

ORACLE CHARTER SCHOOL

888 Delaware Avenue

Buffalo, New York 14209

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday, May 4, 2017

Board Co-Chairs Jacqueline Hollins and Ramone Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

The following individuals were present:

Trustees - James McLeod, Bryan Donohue, Joseph Costantini, Jacqueline Hollins, John Whitty, Evin Conyer, Divitta Alexander, Ramone Alexander, Maureen Ludwig, Thomas Bailey, Ron Stewart, Susan Hakala.

Administration/Teaching Staff - Janet Barnes, Dara Seeley, Ellen Connell, Cara Monaco, Tim Schosek.

Legal-Steve Polowitz.

The following *Trustees* were not present – Vivian Logan, Susanna Schenk.

Commented [S1]: Were they excused??

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations, although KXD Consultants were present during the Executive Session and made a presentation.

MINUTES

Upon motion by Joseph Costantini, seconded by Bryan Donohue, the meeting minutes from the April 6, 2017 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

Janet Barnes, Interim Head of School report:–

- a. She has been preparing for the Charter Schools Institute (CSI) visit to the school scheduled for 15-16 May;
- b. Discussed Dr. Sheffield's visit (KXD consultant), the recommendations that were made, and the plan to begin implementing the recommendations;
- c. Discussed several staff resignations and plans for replacement;

- d. Status of seniors - all parents of seniors had been contacted by telephone or met in person; "At risk" letters will continue to be sent to students up to June 26 (graduation); 75% of the approximately 50 seniors in the cohort are passing.
- e. Graduation for OCS seniors will be on Monday, June 26, 2017 at Kleinhans. Ms. Barnes will set up a system of teacher monitors to help maintain order at the graduation.

A request was made by the Board for accurate data on the exact number of students in the senior cohort and the expected graduation rate for 2017. There was discussion about a parent "contract" (non-enforceable) for the purpose of memorializing parent commitment to their child's education, with the goal being to create the expectation that parent communication and accessibility is a critical ingredient for student success.

Ms. Ellen Connell – Director of Student Life report:

- a. There will be a National Honor Society induction with a handful of students who achieved a grade percentage of 85% or better.
- b. Prom planning in full swing.
- c. Ms. Evin Conyer, Parent Trustee, will be included in the group that is updating the Code of Conduct and the Student Handbook. The new handbook will be sent home with both incoming Freshmen and all other students when they enter the OCS building on their first day. Acknowledgement of receipt of the handbook should also be part of the rollout of the new product.

Ms. Dara Seeley – Director of Curriculum and Instruction report: she, has been working on observations and evaluations, as well as coaching on using data to inform instruction.

Ms. Chantele Thompson – Director of Community Relations and Outreach – no report, was not present at the meeting.

BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Executive Committee has not met for several months because of additional meetings scheduled to prepare for the CSI visit and work with KXD.

Academic Committee did not meet in April but will meet on May 9, 2017. There will be a special meeting of the Board on May 11 in preparation the CSI visit on May 16. The Board is scheduled to meet with the CSI team at 5:30 PM.

Discussion about Oracle Charter School Building Corporation. The Board decided that the new directors of the Building Corp will be Ramone Alexander, Jacqueline Hollins, and Thomas Bailey.

Finance Committee - John Whitty, Treasurer, noted that the OCS cash balance was up, due to receipt of state aid. The budget for the 2017-18 school year is being worked on and will be finalized in time for Board approval prior to the end of June. The Finance Committee is working with the Administration to finalize the Budget

BOARD BUSINESS

At 6:55 PM upon **motion** by James McLeod, seconded by Ramone Alexander, the Board unanimously agreed to move into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues. KXD consultants Ken Peterson and Melissa Brinson were invited to attend the Executive session. At 8:20 PM James McLeod **moved** to come out of Executive Session. Tom Bailey seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Upon **motion** by James McLeod, seconded by Bryan Donohue, the board agreed unanimously to empower Co-Chairs Jacqueline Hollins and Ramone Alexander to negotiate an agreement with Ms. Janet Barnes to become the permanent Head of School. Given her performance since taking over as interim, her understanding of the challenges facing the School, the noticeable change in the School culture and her willingness and desire to continue, the Board felt very strongly that naming Ms. Barnes as permanent HoS was the right move at this time to help ensure the School's stability and improvement. ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) Include Ms. Evin Conyer in the group working on the Code of Conduct and the Student Handbook.
- 2) Communicate to students, parents, faculty, and staff that the Board is taking steps to stabilize the school and build consumer confidence.
- 3) Refine the monthly report that is prepared to keep the Board informed of key metrics and school developments, including accurate data on cohorts and progress toward graduation. Use models from other schools that have mastered effective reporting.

Upon motion by Ron Stewart, seconded by Maureen Ludwig, the Board unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, June 1, 2017 at 6 PM.

Sincerely,

Susan Hakala

Secretary to the Board of Trustees

