

NOCCS Board Minutes
June 21, 2017

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of North Oakland Community Charter School was held on **June 21, 2017 at 6 pm** at the School. The meeting was called to order at **6:05 pm**.

The following members of the Board were present: Stephen Ajani, Raja Antony, Leslie Bell, Mia Birdsong, Mariah Landers, Tracy Hanna, Devon King-Neece, Melissa McDonald, Luis Rodriguez, Sahra Halpern and Rachel Vyda-Venning.

Absent: Joy Sherrod

Guests: David Bond (Dean of Operations and Enrollment), Vesna Regjo (NOCCS Parent), Alexandra Armstead (NOCCS Parent), Jeanna Penn (New Board Member beginning 8/2017), Dewayne Walton (New Board Member beginning 8/2017)

Public Comment

Vesna Regjo (mother of 2nd grade student) spoke expressing concerns about her daughter's class including losing recess time and lunch time and classroom management. She and others expressed their concerns in email to the teacher and head of school but did not receive a response from the head of school. (Close of Public comments at 6:09)

Thank yous and Goodbyes

The chairs expressed appreciation to the board members who are leaving including Rachel, Mia and Tracy.

Their advice for new board members:

Rachel: I wish I had come out saying what I wanted to out the gate. To contribute my full self.
Mia: Being on board is deeply rewarding and a lot of work. Jump in and lead if someone is not leading something. Don't wait to be told what to do.
Tracy: It's easy to get burned out if you jump in and lead everything. Bring your cohort mates with you. Sometimes hard for the co-chairs to have to uphold everyone.

Shout out's:

Mia and Rachel for serving 4 year terms and Tracy and Mia for serving as co-chairs.

Minutes

Leslie made a motion to approve the May minutes. Raja seconded the motion. There were 8 votes in favor: Stephen, Raja, Leslie, Luis, Devon, Melissa, Rachel, Tracy. None opposed.
Abstentions: Mia and Mariah.

Reopen Public Comments

Leslie made a motion to reopen public comments, Luis seconded. Unanimous board approval. Reopened at 6:15.

Guest Introductions of new board members Jeanna Penn and Dwayne Walton.

Alexandra Armstead (Parent of 7th grader, 4th grader and 2nd grader) spoke about why her eldest is leaving NOCCS and how middle school has been rough. The process, staffing, the options lacking in Jr. high have cause reason for us to decide that it's best to give her an additional year at a different school where she might thrive. Also here because I have felt like the school is going a different direction and a direction that is not what I knew of the school and/or wanted to be a part of when I choose it. I'm here to voice that. There are families that are disappointed by where we are at. Just want to state that there are concerns and that I've spoken to many families about that.

Clarifying question from board: Could you explain what you feel has changed? Ms Armstead answered "I'm assuming that, it's all in writing what the school was to look like. TFU amongst other things. Those ideas that existed when we started the school don't stand today. I see those changes. My children see the changes and so I understand we are under a different admin and different ideas but my understanding is that those beliefs would continue on regardless of who was in charge."

Clarifying Question from Board: Could you give us some examples of what you've seen? Ms. Armstead answered that Peacemaking was an area that had changed a lot. She feels that "Children are a lot more hostile than they once were. As far as working with children, how that should be worked through, I don't feel like it's been used or focused on anymore. Children working out issues doesn't exist anymore." (Public comments closed at 6:22 pm.)

State of School Report

Mr. Ajani shared staff hires including Alex Feinstein for Coding, Community Engagement, HR background and Vicky Brescher for facilities work. He's still searching for Seedlings and new K/3 teacher interns. He discussed setting goals for next year including organizational goals, committee goals and separate internal goals.

Mr. Ajani shared that the Santa Fe CAN is looking for a partner to open a school that would serve T/K through 5th grade in the Santa Fe school building. There is a Request for Information available for us to answer and they've asked us to participate. They have funds for designing a school. Want to go to OUSD with their partner next spring and open fall of 2019. This is a potential growth opportunity for NOCCS. Which aligns closely with our school values. The Santa Fe CAN prefers it be a district school with a lot of autonomy. The board discussed the background of the project including when Santa Fe closed (3 years ago) we identified that as an opportunity for NOCCS to grow but we didn't push hard enough to explore what it would mean to get into shape to do that. Board discussion around an internal group to discuss the opportunity, determining if this is a good organization to partner with, the RFI response is due July 21st with the start date of the school being September 2019, and board members were all invited to comment on the RFI draft or join that working group.

Local Control and Accountability Plan

Mr. Ajani submitted another draft the LCAP report. It's due July 1st. The board discussed the need for bundling data and making the TFU consistent. Tracey moved to approve the LCAP with the criteria that the delegating committee reviews the final version before it's submitted on July 1st. Unanimous approval by the board, no abstentions.

Finance Updates

EdTech presented the May financial update presentation including an update on 17-18 state budget: Governor is approving more money for LCAP which is even better than what was projected. This is still the lowest increase in the last five years but it will be \$140 increase per student to \$1,117 per student. We are projecting an operating income of 59K. STRS going up to 19% by 2021...need to plan for these increases.

2017-2018 Budget Discussion

Board discussion regarding Operating Funds and PEC rent, the board confirmed we are maximizing the money we can get for rent/from the PEC. The biggest uncertainty for next year is the increase in enrollment and making sure we met the ADA goals. If we come up short on ADA it will greatly affect the budget. Board also discussed Capital Campaign reserves and plan for how to spend it, original goals were Professional Development, Technology, Infrastructure and Development. That is money that's helping out bottom line. It's not earmarked except for technology because we want to do matching grants. Board needs to approve the use of capital campaign funds. The Special Education reserves look ok even considering increased enrollment.

The board discussed other items including line items for FTO with the agreement there would be separate line items and resource codes for meetings, speakers, events and teacher and staff appreciation. The question was raised whether we need to give guidelines on the expenses but the board felt we didn't need to get into that level of detail.

The board discussed changes relating to positions that would not be continued next year (such as Dean of Students) and money set aside for teacher coaching like home visits, and going above and beyond. Mr. Ajani stated we would be saving money in the long haul because we might not need 2/3 teacher intern or a 6-8 teacher intern. In addition the dean funds will be split into teacher funds. The board questioned the areas for consultants and Mr Ajani stated that Teachers bounced back and forth between this line item.

The board discussed whether the enrollment increases were enough to cover operational expenses and determined that the increases are appropriate yet small.

Devon moves to approve the 2017-2018 Budget from Devon; Tracey seconds the motion. Unanimous board approval, no abstentions.

Luis moves to approve Application for title funding will be submitted to receive funds; Leslie seconds the motion. Unanimous board approval, no abstentions.

Luis moves to Approval for Prayer protection and approval for homeless ed policy need to be approved. Leslie seconds the motion. Unanimous board approval, no abstentions.

Mia motions to approve the EPA resolution. Leslie seconds the motion. Unanimous board approval, no abstentions.

Academic Vision

Mr. Ajani presented his draft Academic Vision to the board and plans to share the Academic Vision with the staff through pre-reads and binder for first day but recognizes that this draft document is not ready for sharing, needs to be edited and formatted.

Board discussion and feedback centered on how to share with the broader community. It's already in poster form. The board questioned the common narrative with the graphics and how do we grow the vision of noccs beyond this? The board requested Mr. Ajani to present a final version to the board this fall.

The board asked how does it satisfy the LCAP and Mr. Ajani responded that it should include alignment and agreement with staff. The board wanted to know how will this be communicated and if it can be modernized. Mr. Ajani answered that it could be more bold in the future and messaging around the 10 core values is hard so he can roll them up and group them.

Devon offered to provide feedback to the document.

Performance Management Policy

Mr. Ajani presented his draft performance management policy for review. He stated there were forms that needed to be developed which he would do over the summer. These include:

- Staff write up slip: A formal slip that I can email and drop in a file with conversation.
- Rewarding high performers with stipends and praise including spending 80% of time with top teachers.

Mr. Ajani will set another goal around teacher retention he wants to hire high quality folks and keep them. The board asked how do we know they are high quality and there was discussion around how to have more opportunity for teachers to have growth opportunities. The board asked what is the performance measure for non teaching staff and why is there potentially a philosophical misalignment with NOCCS core values? Board members also said to make sure values are upheld in teacher culture as much as they are upheld in student culture. Sometimes we uphold oppressive values rather than innovative and responsive values and actions.

The board asked who will be leading all expectations. Mr. Ajani stated he will evaluate all staff. Board discussion continued concerning there is not a system of providing feedback in a timely manner if Mr. Ajani is the supervisor for all staff. He responded that coaches will push in using Marzano's tool but that he is supervising all staff because there is not another option.

The board questioned whether the Dean of Instruction should be involved but Mr. Ajani responded they weren't evaluators. The board again asked why this was the case because it will take a huge amount of time to supervise all of the staff.

Mr. Ajani said what would be helpful would be for the board to give clear observations on how he should move forward. Board members discussed how Mr Ajani should be telling the board how he is using his time and to make the case for how the structure should be or what additional help should be given.

The board recommended that Mr. Ajani look at other models such as Urban Montessori for other structures and how to manage staff; another suggestion was to look at TEN for teacher management and to use Dean of Instruction to do formal observations while Mr. Ajani keeps an eye on it looking for red flags and then does observation.

As part of the performance management policy, any concerns about performance will be addressed in January and will include evaluations by teacher and HOS. The board expressed concern that May was too late for people to get informed about returning and suggested that a promise letter of employment should be offered earlier with an acknowledgement letter later. The board asked if we make a switch to a letter that not a contract and Mr. Ajani stated that in fact that we do it, teachers are acculturated to getting the letter. Mr. Ajani also stated this is the same timeline that that he would like to be evaluated by the board. Another suggestion from the board was to use the word performance for when talking about high performers..

Closed Session

Luis moved to closed session at 8:30, Tracy seconded, unanimous board vote. In a closed session, the Board of Trustees reviewed the performance goals of the Head of School and discussed hiring a 3rd party coach to support the Head of School and the board.

Adjourn Meeting

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, Mariah Landers, Acting Secretary