

ORACLE CHARTER SCHOOL

888 Delaware Avenue

Buffalo, New York 14209

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday, July 6, 2017

Board Co-Chairs Jacqueline Hollins and Ramone Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

The following individuals were present:

Trustees - James McLeod, Jacqueline Hollins, John Whitty, Ramone Alexander, Maureen Ludwig, Thomas Bailey, Susan Hakala, Bryan Donohue, Vivian Logan.

Administration/Teaching Staff - Janet Barnes, Dara Seeley, Ellen Connell, Chantele Thompson.

Legal – Steve Polowitz.

Consultant – Ken Peterson

The following *Trustees* were not present – Evin Conyer, Divitta Alexander, Susanna Schenk, Ron Stewart.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by James McLeod, seconded by John Whitty, the Board unanimously voted to approve the June 15, 2017 Regular Board meeting minutes, as well as the minutes from the Special Meeting on June 27, 2017.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. Ken Peterson, KXD Project Administrator, noted that the Quality School Review was complete and that corrective actions were being undertaken. The Five Year Budget Outlook was also being formulated. Current focus is on The Assistant Head of School Search. Initial meetings with key candidates will be held on Friday, 14 July. Additional focus on the human capital strategy is centered on engagement of higher educational institutions, restructuring the OCS organizational structure, designing professional development (PD) for fall 2017, and fueling the candidate recruitment pipeline for teachers and administrators.

Mr. Peterson also presented in detail the renewal timeline and tasks for submission of OCS's charter renewal, due August 15, 2017.

- B. Bill Sunderlin, OCS Facilities Manager, presented and explained a Fact Sheet, covering key areas of maintenance of the Goodyear Mansion, which houses the school, including heating/cooling, roofing, lighting, student desks, cameras/security, historic preservation, capital improvements for 2017-18, etc. He also provided a summary of janitorial services bids and explained facilities staff coverage and its impact on school sanitation throughout the school day, in response to Board concerns about cleanliness at the school. Judge McLeod made a recommendation, with which Board members agreed, that a Facilities committee be formed to assist the Board with oversight responsibilities for facility/building related issues. Mr. Sunderlin provided email addresses: wsunderlin@yahoo.com and bsunderlin@OCS.org.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

Janet Barnes, Head of School Report–

- a. Reported in detail on graduation information for the 2013 Cohort. Of the 59 students, OCS had a total of 37 graduates, which gave OCS a graduation rate of 63% as of June 2017. OCS will offer summer school, and some students will need to report to summer school through the Buffalo Public Schools. Ms. Barnes is hopeful that the OCS graduation rate can get to 75% following the summer school session.
- b. Discussed the 2017-18 school calendar, noting that August 21 is reserved as PD day for teachers. Ms. Barnes also provided dates for the departments to engage in curriculum writing, and she updated a draft copy of the revamped school organizational chart and reporting lines. She noted that the Code of Conduct is 70 pages, and it will be condensed for parents and students.

Dara Seeley, Director of Curriculum and Instruction-

- a. Noted that NYS Regents/finals were administered in June. Data is forthcoming.
- b. The Cullen Foundation grant application to fund a Safe and Civil Schools Program is nearing completion.
- c. Commented that curriculum writing has started and will be the focus in August, starting with the Social Studies Department on July 10.

Ellen Connell, Director of Student Life-

- a. Reported on student behavior management statistics, including year-end data.
- b. Noted successful graduation ceremony, Senior Prom, National Honor Society induction of 4 students, Art Show, and recognition of outstanding foreign language students.

Chantele Thompson, Director of Community Relations and Outreach-

- a. Ms. Thompson provided a written report covering social media awareness and branding of the school, partnership with ABLE Ameri-Corps program, the College Simulation Experience, need for a functioning school library, volunteer hours requirement of 20 hours per student and how to record progress in student service learning.
- b. Enrollment. 74 new confirmations of attendance had been received, with less than half returning paperwork. Additional recruitment will be taking place throughout the summer.
- c. In response to considerable discussion among the Trustees and Ms. Thompson about expanding college preparation skill building to the entire student body, , Ms. Thompson was tasked with coordinating with the HoS, other Directors, and with the Guidance Department in order to bring a comprehensive plan to the table at the August 2017 Board meeting. The college prep priority should be teacher-initiated and addressed daily throughout the school year and should start with students at the beginning of freshman year.
- d. The issue of how to record student community service was tabled for the time being. Board members provided some suggestions.

BOARD BUSINESS

Ms. Hollins:

- Noted that the organizational chart will need to be approved at the next meeting.
 - Said there would be updates to the OCS website.
 - Provided key dates: August 1, Annual Report, August 15, Charter Renewal, September 15, Accountability Review Progress Plan due.
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- Audit/Finance Committee: Mr. Whitty, Treasurer, talked the Board through the OCS financial statements for the eleven months that ended on May 31, 2017, commenting on such issues as the current assets, current ratio, significant variances, etc.

- Academic Excellence Committee: There was no update
- Governance Committee: Mr. Bailey, Chairman, reported on a potential new Trustee, Pastor George Nichols. Ms. Hollins proposed another lead for the Board, which the Governance Committee will pursue.
- BOARD ACTIONS:
 - a. Upon motion by Tom Bailey, seconded by Vivian Logan, the Board unanimously approved formulation of a specific contract for a new boiler for the school building, including asbestos abatement, not to exceed a total cost of \$28,000, subject to approval by counsel and final electronic review by the Board.
 - b. Upon motion by Thomas Bailey, seconded by Jacqueline Hollins, the Board unanimously approved MMA's bid for janitorial services, subject to legal counsel approval of contract. Upon motion by Jacqueline Hollins, seconded by Vivian Logan, the Board unanimously approved the 2017-18 Oracle Charter School calendar, which denotes total Charter days of 188, total teacher days of 195, and total students days of 184.

Upon motion by Bryan Donohue, seconded by James McLeod, the Board unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM.

The next Board meeting will be held on August 3, 2017.

Sincerely,

Susan R. Hakala
Secretary to the Board of Trustees