

NOCCS Board Minutes November 16, 2016

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of North Oakland Community Charter School was held on **November 16, 2016 at 6 pm** at the School. The meeting was called to order at **6:02 pm**.

The following members of the Board were present: Stephen Ajani, Raja Antony, Leslie Bell, Mia Birdsong, Teresha Freckleton-Petite, Juliana Germak, Melanie Gross, Tracy Hanna, Devon King-Neece, Mariah Landers, Melissa McDonald, Rachel Vyda-Venning, Lakisha Young

Absent: Sahra Halpern, Luis Rodriguez, Joy Sherrod

Guests: Aleshia Reaves (FTO Co-President), Chien Wang (FTO Secretary), Christina "Krea" Gomez (Dean of Students)

Public Comment

Krea Gomez offered her services as a resource for historical information about the school and community. She has lived in the neighborhood since 1997 and has been at NOOCS since 2004.

Raja made a motion to add discussion of the Annual Fund campaign to the agenda. Melissa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Juliana moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Leslie seconded the motion.

There were 11 votes in favor: Stephen, Raja, Leslie, Teresha, Juliana, Tracy, Mariah, Devon, Melissa, Rachel, Lakisha. Abstained: Mia, Melanie.

Head of School Report

Mr. Ajani gave updates on staffing/professional development, programming, enrollment/attendance/recruitment; and answered questions. He began by sharing that the post-election climate has sparked dialogue at the school with students acting on their own agency to stage a peaceful protest march in the neighborhood. Their civic demonstration was observed by our neighbors, the Maker Movement org, who sent an encouraging letter to the student body.

The school is fully staffed now since Brandy Payne has returned full-time after a death in her family.

In regards to enrollment, there is an open seat in the middle school that will be offered to a 6th grader even though it was vacated by an 8th grader. When asked why, Mr Ajani responded that the school is taking a more strategic approach to backfilling (the practice of enrolling new students when existing ones leave). It will be easier to integrate a new 6th grader during the school year and have that student adapt to the school over the next couple of years versus

months. The board asked Mr. Ajani about the impact of backfilling on hard assets like furniture and technology as well as soft assets like classroom instruction and school culture. He said he would be tracking feedback.

The board also asked for an update on extending the kindergarten day. Mr Ajani replied that while the school staff is still on board with this change, he realized that more conversation and research is needed to support this decision. The Executive Committee has assigned The Ed/Data/Tech committee to lead the discussion and surface the questions that need to be answered. This will be part of a larger push to focus our collective efforts on the sustainability work and how proposed changes to school programming benefit the school in the long run.

The instructional coaching team recently conducted a teacher satisfaction survey and will be following up 1:1 with staff who volunteer to be interviewed. Areas in which teachers felt positive:

- admin support on class culture and management
- Peer-to-peer collaboration
- Protected planning time
- Classroom aides

Areas that teachers felt needed improvement are:

- Differentiated professional development
- ELD and Math curriculum
- Opportunities to observe instruction, creating a feedback loop

The board is pleased that the school is leveraging internal teacher leadership to deliver professional development.

There were some clarifying questions/feedback about other portions of the HOS report:

- A budget request for an additional education specialist to support Ms. Parker in order to meet the needs of students. The Personnel Committee will start looking into a strategy.
- For Average Daily Attendance, arriving after 9:30a is when a student is officially considered absent.

Finance Updates

Answers to previous questions:

- Kelly from EdTec prefers to do her Charter School Finance 101 presentation in person. She can make it NOCCS specific. We should wait until January so it can include some long term planning data.
- According to Kelly, extending the kindergarten day would have very little impact on the budget because it only accounts for 1.5 hours of after school revenue.
- The Oakland Ed Fund grant was already in the budget
- Prop 39 spending so far is \$98K on solar panels (being installed over winter break), leaving \$69K to spend this year

Overall operating income has increased from \$21K to \$26K. Revenues rose by \$12K thanks to an increase in LCFF (due to FRL growth, now at 26%), a bump in Title I (from \$10K to \$14K),

and an extra \$5K from the lottery fund. Expenses only increased by \$7K, the bulk of which is an unexpected \$4K property bill. Kelly from EdTec called the city assessor's office to confirm that NOCCS is the responsible party. Still, more investigation will have to be done since we are the renters. If this bill is an increase over base tax, then PEC should reimburse use. Other budget variances are due to Classified Salaries (under budget in Clerical & Office Salaries and over budget in Special Ed.). The variance is an adjustment of Melissa's salary due to a change in her job functions, so they cancel each other out.

Despite the small increase this month, we still have lean months ahead. The finance committee has been discussing short term solutions as well as developing proposals for long term financial sustainability. Ideally, we 2-3 months of operating cash reserves or \$500K. We currently have only \$200K in cash reserves. We need either \$300K in operating income in the first year or we can incrementally build our reserves by \$100K/yr for the next 3 years.

With the help of EdTec, they came up with the following scenarios for increasing revenues based on a net income of \$7,912 per student:

- Gradual Enrollment Growth: Adding 10 students over 3 years would definitely balance the budget but the impact on operating income would be minimal.
- Adding a TK (transitional kindergarten) class: While operating income would increase significantly, there are costs considerations like staff, space plus how would having a TK impact the kindergarten admission lottery?
- Staff Reduction: Eliminating staff positions would provide the greatest bump but it would have to be done in a way that doesn't impact our ability to serve students.

Other budget considerations: To date, fundraising events have brought in \$24,176 (toward an anticipated \$135K for 2016-17). We do not have parent leaders for the annual fund yet, which is the largest fundraiser for the year. Also, we don't have as strong staff leadership on fundraising as in past years. If these fundraisers don't meet their goals, we'd be facing a bigger budget shortfall.

Other updates:

- A recent conversation with the PEC Chair raised a lot more questions than provided answers. Supposedly, we are not guaranteed the PEC grant. Then what is their purpose, who gets to be on their board, what is our lease agreement, what do their charter and bylaws say, do we have an MOU? David Bond will be asked to locate any and all documents about our relationship with PEC and share them with the Finance Committee.
- What will be the budget impact of the new Prop 50 legislation? Devon will check into this.
- A team of board chairs/head of school will be meeting with Carolyn Gramstorff from Educate 78 after the break to think about replication and scalability. The former chairs commented that the preliminary work had been done when Carolyn was head of school and suggested that the group talk with a member of that team before the meeting.

Ed/Data/Tech Committee Update

In preparation for the January vote on a sustainability plan, the committee was to initiate a conversation about defining core programming at NOCCS, collecting data on increasing enrollments, how we can leverage our education model to increase revenue/decrease and what impacts any changes will have on instructional/admin staff. At this meeting, the committee lead the board in an exercise about telling the story of NOCCS. Since data means gift, what are our school's "gifts" to the community? The committee collected the responses to use as feedback for their presentation next month. Next steps will be to look at the cost of each proposed solution in terms of money and human resources and to get teacher input.

Adjourn

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Teresha Freckleton-Petite, Secretary