

Alignment Peoria Governing Board | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 4/21/2016 1:00 PM | Meeting location Gateway Building

Meeting called by	Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat, Ed.D	Attendees
Facilitator	Peoria Public Schools, Sydney Rogers, Alignment Nashville, Bridget French, Alignment Rockford,	Dan Adler, Jim Ardis, MacFarland Bragg, Charles Bandoian, Laraine Bryson, Emily Cahill, Beth Derry, Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat, Brent Eichelberger, Tom Fliege, Matt George, Elaine Gordon, Jeff Griffin, Tom Hammerton, Ken Hinton, Deveraux Hubbard, Ernestine Jackson, Sean Liu, Denise Moore, Andrea Parker, Fr. David Richardson, Gary Roberts, Sid Ruckriegel, Debbie Simon, Ryan Spain, Mark Spenny, Michael Stephan, David Taylor, Matt Vonachen, Dan Walther, Bob Woolsey, Girish Seshagiri, Chris Coplan, Tracey Jones
Note taker	Tracey Jones	

AGENDA TOPICS

Time allotted | 15 min. | Agenda topic Welcome & Introduction | Presenter Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat

Discussion: Dr. Kherat thanked everyone for attending the Alignment Peoria introductory meeting of the Governing Board. Dr. Kherat reported that a small working group continues to meet to develop what the Alignment model in Peoria might look like and has contracted with Alignment USA for guidance on a three month basis, which expires in May. The group represented four large stakeholder groups: business, non-profit, education and elected officials. The working group identified various leaders from a variety of stakeholder groups to today's meeting to learn more about the position on the Governing Board. The purpose of the Governing Board in the Alignment model is to oversee the Operating Board, direct education improvement project implementation and oversee the progress of Alignment Teams. Dr. Kherat invited Tom Fliege, a member of the working group, to share his experience with the Alignment journey. Mr. Fliege thanked those in attendance for being open to learn more about the Alignment process. He indicated that we all need to work together to get things done. Alignment Rockford has been very gracious to work with us to give us more guidance with this platform. Rockford is very similar to our city, but we want to have our own process and our own choices. This is why everyone is here today. The community leaders in the room have been chosen to be a part of the Governing Board. We will give them everything that they need to help with this. Alignment Nashville, now Alignment USA, and Alignment Rockford have been helping us to get to the point where we are today. Education is pivotal to our future. We have generations of children that we owe a good education.

Time allotted | 20 mins | Agenda topic Overview of Alignment | Presenter Sydney Rogers & Bridget French

Discussion: Sydney Rogers thanked everyone for the opportunity to work with Peoria. Alignment works with a lot of communities across the US and some are just not ready for this. Peoria is absolutely ready for this! We have the Mayor, business leaders, non-profits and everyone on board with this already. If Peoria takes the next steps, Bridget French from Alignment Rockford and Heather Chalos, COO, Alignment USA, would be our coaches to help us through it. A brief overview was provided on how things got started in Nashville. In Nashville, in 2002, graduation rates were down and things seemed to be crumbling. Many groups wanted to help the schools, but it was rewarding and distracting at the same time. There was no coordination. A couple of business leaders from

Nashville, philanthropists who had given money to non-profits to help the schools, realized that the small groups were not making a major impact. They went to the Superintendent with a new idea which became Alignment Nashville.

Wicked Problems – all interrelated. Poverty affects education, trauma and adverse experiences affect how children learn. In our society we have tried to isolate the problems to fix them. Actually, the problems are interrelated and are all connected. There has been a total lack of coordination. There would be a group working on career readiness over here, nutrition over here and they were not talking to each other – only to themselves. The two business leaders in Nashville knew that if they could bring everyone together they could make this work and really be impactful. The mission was to bring all of the groups together and combine their resources to make a positive impact on the schools. It is about the community supporting the students so that they are healthy and ready for school. It is about an education system throughout the community. “Each institution is autonomous and has to do its own work the way each instrument in an orchestra plays only its own part. But there is also the score, the community. And only if each individual instrument contributes to the score is there music. Otherwise there is only noise. And this...is about the score.” ~ Peter F. Drucker, 1999. When each group works alone they don’t do as much good as when they are all working together. The school districts goals and strategies are what everyone is working towards. In Nashville, you had a lot of finger pointing at the schools. The community groups were asked who was being held accountable for the students’ scores – the school district. The school district is driving the bus and we need to get on their bus and work towards its strategic plan. All of the sudden, after the finger pointing stopped, great things started to happen. We need everyone to be working together and moving in the right direction. How do you get everyone on the same agenda? Sydney and Bridget are here to show us how. Every community figures out its own way.

Alignment is a toolset – not a program – it is a way of working. There are four buckets of tools – Principles, Structure, Process and Technology. Today we are going to drill down into the Principles for Peoria.

The Principles for us are to always follow the lead of the school district. Everything we do is going to be transparent. We are going to post all minutes on the website and all meetings are open. Complete transparency. Why is this so important – because if you are the CEO of a company, you have to establish a culture in your organization. When you put a bunch of different sectors together you have to align the cultures. They may not always be in opposition, but there needs to be a cross-culture established.

Structure – is about putting in place structure that will allow you to cross pollinate and have accountability all the way across the community. The structure looks like – The Board of Directors – Operating Board – Alignment Teams. This is an unusual structure. The Alignment Teams (A-Teams) are work teams (Kindergarten readiness, Nutrition, High School, College and Career Readiness, etc. – we can choose). Nashville started with four, and now have twenty. The A-Team has a chair and vice chair – one represents the school District and one represents the community. The Chair must be a decision maker because if you set up a team that makes decisions that will affect the school district but do not have a school district decision maker as the chairperson, then it’s probably not ever going to happen. If you have chairs and vice chairs and they both sit on the operating board, the governing board probably will not get in the weeds of the work much, but will set policy agendas, remove boulders and make sure that the progress of the organization continues over time – that is what you are considering here in this room. The Operating board meets every month – the chairs and vice chairs – to come up with solutions that are not siloed, but instead are solutions that are across the whole spectrum to have peer accountability. If this group is working on 3rd grade reading and one is working on Pre-K readiness they are approving each other’s work. It is a critical arrangement.

Process – starts with Tactical planning, then engaging the broader community. This can take a few months to a few years. The bottom line is at the end of the day moving through this process, you end up changing the way the community works together period.

Technology – Collaboration tool that ties everything together. The staff that is running it manages it, tracks data, does communications, etc.

Alignment Rockford Annual Report – Bridget Nashville has been a great role model for us. This really captured the work of the team and she is happy about the number of people who wanted to give a positive quote about Alignment Rockford. It really takes a good look at what Rockford has been working on. In the report, each A-Team has a couple of pages about what they do. Nashville’s annual report is on line and each A-Team has a couple of pages.

What Peoria is looking for is change and looking at the change that has happened in Rockford. There needs to be strategic alignment, identification of resources, coordination of resources, collaboration among partners, alignment of resources and systemic change.

If you think of this as a race car – Peoria Public Schools is driving, the community is the accelerant to their success and the toolset is there to make it work.

A short video was shown regarding what great things that Alignment Nashville is doing from the community leaders who are involved in the platform. An additional short video was shown regarding where these same community leaders believe that Nashville would be without Alignment Nashville. Alignment Rockford has taken years to fully develop.

Time allotted | 1 hour 45 mins | **Agenda topic** *Development of Governing Principles* | **Presenter** *Sydney Rogers & Bridget French*

Discussion: Handout regarding the Principles that were developed for Nashville. Rockford and Nashville have the same operational principles and they help to create the culture of transparency and makes sure that everyone is there for the same reason. Rockford added the principles of teamwork which are a little bit different in that they guide the team members to make sure they are doing what is best for the group. These are referred to a lot – one of the ones that is referred to the most is “all agendas are left at the door.” It is important that we are all working towards reaching our long term goal that aligns with the strategic plan of the Peoria Public School District and not looking at “how can I leverage this to benefit my organization?” The operating principles come out of the organizational principles.

Movement to small groups to help everyone work through what our principles should be for Peoria. The hand out was given of the principles from Rockford and Nashville. It takes two to three years to get this up and running. Work in groups of three – choose three to five principles for Peoria and secure a basic understanding for what Alignment means for Peoria. Because we want everyone on the same page, each group will explain their principles and why they are important to Peoria. We will then prioritize them all. The results are below:

Participants worked in groups of three to develop proposed Organizational Principles for “Alignment Peoria.” Participants then voted on their top three principles. Results:

of Votes - PRINCIPLES

14 Focus on Peoria Public Schools equals regional benefit.

8 We will work as a unified community with relationships based on trust, leaving personal agendas at the door.

6 The outcome of our work is to prepare all children to be college and/or career ready.

6 Projects will be based on data and community research to achieve specific measurable outcomes.

5 Our focus is on meeting the needs of the whole child.

5 Abandonment of ego, turf and personal agendas.

- 4 All team work and outcomes must be designed to achieve all Peoria Public Schools' strategic plan and goals.
- 4 While targeting academics, we are focusing on the whole child and the family.
- 3 The work is comprehensive and multifaceted, designed to enable student and community success.
- 2 Govern with openness, transparency and collaboration.
- 2 The work is generational.
- 2 Always support the Peoria Public Schools' strategic plan.
- 2 Trust.
- 2 Transparency.
- 1 The outcome of work is to enable children to be successful.
- 1 The work is designed to support the Peoria Public Schools' strategic plans.
- 1 The work is focused on those who most need support in order to be successful.
- 1 We work with a spirit of unity.
- 1 Emphasis on the child holistically.
- 1 Family involvement.
- 1 Appropriate resource allocation.
- 1 Unity.
- 1 While we are targeting academics, we are focusing on the whole child, especially those who are most in need of support.
- 1 The work is designed to support the strategic plan.
- 1 Agendas of individuals and organizations are left at the door.
- 0 Agree to speak in a common language; speak with one voice.
- 0 Focus on at-risk students.
- 0 Children's needs first.
- 0 Unity—no silos.
- 0 Trust & open communication.

0 Agendas of individuals and/or organizations are left at the door to maintain highest level of trust, unity and integrity.

0 The work is inclusive and transparent.

Group feedback:

- * We have several initiatives already in place. When Rockford and Nashville were launched, what happened to those initiatives? They are layered into Alignment. We are aware there are collective activities happening in every community bringing people and organizations to the table. Alignment is the table in the middle, convening all the tables so that we can achieve our long term outcomes together.
- * Need an inventory of things happening in the community so we're not duplicating anything already happening.
- * If we can figure out a way to pull in the same direction, we can do amazing things. There has to be a framework to enable that to happen.
- * Exciting opportunity to bring things together
- * Not a program; a platform—need to ensure we're communicating this well. May be seen as “flavor of the day.” Should be seen as a platform to bring all of the initiatives together.
- * Can we create a culture in which “what’s good for us is good for me?”
- * How is career prep and 21st Century skills included in these efforts? Pathways to Prosperity would layer right into your Alignment efforts.

These will be distributed for approval and adoption by the Governing Board as we move forward. These will become very important foundational principles for our group. This is a just the first part of the work. We have started to show the most important principles for our work.

Discussion regarding the importance of this group to understand what is meant when we talk about collective impact. This was a struggle in Nashville for the first 5 years. Everyone was doing collective action. Everyone would get together to work on a project, but then 3 – 4 years down the road there was nothing to say this is what happened because of this work. Nashville knew they had to do an outcome based approach to be able to track the work so that they would be able to see where they wanted to go and know when they got there. We are going to see a glimpse of the methodologies today. It is incumbent on the leadership of this initiative to establish those regional, big hairy audacious outcomes. What do we at the region want to say about this? What is it that we want to accomplish? This is the responsibility of the Governing Board.

Time allotted | 30 mins | Agenda topic Long Term Outcomes | Presenter Heather Chalos

Discussion: This is getting to the core of why we are all here. Everyone has ideas of what we want to achieve as a community, our long term goals and we already have some ideas of what those things are. Our Alignment Peoria group will identify and assess those things as we move into that work.

A goal without a plan is just a wish. We want to have a toolset that we can use to get to the goals. Video presentation from Kid President regarding writing a letter to the future which is really what we are doing. We looked at Nashville’s long-term outcomes – impact graduation rate, increase number of students who are ready for

college, increase the number of students that are ready for careers, impact community prosperity and impact children's health and wellness in our community. These are similar to some Peoria ideas. Other ideas from other Alignment cities are: improve student achievement for every student, increase civic/community/family involvement in all schools.

Wicked problems – talking out things that we want to change and impact – the way is to get to it from a lot of angles. It will take multiple strategies to get to the issues that are all connected. Increasing graduation rate: different groups are working in their own way toward that outcome. The high school team is looking at the climate and culture – the parent engagement team is looking at decreasing discipline referrals and attendance – the elementary team is looking at math and English proficiency – the nutrition team is looking at increasing community support of students and families – the adolescent sexual responsibility group is looking at decreasing the number of students dropping out because they became parents. All of these different things are happening with the same long-term goal in mind. We work backwards – with the end in mind. Once you know where you are trying to go you plan how to get here. Work through short and midterm outcomes to get to the long-term outcome. It's the impact. In working through our tool set and working through the process we are able to actually pay attention to the things that we can actually do, the things that we can measure to show that you are successful, etc.

To reach the long-term outcome, we have to reach the midterm outcome. To reach the midterm outcome we have to reach the short-term outcome. Example – Increasing college readiness (Long term), team put together organizations, community partners, businesses, principals and staff to work together to reach this. They decided they needed to focus on the students who are scoring a 21 or higher on the ACT. What do they need to do to get to that number? Maybe if we increase student preparedness for the ACT then in turn we will have more students scoring 21 or higher which in turn increases college readiness. They are providing personal ACT prep for students who scored 17 – 20 on the practice ACT. The belief is that if they can get the students some personalized attention they can get them up to a 21. So a \$12.00 investment per student in this program + collaborative alignment support (getting volunteers, giving training to them and showing them what to do – come in certain times to work with the students) = \$15,000 per student in Nashville. It took a little money and a lot of community support.

Another activity – thinking about Alignment teams that will be needed and what each team would do to reach the long-term outcome of increasing the graduation rate. Each team was assigned something different and had to explain what they would do to work towards the long-term outcome of increasing the graduation rate.

Behavior Health – decreasing suspensions & expulsions – find the students who need the SEL services

High School Team – early understanding of options (students need to be exposed to different ways they can go after school)

Health Services – In order to increase graduation rates we need to decrease the number of sick days for the students – target the students who seem to have medical issues (education services, etc.)

School nutrition - Talked about food for kids at breakfast, lunch and on the weekend – talked about partnerships with grocery stores; introduce nutrition programs with other community programs, urban gardens, healthy vending machines, etc.

Middle School – targeting the 8th graders who are not functioning at grade level – identify the students who are not on target – recruit highly qualified reading teachers to help with summer programs so that as the students hit 9th grade they are ready.

Elementary School – Improve reading ability at grade 1 – work with United Way, pre-K programs

Parent Engagement - Parent University with the local Universities to provide free access to parents to show why their engagement is so important to their students' lives – improve parental involvement by 25% (more explanation by Sydney regarding the Parent University they have established)

This is an example of what our community impact would look like; having all of the teams working together for the long-term outcome. With multiple strategies working we have a much better chance of impacting our long-term outcomes. All of the things connect to each other.

This group, the Governing Board, will be the group that decides what the community long-term outcomes will be. That is how you will decide what everyone is working towards and decide what your teams should be to get to that goal.

Time allotted | 10 mins | **Agenda topic** *Wrap Up/Next Steps* | **Presenter** *Sydney Rogers*

Discussion: The next steps are for you to follow up with this meeting in the next month. Nashville is available to answer any questions that we may have. They will be back to help us build this initiative. The directions for the Principles are to decide what we think is most important. Once the Governing Board has been decided on, they will need to adopt the principles.

At the next meeting there needs to be discussion as to what the long-term outcomes should be.

We have a short term contract with Alignment so we will need to get this started if we are interested in it.

Comments: We have several initiatives going on right now. When Nashville launched it, did a lot of those initiatives come into the Alignment organization? It is seen in every community – multiple initiatives. When Nashville started it was a novelty, but now it is the thing to do. When we start to have teams form, then we pull in the partners. We are not inviting anyone to our table; we are setting a table for everyone to be a part of.

This is a process not a program.

Has there been anyone who has refused to participate? Yes, there have been.

All of the ingredients are already here, but we often are not aware of each other. Is this approach a viable one with everyone in the room? Peoria Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat, is driving the bus. The object is for us to find a way for us to do what we do better. How do we work to accomplish this together? Can we create a culture in which people can we check our agendas at the door, don't worry about their turf and are not executing personal agendas? Can create a culture in which what is good for us is good for me?

We will reconvene as a group soon.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50pm