

## **NOCCS Board Minutes November 18, 2015**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of North Oakland Community Charter School was held on November 18, 2015 at 6 pm at the School. The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm.

The following members of the Board were present:

Stephen Ajani, Stephen Fox, Juliana Germak, Ann Gordon, Sahra Halpern, Tracy Hanna, Mariah Landers, Kristen McClusky, Pamela Rich, Luis Rodriguez, Rachel Vyda-Venning, Lakisha Young

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Minutes**

Board members provided edits to the September and October minutes. Luis moved to approve the September minutes, and Sahra seconded the motion. There were 11 votes in favor, one abstention, and zero no votes. Rachel moved to approve the October minutes, and Kristen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **Head of School Update**

Board members asked questions about the Head of School report.

Mr. Ajani explained his observation that managing EDP takes quite a lot of both Ms. Gomez's and Ms. Mercer's time, and that he would prefer their time was more focused on their roles during the school day. Mr. Ajani plans to talk with them and the FTO about identifying an outside vendor to run EDP. He would like to do an RFP to identify approximately 5 interested vendors from which to choose. He will solicit FTO and family input in this decision. Board members provided the following resources: Alameda County Office of Education has excellent after school resource information. Two well known vendors in Oakland are the JCC and Adventure Time.

Mr. Ajani raised concerns about the current Elevate staffing process and would like to revise that process. A second Elevate staff member has resigned. Current Elevate staff members work 9-6. This is a long day, especially given their salary, plus they miss some of the Elevate training their colleagues get to attend. Ms. Germak said that her preference would be to have them there during the school day if there was a choice between during school or after care. Mariah recommended establishing a relationship with Teach for America, saying that she has been impressed with what they're doing and that they do communities of practice. Mr. Ajani said he will connect with them.

The Board also discussed whether the teacher intern salaries are too low (\$17/hr plus paying for their participation in the BATI program).

An eighth grader has applied for an open 8th grade spot. He is moving from Vallejo and is the cousin of a current NOCCS student. As a result of outreach Mr. Ajani is doing in the community, several families have expressed interest in coming to tour the school.

Mr. Ajani announced that he has applied for a \$10K Teach for America Alumni Integration Grant to research ways to use blended learning to increase math scores. He, Mia and Tracy met with Brian Greenberg, CEO of Silicon Schools. Brian toured NOCCS and they discussed innovative ways of using technology in the classroom as a way to give teachers more time to personalize learning as well as more real time data on student performance. He talked about it as a way of thinking about increasing the number of students we serve and making the NOCCS model more effective. Luis said that he has connections to Stanford and other organizations that provide pro bono consulting and that he would be happy to make connections for Mr. Ajani based on his interest in getting consulting help with reexamining NOCCS's model to make it more sustainable based on feedback from Brian. Mr. Ajani will work on defining this concept in more detail.

Mr. Ajani discussed that NOCCS' underserved populations (AA, Latino, FRL) are growing the fastest. NOCCS needs to address this quickly, have the right assessments and feedback, and the right fit teacher in every classroom. Of the ten lead teachers, five need significant amount of support to run smoothly, and the other five need support to move the next level. The coaching load is huge and Mr. Ajani is working to bring on another coach.

### **SBAC Report**

Mr. Ajani presented preliminary data from the SBAC results. There is no comparison for these results because it is the first time it was administered. NOCCS is outperforming the state and three charter schools have asked to visit us to see the middle school as a result of our ELA scores. There is a discrepancy between our Illuminate and Power School data which is making it difficult to analyze subgroup data. Mr. Ajani is working to address this and will be contracting with Ed Tech for additional data support services. Ms. Germak said that the low third grade scores may be the result of the lack of test prep time and due to it being their first time taking this type of test. She also recommend that the test be done once a week rather than daily to reduce the classroom disruption caused.

### **Finance Updates**

Sahra shared that we received a notice from California School Finance Authority stating that we have not met the eligibility threshold for free or reduced-price meals required for the award of SB 740 funds, which subsidize NOCCS' rent payments. We were awarded \$121,000.00 for the 15-16 school year; but since the free and reduced meal numbers for our zoned attendance school (Emerson ES) has fallen below 70% we are being asked to reimburse the State. This is not the first time NOCCS has run into this issue, but it is the first time the California School Finance Authority has been in charge of the process. We are working with the Charter School Development Center and Ed Tech to draft a letter of appeal. We believe we have a strong case

for keeping the funds. However, if we are unsuccessful, we will have to pay the \$121,000 by Dec 15th. In that case, Mr. Ajani will ask the Board to consider requesting additional funds from the PEC to pay for the gap.

Mr. Ajani explained that we may need to spend more on Special Education this year. This is because we have more needs than anticipated, including three potential new IEPs and more requests for evaluations. NOCCS may be able to get through this year with the current funding level and may need more for next year. Mr. Ajani wants to make sure that Christine is set up for success for retention purposes. The increase would be in the \$20-\$40K range. Online services for special education are available and will be considered as an option for support.

### **Committee Updates**

**Personnel:** The committee would like to focus on three core areas: staff handbook & policies, staff exit survey, head of school evaluation

**Technology:** There are not sufficient members of the committee to make decisions. The committee would like to add teacher representatives from the upper and lower school to its membership, as well as a parent and a student. It's important that technology is integrated with curriculum and doesn't just focus on devices. Technology should be tied to instruction on both the student and system side. Currently NOCCS doesn't have the right systems and has a very part time support system. Ideas include developing a 3-5 year instructional plan, giving teachers devices as a perk for retention.

**Development:** Participation in the annual fund by the Board is at 88 percent. We are starting in much better shape for this year's Annual fund. We currently have \$31,500 pledged (\$23,500 from the Board), leaving \$48,500 more to raise of the total \$80K. However, most of our big donors have now pledged so the rest of the funds will need to be raised by small donations.

### **Strategic Planning**

The Board discussed the value of incorporating the Strategic Plan goals into the Head of School evaluation process.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Ann Gordon, Secretary

### **To Dos:**

The following action items were identified during this Board meeting:

- Board Chairs to follow up with parent who made the public comment on math at prior board meeting.
- Personnel committee to work on policy change for vacation time for administrative staff.
- Mr. Ajani will provide additional information on the Ed Tech contract for data support to the Board.

- Mr. Ajani will provide a high level SBAC data summary at the next Board meeting and list the steps being taken to address data discrepancies as well as student performance.