***Proposed* Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School**

**Summary of Interview**

*Questions derived from review panel and documentation review*

***Note: The interview summary is not a transcript of the interview audio. Responses have been summarized by Department staff. The order of questions and responses within the summary may not reflect the chronology during the interview.***

**In attendance:**

**Keith Blanchette**,proposed board member

**Pamela** **Boisvert**, proposed board member

**Reed** **Hillman**, proposed board member

**Richard** **McGrath**, proposed board member

**Daniel Pear**, proposed board member

**Jasmin Rivas**, proposed board member

**Christine Tieri**, proposed board member

**Jim Donahue**, proposed executive director; proposed non-voting board member; president and CEO, Old Sturbridge Village

**Lisa DeTora**, proposed director of teaching and learning

**Emily Dunnack**, director of education, Old Sturbridge Village

**Debra Friedman**, senior vice president, Old Sturbridge Village

**Tina Krasnecky**, vice president of finance, Old Sturbridge Village

**Margaret Pierce**, vice chair of the board of trustees, Old Sturbridge Village

**Jill Mirman**, school designer, EL Education

**Not in Attendance:**

**Alberta Sebolt-George**, proposed board member

**Anne McBride**, director of development, Old Sturbridge Village

1. **What are the most significant additions or improvements since last year’s application? What was the rationale behind the changes?**
* We worked to improve last year’s proposal based on feedback received from the Department.
* We worked closely with EL Education through Jill Mirman (school designer, EL Education) to make sure that our board and our proposed school leadership and the staff of Old Sturbridge Village had a deeper understanding of EL and what the partnership with EL means for the school program.
* Last spring we added Lisa DeTora as a proposed director of teaching and learning. Lisa has experience with EL, experience as a founding member of a new school, and was a camper at Old Sturbridge Village as a girl. We’ve been working with her to strengthen curriculum, to strengthen the EL strand, and to determine how best to support the founding faculty of the new school.
* The proposed school now includes grade three to accommodate families that applied last year.
* We developed a new school leadership structure in which the role of principal is replaced by two director roles: a director of teaching and learning and a director of student support. This strengthens the application by allowing Lisa and her counterpart to focus on the students. This structure was developed in consultation with Kristen Harrison, executive director of Christa McAuliffe Charter School.
1. **How will the school in partnership with Old Sturbridge Village prepare students for college and career readiness in the 21st century?**
* We want our scholars to go into high school and be leaders, on a trajectory towards college and career readiness. We will hold high standards for student work and emphasize high achievement. The partnership with the museum and with EL will allow for opportunities for real-world application. The learning expeditions and Discovery Experiences in Old Sturbridge Village will provide students with hands-on learning opportunities tied to the standards. In seventh and eighth grade, students will participate in internships with members of the village staff.
* A big part of college and career readiness is bringing the families into the fold, creating a culture of going to college that is going to foster that desire and understanding that they can do this, to make sure that when they do graduate high school, they are ready to go.
* I (Christine Tieri, proposed board member) am an employer in the area. I have brand development marketing firm, and I often hire people who maybe didn’t go the traditional route or were not at the top of their class, but they are imaginative thinkers, and they are in charge of creating experiences for my clients and my clients’ customers. When I participated in the Expeditionary Learning 101 day I was impressed and inspired by how students are taught how to think outside the box, how to bring a new approach to their projects. From a career readiness standpoint, this is really inspiring.
* We want to make sure we can satisfy the workforce needs of employers in the Commonwealth. We know there is a shortage in a lot of the trades. We are going to take advantage of our campus. We have a farm, we have animals, we have a solar array, we have a water-powered grist mill and sawmill. This is an opportunity for the kids. Because of the features of the campus, students can go out and see occupations where you use your hands. They can watch the tinsmith at work, the blacksmith at work, the farmer farming.
1. **Two key design elements are named in the application: the school’s partnership with Old Sturbridge Village and the school’s partnership with EL Education. Without referencing those organizations, what would you say are the key aspects of the school’s design that make it unique and that will enable the school to accomplish the mission?**
* When we first starting talking about creating a school at the village to meet the needs in the community, we were talking about things like project-based learning; student-led conferences; real world applications; high standards for academic achievement; a strong school culture where students are taught with intentionality how to treat one another with respect and with kindness; helping students develop high expectations for themselves and for their future; and helping students understand who they are as learners. Those are the things we see as important school design elements. The two partners as design elements allow us to get those things done quickly and within a tight framework.
* We also want to create a sense of inclusive community, one that really emphasizes character development.
* Real work is at the heart of this vision: work that matters, work in the community, and bringing a growth mindset and having to revise your work.
1. **The application includes the goal that “By the end of the school year, all students will have participated in a project aimed at contributing to their community—classroom, school, or beyond.” Describe some ideas of projects that might require students to engage in the communities within your proposed charter region.**
* The village is part of a pilot program in the town of Sturbridge looking at ways to improve storm water drainage. There is a possibility that the village may be a site for that kind of a project. I can see students from the school being involved with that, presenting to the board of selectmen, and perhaps going out and showing other towns what we’ve done. The students would do fieldwork and we would train them to speak with the selectmen and other constituents. The students are community members and we want them to develop a voice to go back to their 12 sending districts and make their communities better.
* Projects would be about making communities better, with an emphasis on the environment, social justice, conservation, and using the character traits that we have talked about in school to make their neighborhoods better places.
* Students could learn in the village greenhouse and gardens about how fruits and vegetables grow and donate the produce to a local food pantry.
1. **Describe the population of students the school intends to serve. What are their needs, and how will the school’s program address those needs?**
* Of the 12 towns in our proposed region, 6 are underperforming at this point. We are targeting our recruitment in those six towns. There are a great number of economically disadvantaged families in those towns. Almost all of the parents who have come to the information sessions have indicated their children have learning needs. This is the type of population that we are looking to attract.
* The school will provide a compelling learning experience that not all students currently get. Curriculum design pieces are important. Differentiated learning is important. The expeditions are designed to be differentiated. EL curriculum has “rivers” of opportunities to differentiate for English learners and students with disabilities.
1. **What progress has been made to engage families and the community in your vision for the proposed school since last year’s submission? Please share any updates you may have regarding demand.**
* We have continued doing outreach, especially in Southbridge. In the summer and the fall, there was a core group of people going door to door talking to people. Since November we have been holding information sessions four nights a week in the towns where we feel there is the most need: Palmer, Webster, Southbridge, North Brookfield, Spencer, and Monson. After next week we are going to start doing more door-to-door recruitment on weekends, going to different community events, barbershops, beauty parlors, and markets, anywhere people are gathering and you have the ability to stop and talk to them.
* After we were not approved last year, the demand seemed to increase. We are half way to filling all of our seats and we haven’t yet started our strong recruitment efforts.
* Right now the majority of demand is for Kindergarten and 3rd grade. There are not many siblings. About sixty percent are from Southbridge.
1. **[Board] The application describes the challenges faced by communities the school will serve, and says that the school will “target recruitment toward students who are considered at-risk for successful learning”. How will the board evaluate the management organization’s success in recruiting an at-risk student population? What are the board’s expectations for levels of enrollment of students with disabilities, students identified as economically disadvantaged, and English learners?**
* When we talk about who is going to come to the school, we would like that to model the towns in the proposed region. We might not know until we have the first class exactly where we stand, and that could drive recruitment processes for the following class.
* Deb (Debra Friedman, senior vice president, Old Sturbridge Village) gives us updates on where recruiting efforts are being held. I know the neighborhoods she is going into. The majority of our applications are from Southbridge as a result of Deb going to the places where these people meet in the neighborhoods where they live.
* We worked with Deb to connect her to the networks and agencies in the neighborhoods.
1. **What is the approximate amount of time a student will spend learning at the museum in a typical week, outside of the Wednesday afternoon Discovery Experience?**
* Emily (Emily Dunnack, director of education, Old Sturbridge Village), Rhys (Rhys Simmons, director of interpretation, Old Sturbridge Village) and I (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) are working on a manual for teachers that will lay out all the opportunities for accessing the museum. Teachers will have a menu of options and will sign up to use the museum. We want them to access the museum for at least thirty minutes on a daily basis.
1. **With daily access to the museum, are there adjustments within the school’s schedule? You have fifty-minute periods, and it will take time to get everyone ready to go outside and to get over to the museum and back. Can you tell us more about how this works?**
* Time on learning is important. We are going to be strategic about it and aware of the time it takes. I (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) will be timing how long it takes to get to different places on the campus. We want them to use all their time on learning, so during transitions we may have students sing songs about simple machines or practice their multiplication fast facts. We will have structures in place to use all our time wisely.
* In some cases, the museum will come to the students. Staff might come in and do a program such as teaching a 19th dance or a Native American song. It might be a curator who brings objects from the collection that would relate to whatever students are learning.
1. **What is EL Education’s experience in developing K-2 curriculum? Are there ways in which the EL approach is modified for students in grades K-2? What is Jill’s (Jill Mirman, school designer, EL Education) experience in developing K-2 curriculum?**
* There are a lot of EL schools in the country, and the organization has more than 25 years of experience. These grades are not new for us. The school is planning to pull from some of the best plans in other places. We are creating a Common Core ELA curriculum for K-2 that is being piloted in multiple places, including in Boston. It will be ready when the school starts.
* Several years ago our organization realized that we were pushing down the standards into the lower grades and that that was supplanting some of the joy and delight that we want to see in primary grade classrooms. We created a document called “Characteristics of Primary Learners” that includes eight elements aligned with what the Wells family wrote in their mission for the village many years ago. Young learners should learn through movement, through play, through imagination, through music, through song, all of those things. This is an approach the school will use.
1. **Please describe the work that would need to be done prior to the start of the school year to develop curriculum. What do you already have developed? What still needs to be adapted and/or developed?**
* I (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) met with Jill (Jill Mirman, school designer, EL Education) and Old Sturbridge Village staff to come up with some roadmaps for our learning expeditions and Discovery Experiences, supplemental social studies and science units, and math. Starting in February, the plan is for me to begin working full time. We will begin developing these further. We will drill down discipline by discipline, grade level by grade level with Expeditionary Learning’s standards assessment planners. I want to be able to hand teachers a completed curriculum document that will guide them. I will be focused on standards, long-term learning, the supporting learning targets, and formative and summative assessments. Year two is where I see us writing our own expeditions, but for year one my goal is to have those mapped, ready for teachers to roll out.
1. **What will teachers do with the curriculum materials developed by the director of teaching and learning, the director of student support, and the EL school designer? What are the expectations prior to the first day of school and ongoing?**
* Teachers will need to familiarize themselves with the structures of the lessons, and will focus on differentiation to meet the needs of their students.
* We are going to have training for teachers. Staff will have 12 days of professional development in the summer. EL has developed workshops to bring teachers on board. We are going to talk about how to look at Expeditionary Learning’s English language arts modules and how to use the student discourse protocols.
1. **What are the staffing resources for developing the curriculum? You (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) will be starting full time in February, and Jill (Jill Mirman, school designer, EL Education) will be involved on some level. Will the two of you be developing the curriculum for all four grades and all content areas?**
* We are also working with the Department and with Old Sturbridge Village, continuously collaborating with these resources. We are going to be spending a lot of time at two Expeditionary Learning schools: The Springfield Renaissance School, where we will be looking at their upper elementary and middle school, and Alma del Mar, where we will be looking at their math curriculum. I want to take what they have done and tailor it to our experience.
1. **The application says that the director of student support will be involved in developing curriculum. Can you provide an update on how that individual might be involved?**
* Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) and I (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director) have met with a couple individuals who have expressed interest in the director of student support position. We want to identify the right person with the right qualifications to lead the special education program of the school. My expectation is that we will likely have somebody on board by early spring. They may not be available full time until June. We have had discussions about that and feel we can work with that. As soon as that person is identified we will involve him or her in the planning for faculty professional development and the planning for curriculum development.
1. **Please describe the processes you will use to develop, adapt, evaluate, and/or revise the curriculum and align the curriculum to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF), between now and the start of the school year, and once school has started.**
* When we create our learning expeditions, the process will be data driven. I (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) want to look at pre-tests and see where students are struggling.
* We will make sure the standards match up with our expeditions. Jill (Jill Mirman, EL school designer) will help us with aligning the expeditions to the standards.
* Standards will be mapped out for teachers. Lessons and assessments will be based on the standards. This is a fundamental part of our planning.
* From March to July of this year, I (Jill) will have regularly scheduled meetings with Lisa. We will look at the curriculum and determine what adjustments need to be made. In addition to looking at the academic dimension, we will also incorporate the other elements of the EL model, including the character and high quality work pieces. We won’t plan everything, since it is important for teachers to have ownership.
* We will create a work plan with very clear and intentional goals. All EL schools have a work plan that lays out the priority goals. When you start a new school, you have to do absolutely everything, but everything cannot be the highest priority, because it is impossible. So we have to do the hard work of identifying the most important things for each month as we go along. Part of the plan is to determine how the school leadership and the board will monitor the progress of the plan and to determine how EL Education is going to monitor the implementation of the model.
* Lisa and Dan (Daniel Pear, proposed board member) both have experience starting an EL school that is successful, and we have a relationship, so we are not starting from scratch.
1. **[Jim Donahue, proposed executive director] How do you fit into the March to July timeframe? When you hear Jill (Jill Mirman, school designer, EL Education) describe what she is going to be doing as the EL partner, and you hear Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) talk about the work she is doing, what will your role be?**
* My role is to get the resources the team needs to get the job done really well. I will work with Tina (Tina Krasnecky, vice president of finance, Old Sturbridge Village) and the human resources staff to identify the director of student support and to hire teachers, providing support to Lisa in the selection of those people. I will be involved in developing the physical space and ensuring that policies and procedures are in place. I will monitor the school’s progress against the plan. If there are issues that come up, I will rally the resources to overcome those obstacles and make sure that we stay on schedule. I will leverage the partnership with Old Sturbridge Village to make sure that the guide that Lisa has been working on with our colleagues at the museum is finished. I will coordinate training for village staff in anticipation of opening day. I will connect with teachers and families, getting people excited about the school. As time permits, I will sit in on faculty meetings and provide Lisa and the director of students support with some guidance. I will possibly sit in on some home visits and spend some time with families.
1. **Please clarify the role of museum staff in the educational program. Will museum staff take an active role in developing curriculum?**
* The charter school is a client of the museum. Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) and the director of student support with my (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director) guidance and the supervision of the board will be in charge of the curriculum. They will share their vision with museum colleagues, who will then propose partnerships and programs.
1. **What is the extent of the instructional roles of museum staff members’? What are the expected qualifications of staff from Old Sturbridge Village who will be delivering instruction?**
* Museum educators and staff will be involved in instruction, especially in the Discovery Experiences. Some museum staff members are retired school teachers. Many have been working with students in an academic setting at the village for a long time.
1. **How will staff from Old Sturbridge Village be trained and supported to deliver instruction that meets the needs of all students? How will the educational programming provided by the museum be evaluated for effectiveness?**
* Emily (Emily Dunnack, director of education, Old Sturbridge Village) and Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) are going to put together a program for teachers and museum staff that will focus on teacher language and behavior management based in EL’s philosophy. We want consistency between school staff language and museum staff language. We want to introduce the museum staff to the concept of learning targets.
* Rhys (Rhys Simmons, director of interpretation, Old Sturbridge Village), Lisa and I (Emily) have been working to develop the Discovery Experiences. We started with the standards and worked from there. The three of us have been creating the content for these for a couple of months now. During the school year, Rhys and I will provide on-the-ground support for these. One or both of us will be there every week. We anticipate one of the school directors or the executive director will check in monthly. We will do a pre and post assessment for each of the five-week units. There will also be mid-term and final student and teacher surveys.
* The same museum educator will work with the same group of students for every Wednesday afternoon Discovery Experience. We hope this will strengthen the relationship between the museum educator and the classroom teacher and better ensure that the Wednesday experiences support what is happening in the classroom. We see the role of the museum staff as providing content expertise.
* The classroom paraprofessionals will support the students and the museum educators Wednesday afternoons.
* Teachers and museum staff will check in with each other throughout the year to see how things are going and to support each other. There will be time for them to plan and touch base.
1. **What additional efforts will need to be undertaken by Old Sturbridge Village to serve the school as envisioned in the application? What additional Old Sturbridge Village resources will be brought to bear, beyond those currently available?**
* We will not have to hire a lot of new staff to support the school, since the current staff is underutilized. Employees will get more hours. Some of that time will be used for staff development and program planning. As school enrollment grows, there will be the opportunity to hire more interpretive staff. We currently have enough administrative staff to support the school in the early years.
1. **[Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning] Describe your plan for a responsive general education classroom and the strategies the school will implement to ensure academic success for all students. How will the curriculum be made accessible and appropriate for all students? Tell us about your experience in serving diverse learners. Describe the instructional methods we would expect to see in classrooms.**
* I have ten years experience in an urban district, working in inclusive classrooms with students with significant disabilities and students who don’t speak English, adapting the EL model for all types of learners. The model works well. Students are engaged in topics that are compelling.
* I can imagine leading my staff in this type of work. EL’s English language arts modules already include differentiation. We will expect teachers to be able to manage a lot of different things going on at the same time, including small groups and push-in services. Teachers need to be comfortable with multiple adults in the room and comfortable with self-guided learners.
1. **What are your assumptions about the enrollment of students receiving special education services and students receiving English as a second language (ESL) services? How did these assumptions guide your staffing for these programs during the first charter term, especially year 1 (0.5 administrator, 0.5 special education teacher, 1 ESL teacher)? How does your financial planning permit the hiring of additional staff if needed in these areas?**
* We anticipate that 20 percent of the initial 160 students will have special learning needs. If the number is higher, we will look at the staffing model and make some changes in the budget. The same is true for English learners. We will make adjustments as needed.
1. **What are the expectations for the qualifications of the director of student support who will oversee both the special education and English as a second language programs?**
* The director of student support will need to have a sheltered English instruction (SEI) administrator endorsement, a special education teacher license, and a special education administrator license.
* We have a person in mind who has these qualifications and who is in a similar position at another school, but we are not sure if she has enough years of experience in that position.
1. **If you are not able to identify someone for the director of student support position, the individual who in the proposed organizational structure would be a peer to Lisa, would you consider instead hiring someone who would be in a reporting relationship to Lisa?**
* We have talked about changing the reporting structure if we can’t find a person with the qualifications and experience we need.
1. **What preparation will teachers need in order to be successful in implementing the instructional program? What are your plans for ensuring that they are ready prior to the start of the school year? Who will deliver the initial professional development?**
* In early August, the eight teachers, Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning), and the director of student support will attend a workshop in New York City on active management in the EL classroom. The training is four days. In the future, any new staff member will be sent to this four day training. This is in addition to the 12 days of professional development that will be held on site in August. Jill (Jill Mirman, school designer, EL Education) and I (Lisa) will develop a work plan for those 12 days.
* During the planning period, Lisa and I will draft a professional development plan for the year. Some professional development will happen Wednesday afternoons, and some will take place during other parts of the schedule.
1. **What are the expectations for parent engagement? How will the school support and cultivate parent engagement in light of the anticipated challenges for the at-risk families targeted by the school and the potential geographic distance of some families from the school?**
* During the summer before the school opens there will be cookouts for families to get to know one another, and teachers will make home visits prior to the school opening.
* On a monthly basis there will be some type of family activity at the village: Christmas by candlelight, game nights, and celebrations of learning where students share about their expeditions. We will provide transportation to family nights.
* We will ask family members to serve as experts in learning expeditions.
* There will be a parent advisory council, and one board member will be a parent.
1. **What have board members done since we met a year ago to develop their understanding of board processes?**
* On an annual basis we will evaluate the executive director and conduct self-assessments of each board member and the board as a whole. We have to approve, monitor, and manage contracts between the school and Old Sturbridge Village.
* We are not going to get involved in the day-to-day management of the school. The executive director will report to us, and we will have a dashboard with metrics we can use to hold Jim (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director) accountable for fulfilling the mission, student performance, and the school’s financial viability.
* Over the past year Tina (Tina Krasnecky, vice president of finance, Old Sturbridge Village) has been filling us in on the finances, keeping us up to date on changes, and laying out long-term financial projections.
* We have been meeting frequently and looking at the responsibilities that we need to take on. I think that we are clearer on what those are now. We have been throwing “what if” scenarios at each other because we want to be comfortable with how we would respond in different situations.
* Since the previous interview we dug into the management contract. Old Sturbridge Village will provide services including accounting, payroll, human resources, IT support, fundraising, student recruitment, and student transportation. We have facilities contracts that include the rental space, utilities, maintenance, security, and snow removal. We also have food service contracts.
* We met with Jill (Jill Mirman, school designer, EL Education) and Old Sturbridge Village staff for a day to better understand Expeditionary Learning.
1. **[Margaret Pierce, vice chair of board of trustees, Old Sturbridge Village] Please describe the proposed executive director’s capacity to fulfill the role of executive director of the school while also serving as CEO of Old Sturbridge Village.**
* I’ve known Jim (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director) since before he joined Old Sturbridge Village. Jim is a person who can work all the time on a lot of different things. He has experience with charter schools. Jim is an educator first, with 12 years experience in an urban environment. Does he have the ability to manage both? Yes. He has boundless energy. His passion for learning, education, students, and community provides him with extra capacity to share.
* When the board of Old Sturbridge Village evaluates Jim in the future, we will take into account his work at the school. We will be on the lookout for signs of exhaustion, that he is overdoing it. We are good at pulse-taking.
1. **[Board] Please clarify what you see as the relationship between the school’s board and the board of Old Sturbridge Village.**
* We want to collaborate closely with the museum’s board. We have a contract with the museum that involves lots of points of contact, so we will have to meet with the board of Old Sturbridge Village. Once the board is up and running we need to develop formal structures for periodically interacting with the museum’s board.
1. **Please describe how the board determined that fees to be paid to Old Sturbridge Village are appropriate. The costs associated with the management contract and the Wednesday programming at Old Sturbridge Village shifted slightly to be less costly in the first few years of operation but more costly once fully enrolled. What considerations by the charter management organization and the proposed board resulted in these modifications?**
* Tina Krasnecky, vice president of finance, Old Sturbridge Village: We have gone back on forth on the development of the fee. Charging a percentage based on enrollment is not uncommon. The percentage allows the school to keep the budget balanced. In the first year the dollar amount is under $200,000 and at full capacity in year six it is under $500,000. The village is able to provide the school with a highly leveraged workforce. I have the capacity and the time to do both my village job and support the school. We think that we are providing the school with a very cost competitive service level, a high level of service for a good price.
* Board members: We think the proposed percentage will save the school $600,000 based on what it would cost to hire staff and obtain the services that will be provided. Knowing our costs based on the number of students is helpful from a budgeting perspective.
1. **Please describe the board’s process for evaluating the school leader. Is the board evaluating just the executive director, or is the board also evaluating the director of teaching and learning and the director of student support?**
* The executive director reports to the board of directors. The executive director is responsible for the director of student support and the director of teaching and learning.
* The evaluation of the executive director will involve looking at strategy and policy development, staff supervision, financial management, external relations, implementation of the accountability plan, student achievement.
1. **When you say that the director of teaching and learning and the director of student support report to Jim (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director), what does that mean to you as the governing body of the school?**
* We (the board) will hire and can fire the director of teaching and learning and the director of student support, based on Jim’s recommendation.
* We will evaluate the director of teaching and learning and the director of student support through Jim’s evaluations and the data we collect.
* The plan is that the executive director, director of teaching and learning, and director of student support will come to monthly board meetings. If we don’t like the answers Jim provides, we will have a conversation with the Old Sturbridge Village board because our contract is with them.
1. **[Jim Donahue, proposed executive director] What are your expectations for interactions and support provided by you to the director of teaching and learning and the director of student support? It is clear from the application that the director of teaching and learning is the de-facto principal of the school based on the description of responsibilities. What value do your services add to the contract? How does your role change as the director of teaching and learning develops experience?**
* Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) and her counterpart will have control of the day-to-day operation of the school from a programmatic perspective. I will be making sure that our finance, human resources, facilities, and development staff at the village are doing what they need to be doing. If things are going smoothly, then my role will shift to thinking about a high school expansion and renewal of the school’s charter. My vision is for this school to become a model for EL and for other museum schools. I hope to develop an institute that gives our faculty an opportunity to become master teachers. I want to create workforce development opportunities for parents, extending existing partnerships Old Sturbridge Village has with community organizations. I see lots of opportunities as the executive director once the school is reaching all of its goals and exceeding them.
* I will work with Lisa to establish clear goals for student performance and school culture. My vision for managing the academic program involves holding daily early morning meetings with the director of teaching and learning and the director of student support. I will also meet with them weekly to discuss broader issues. I will observe faculty meetings to see how Lisa is interacting with faculty and to assess faculty engagement. I will also look at student work to see if it is at the level we expect. With the director of student support, I will look for differentiation in classrooms.
1. **[Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning] What do you need to be effective in your role (proposed director of teaching and learning)?**
* Working with Jim (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director) I feel like I am receiving the benefits of a mentorship. He has given me confidence to take on a leadership role. I will look to his experience in dealing with parents, dealing with faculty members, and dealing with student behavior management. I will be looking to him for a lot of advice and guidance. We have a great relationship. To know that he is there as a support and our biggest cheerleader gives me peace of mind.
1. **[Board] Please describe Lisa’s (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) capacity to implement the proposed program.**
* We have been working with her for months. She interacts well with us as a board. She has the experience and personality for the position. The passion she brings to this position is contagious.
1. **[Board] Please describe the rationale for having co-directors.**
* We like that student services has its own director, because that is so critical to the whole learning process. Academics are critical, but the student services piece is as well.
1. **[Board] What is your understanding of the differences between what Jim (Jim Donahue, proposed executive director) will be doing and what Lisa (Lisa DeTora, proposed director of teaching and learning) will be doing? How will you hold them accountable for the school’s results?**
* Jim is working with us to develop the strategies that will be put in place. Lisa and the director of student support will execute those strategies.
* We will look at student enrollment. That is the overarching measure of our success—what the people in our communities want to do with their kids when they have options.
* We see EL Education as a partner with the board. EL will do two reviews every year and report to the board.
1. **Please update us on your facilities planning. Summarize the scope of the renovations that need to occur prior to the school opening, and plans to undertake those renovations.**
* Old Sturbridge Village has hired an experienced charter school architect to look at various locations in the village. One plan we are currently evaluating would involve three phases. The first phase would be ready by this August, work on the second phase would take place the following summer, and work on the third phase would take place the summer after that.
1. **Please update us on your transportation planning. What is your minimum commitment for transportation in the first year of operation?**
* We are committed to transporting students to school every day, most likely through a contract with a third party. It will not be door to door, but there will be a drop-off point in every community.