating, and sharing a vision. We will rebranding Iftin, and building a message about who we are. “Focus on the focus” leads to transformational change. And establish and implement a coherent system of improvement that leads to quality instruction and outstanding student outcomes. The Iftin Focus is creating and celebrating respect, supporting instruction, student safety, and it is not easy. It takes persistency, resiliency, commitment, and a belief from all stakeholders that all students can achieve at high levels. Iftin is clearly committed to the work, and we are here to support you.

Mr. Nur: We also want to recognize Cara’s support with an award.

Mr. Hori: Cara works extremely hard, visiting classes, and a great person for us. We recognize her efforts, and thank her for the vision she brings.

- B. Carol Proud, Iftin Charter Instructional Leader
Iftin’s Education Plan

Ms. Proud: I want to thank our faculty members here on a Saturday. On the ground is my presentation today. We are built on the idea of tolerance. You should see it and feel it in the classroom. Nurturing is a real strength, and brings people together. Integrity is based on data, and teachers share the data on the 4-Way Connection, leading to a constant building of our students. Focus as Cara said, is the active engagement. Yesterday over 35 staff had first-aid training. We have a safe, clean school, through the work of our custodial work. We have prioritized emergency drills, and have trainings on crisis intervention. We will support teachers and set conferences to look at data on how to improve as an educator. Thank you to all of you setting up a 3 to 5 year plan for our students.



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IV. Stakeholder Dialogue 11:15 – 11:45 am

- A. Abdulkarim Warsame, Iftin Board President
Our Collective Future

Warsame: We invite our community once a year, and in the rest of the country, the board goes away on a retreat, and discusses their mission and vision. The last couple years we have been here on campus and set a working retreat, and bring our team to enlighten us and our community how achievement looks. We need a well-rounded community, and these topics are important discussion items. An education plan is prioritized, and important to the success of our students. I hope we all understand our job is to reflect on what has been done, and improve it to be better. As we consider our future budgets, we want to prioritize that every student comes to school to learn and achieve. We look forward to hearing more feedback from the community.

Hassan: (translates Warsame speech to Somali for the majority of Somali speakers.)

Mohamed Ares (community member): Our renewal is very important in 2020. The renewal isn't up to board, admin, teachers, and it is the collective vision of the community. I want to focus on 3 areas. What is the education and academic achievement? In order to get more people, we need to convince the parents that this is the right place for the children. We need to convince them this is a safe school. We need to campaign and go to the offices, and make friendships. We have to make our case, and work together.

Abdirahman Ali (community member): Anyone who is here wants the school to succeed. But how? I recommend a new board, instead of recycling themselves. When and who gets to select?

Abdirahman Said (community member): Thank you for hosting us today. I think everyone here today has ideas on Iftin's success. I think we need to build positive relationships with families and parents. I think we need to focus on the academic success of parents.

Kadar Ismail (staff): As a parent, I thank all the members who are educating our students, and empowering our children to be leaders in the future. We came to this best country to achieve, and we have amazing examples like President Obama who's father was from Kenya. Our kids could be the future president of this country.

Nadia (school-site council): We all want to be a great school, and that's our focus. There's a big challenge ahead of us, and are we going to work together? We need a different direction, and if we make the changes needed, we will make the progress we seek. Are we ready? (crowd: yes!)

Mr. Nur (parent liaison): We've had 11 parent sessions, and encourage more community input.



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V. Conclusions 11:45 – 12:00 noon

- A. Ali Hori, Iftin Principal
Recognition and Closing Remarks

Mr. Hori: Today is a great day for Iftin. My door is always open to you, and I want to thank our founders, our staff, our teachers, and our board. I want to recognize some of the guests here. Khadar Ismail, our Dean of Students, is being presented this award due to his excellence. Our parent liaison, Mr. Hussein Nur, has worked hard, and we thank him for his dedication. I recognize our IT coordinator, Abdi Mohamud, who is everywhere on the campus, and working at this school for 11 years. Our teachers are so great and dealing with the student behavior. I recognize Emily Whelehon for her service as a teacher. All parents appreciate her. I also recognize Niomie Allison for her hard work, the hiring committee, and she worked with us all summer. I recognize Lucy Mizell, our math teacher, and her student performance is very high. Leadership is not easy. But our board members handle school situations. I recognize our board president, Abdulkarim Warsame, for his dedication. Faisal Ali's leadership is positive with his contributions. Mr. Joe Udall makes contribution as a teacher and a board secretary. Mulki Hersi is an important female voice on the board, and we are so lucky to have her. Ibrahim Hassan consistently asks questions of the educational plan. Rahmo's leadership and vision has been important to the organization.

We need more leadership, and we will work together to reach our school goal. We will have a long waiting list into the future after the changes we will implement.

Lunch 12:00 – 1:00 pm

VI. Advance Planning

The next regularly scheduled Governing Board Meeting is to be held on **Friday, December 7th, 2018** at 5:30 pm in the Iftin K-8 Library at 5465 El Cajon, Blvd San Diego.

VII. Adjournment 12:45 pm

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Office of Iftin Charter School at (619)265-2411. Notification of 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the School to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to that meeting (28 CFR 35.102.35.104) Additional questions can be sent to Board Secretary, Joe Udall, at mrudalliftin@gmail.com