

ORACLE CHARTER SCHOOL  
888 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14209

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
Thursday December 1, 2016

The following individuals were present: Trustees - Joseph Costantini, Jacqueline Hollins, Tom Bailey, Maureen Ludwig, Ron Stewart, James McLeod, Susan Hakala; Administration - John Ashwood, Dara Seeley, Chantele Thompson, Amanda Kenefick, and Courtney Hawkins. Legal - Steve Polowitz. Vivian Logan, Ramone Alexander, Divitta Alexander - Trustees, were not present.

Non-voting new Trustees Evin Conyer, John Whitty, and Bryan Donohue were not present. Non-voting new Trustee Susanna Schenk was present.

Board Chairman Joe Costantini called the meeting to order at 5:55 P.M.

MINUTES: Upon motion by James McLeod, seconded by Maureen Ludwig, the draft minutes from the November 3, 2016 meeting were approved.

PRESENTATIONS:

An Oracle Charter School student shared the results of research on discipline and school culture she was directed to complete among students, teachers, and staff. In addition she provided her personal reflection on the need for respect. Ms. Jacqueline Hollins noted for the record that this presentation may have been inappropriate.

DISCUSSION:

This spurred a 45-minute discussion on discipline and mutual respect in the school community, with focus on behavioral issues in the school. It was decided that a future special meeting will be dedicated to the recurring theme of discipline and school culture issues at OCS. All agreed that it is an ongoing issue that must be systematically and consistently addressed at all levels and that everyone must work to make the school culture more conducive to mutual respect and trust. Once the student Code of Conduct review/rewrite is completed, a mandatory orientation will occur in which students will be told what is expected, and teachers and staff will be expected to ensure consistent enforcement. Professional development of teachers and staff will also focus on this, and additional directed resources may be sought to augment efforts to address the recurring theme of discipline issues at the school.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Mr. John Ashwood, Head of School, provided the HoS and Directors' report in written format. Highlights included 366 total students enrolled, staff vacancies in Science, COSI, counseling, and math; 2 SPED teachers to start in December and an ENL teacher will begin in January. Director of Student Life, Ms. Connell, was not present. There were statistics provided on removals from class and reasons, formal suspension

hearings, phone submission compliance, students working with School Social Worker and with Mediation specialist; update on athletics and clubs, and HERO positive behavior management program. On 11/30/16 Ms. Connell attended a conference on Alternatives to Suspension. Ms. Dara Seeley, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, noted that professional development has continued to focus on alignment of lesson plans to OCS template and midterm assessments. Ms. Seeley has been working with the Academic Excellence Committee to refining the "Data Dashboard" prior to the committee's meetings. In regard to Marking Period 1, 11th grade English students took an entire Regents Exam with two timed writing tasks. Global 2 had a 75% pass rate at MP 1, and in U. S. History, the teacher believes that there will be such a high pass rate at midyear that the classes will move on to Civics for the 2nd half of the year. Math at OCS is on an upward track; the bar is raising as time goes on. Ms. Chantele Thompson, Director of Community Relations and Outreach, noted that the new school website has been launched. 70 parents attended Parent Teacher conference. Only 22 responses were received for the Parent Survey. There was a first monthly "Lunch with Leaders", which is a student and parent engagement program. Ms. Thompson made an appeal to support 10-15 students who want to participate in a service trip to the Dominican Republic in spring 2017. 21 female students are participating in the Eniola Sisters mentoring program with 17 community leaders. There will be various efforts to support students in need at Christmas. Teachers are contributing to food baskets for a Christmas meal and breakfast, and the Board will raise money for warm weather gear, perhaps for every OCS student (depending on how much is raised).

#### NEW BUSINESS:

It was noted that the by-laws were out of date and did not reflect the new administrative structure of the school with 3 Directors serving under the HoS, for example. The by-laws are being revised, with notable change in the manner in which the parent Trustee is chosen. The revised by-laws will be sent out electronically prior to the January 2017 Board meeting, at which time they will be voted on for approval.

A formal, written resolution was introduced to to appoint Mr. John Whitty to be the new Treasurer of the Board. Judge Jim McLeod moved to accept the resolution and Joe Costantini seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved by vote. He will be able to carry out the functions of the Treasurer once his appointment to the Board has been approved by CSI. The signed resolution will be sent to CSI for its records.

Tom Bailey moved to appoint Bryan Donohue to the school's Board of Trustees, subject to CSI's approval. Ron Stewart seconded the motion, and the Board passed the motion unanimously. Mr. Donohue's application will be submitted to CSI for final approval, as required in order for him to become an official voting member of the Board of Trustees.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:17 P.M. Maureen Ludwig moved that the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Jacqueline Hollins seconded the motion. At 7:30 P. M. Maureen Ludwig moved to come out of Executive Session. Judge Jim McLeod seconded the motion. All were in favor.

At 7:30 P.M. the meeting was adjourned. The next Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 5, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan R. Hakala  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

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