

NOCCS Board Minutes October 19, 2016

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of North Oakland Community Charter School was held on **October 19, 2016 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, Teresha Freckleton-Petite, Juliana Germak, Tracy Hanna, Devon King-Neece, Mariah Landers, Melissa McDonald, Luis Rodriguez, Rachel Vyda-Venning, Lakisha Young

Absent: Mia Birdsong, Melanie Gross, Sahra Halpern, Joy Sherrod

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

Public Comment

No public comments were made at this meeting. As a reminder of board protocols in response to public comments, Lakisha informed the directors that they can ask clarifying questions, but not give feedback or comments. The Executive Committee will discuss any public comments that require the board's attention.

Minutes

Tracy moved to approve the minutes. Luis seconded the motion.

In favor of approving the August minutes: There were 11 votes in favor: Stephen, Raja, Leslie, Teresha, Tracy, Mariah, Devon, Melissa, Luis, Rachel, Lakisha. Abstained: Juliana.

In favor of approving the September minutes with requested edits. There were 9 votes in favor. Stephen, Raja, Teresha, Juliana, Tracy, Devon, Melissa, Rachel, Lakisha. Abstained: Leslie, Luis, Mariah

Head of School Report

Mr. Ajani gave updates on staffing, programming, enrollment/recruitment; and answered questions. In regards to the extending the kindergarten day, the board wanted more information on the following:

- Budget implications for this change
- Rationale/impetus for this change

Some questions that surfaced were:

1. Is it an academic programming strategy, a marketing strategy to make the school more attractive to working families, both?
2. Other board members wanted to clarify that our kindergarten program is not half day and there are developmental studies that support an early release for kindergarten students.

Who makes the ultimate decision is a gray area especially since it would impact the budget given that the school would lose the revenue from the Seedlings program

Some suggestions provided:

The board requested that Stephen pause any conversations with families until we have the following data ready by the November meeting: a projection of budget impact and how the budget would be balanced; more details on the pros/cons of an extended kindergarten day--OUSD made the transition years ago, we should be looking at their outcomes: what are the benefits, has more instructional time boosted student achievement?

The board discussed the preliminary 2015-16 state test results. While NOCCS' aggregate scores in Math and ELA are typical of high-performing charters, we should be drilling down and looking at how well we are preparing our subgroups to perform on these tests: students of color, low-income, , ELL, special education students. Having these figures ready to show that we're educating all students will be important in the growing anti-charter climate. The state does not provide these breakdowns when the subgroups are too small as is the case with NOCCS. It has to be done in-house. Stephen said he has some of the data drill downs, but he needs help. We've not had success with using software program or volunteers. Furthermore, once we have the data, we need an analysis strategy. What will be the benchmarks? The Education/Data/Technology Committee will tackle these issues.

There were some clarifying questions/feedback about other portions of the HOS report: What are the numbers of ELL students being administered the CELDT? Stephen replied 38.

The Rtl program section should include the budget impact of providing special education services.

Concern was raised over the plan to reduce school tours from 7 to 2, especially if the goal is to get 3 applications for every 1 open seat. Stephen said it's a bandwidth issue. One of the questions shared was whether FTO/student ambassadors could take over school tours so that we are giving as many chances possible for prospective families to see the school?

NOCCS is already on the radar for certain families (referred to as intentional families). Common enrollment will raise awareness of all the charter school options in Oakland, so we need to be ready to educate the broader community about NOCCS. The Comm/Dev team will own this piece: looking at school branding, online presence, community outreach.

Finance Updates

Overall operating income has increased by \$7K and NOCCS is now forecasting to end the year with \$21K in operating income. Our cash flow projection is bleak. February and March 2017 will be really lean. The committee is working on revenue projection tables from increasing class

sizes. The board needs to start seriously thinking about increasing revenue and the finance committee will work with the PEC to get the grant sooner rather than later in the school year.

The sustainability committee is going to own this discussion (no longer a sustainability committee as of October 2016). By January, we will have a plan to fix the financial situation. But the entire board will be involved, so we all need to take a School Finance 101 course. EdTec has an hour-long presentation. Devon will follow-up on how best to set this up. Lakisha is going to track down Carolyn's presentation because it did a great job of illustrating the budget gap between public funds and the cost of programs and thoughtfully explaining how the school approached fundraising from families.

Mariah commented that she just visited the Duke Ellington School, a high-poverty school in DC that has 100% family giving.

Stephen was asked about grant proposals in the works. The school is working on submitting a couple of grants to the SF Foundation. We also received a \$12k grant from Educate 78 for teacher leadership and coaching. This needs to be reflected in the budget.

Melissa volunteered to be the non-finance committee member to review the audit, as is required.

Committee Updates

A member from last year's committees gave a brief summary of their work, lessons learned, and recommendations for the work ahead:

Finance: The committee largely focused on the changing financial picture at NOCCS, including returning \$130K in SB 740 funds from 2014-15 because the FRL number at Emerson dipped, salary increases and the special education lawsuit settlement. Revenues flatlined while expenses ticked upward. This year's committee will need to focus on raising revenue, cutting expenses, or both. Also, working with PEC to support our budget is going to be important.

Governance: The committee worked with Educate 78 to provide board development and recruit external board members. For the second consecutive year, the committee coordinated parent leadership elections with the FTO. Only one parent ran for a board seat. This year, the committee should work on creating board pipeline and a strategy for board development.

Personnel: The committee updated the Employee Handbook to clarify PTO/sick leave and put a tracking system in place. Other human resource tasks that were tackled were: drafting Head of School evaluation, exploring what an ongoing compensation review would look like, and making sure former staff complete an exit survey. A lesson learned was to ask former members for information to avoid re-creating the wheel.

Strategic Planning: The committee spent a lot of time trying to decode the document and was never clear on their goals. They organized board member visits to observe classrooms, teacher appreciation activities, and a teacher survey.

Development: The committee worked with David to support fundraising, including chairing the Annual Fund (which is vacant this year), initiating a grant writing committee that met once, and building a relationship with the FTO. They also closed out the capital campaign.

Executive: This committee is made up of board officers and the Head of School. They plan agendas, discuss public comments, provide oversight and support of school leadership , evaluates the school leader with the tool developed by the Personnel Committee.

Melissa reviewed the 2016-17 committees with the goal that we all understand what success looks like and each committee's work is critical to achieving success. In addition, there will be transparency about when each committee meets and what they are working on.

The committees and member assignments:

Executive: Devon, Lakisha, Melissa, Stephen, Teresha

Finance: Devon, Rachel, Sahra, Stephen, Tracy

Governance: Leslie, Teresha, Tracy

Personnel: Joy, Lakisha, Melanie

Education: Joy, Luis, Mariah, Raja. Staff: Cori Belew

Communications/Development: Melissa, Raja, Teresha. Staff: David

Sustainability: Lakisha, Juliana, Mia, Rachel. Staff: Krea

Board members broke out into their committees to schedule their first meetings, pick committee chair(s). Each group should be readying preliminary reports. Board materials will be distributed the Friday before each meeting.

Adjourn

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Teresha Freckleton-Petite, Secretary