

APPROVED



**ONE CITY**  
SCHOOLS

## One City Schools

# Minutes

## One City Regular Board Meeting

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### **Date and Time**

Tuesday November 16, 2021 at 4:00 PM

### **Location**

**In person at the UW South Partnership building in The Village on Park Street, 2238 S Park Street, Madison WI.**

**Community members may join the November 16, 2021 Board Meeting via Zoom at <https://onecityschools.zoom.us/j/96414211790>**

**Meeting ID:** 964 1421 1790

Topic: One City Regular Board Meetings

Time: Nov 16, 2021 04:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

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#### **Directors Present**

C. Zdeblick (remote), D. Aguayo (remote), D. Ledesma, PhD, G. Derzon, J. Krupp (remote), N. Wray (remote), S. Martyniak, S. Stroman, T. Jaeckle, T. Pedracine, W. Akhtar

#### **Directors Absent**

C. Gaines, G. Ladson-Billings, S. Klug

#### **Guests Present**

B. Pickett, C. Hodge, D. Davis, D. Stephan, F. D'Abell, F. Knepp, G. Wiseman, L. Allen, M. Ruffin, X. Zupan

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### **I. Opening Items**

#### **A. Record Attendance and Welcome Board Members**

#### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

T. Jaeckle called a meeting of the board of directors of One City Schools to order on Tuesday Nov 16, 2021 at 4:00 PM.

**C. Approve Minutes from October 26, 2021 Regular Board Meeting**

G. Derzon made a motion to approve the minutes from One City Regular Board Meeting on 10-26-21.

T. Pedracine seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**II. Recognize Retired Board Members Lynn McDonald and Jodie Pope-Williams**

**A. Recognition of Retiring Board Members Lynn McDonald and Jodie Pope-Williams**

Board members thanked Jodie Pope Williams for her service to the school and to the Board and commented that Ms. Pope Williams has always been an involved, vocal parent Board member. Her son, Cameron, has been a student at One City since its inception. Ms. Pope Williams stated that, from the lens of a Board member who is also a parent, it is important to remember that what the Board does has an impact on our scholars. Ms. Pope Williams will continue to be a part of One City as an active member of the Parent Council.

The Board thanked Lynn McDonald for her service to the school and to the Board. Dr. McDonald supported One City even while she was living in the UK. Dr. McDonald brought the FAST program to One City, and that program has become the cornerstone of our robust parent engagement. Dr. McDonald is an ultimate connector who brings people together.

Dr. McDonald will continue to be a part of One City and plans to attend the next FAST graduation.

**III. One City Parent Board Member Input**

**A. One City Parent Update by Parent-members of One City's Board of Directors**

Board members W. Akhtar, T. Pedracine and D. Ledesma acknowledged the stress that has existed for all schools, including One City, for the past year.

W. Akhtar thanked the Board and staff for providing space for parents to share their thoughts and concerns. Parents are happy to be part of the team, and are continuing to meet with staff leaders monthly to discuss any concerns. Currently, parents and staff are discussing IEP support, bilingual support, security and communication,.

Parents stated that they are grateful to have the infrastructure in place that allows staff and parents to discuss issues day to day, and that those discussions are going well.

Parents are optimistic that we will continue to make progress around issues of communication during these complicated times.

D. Ledesma emphasized the importance of these efforts as research shows that communication and good relationships help make great schools.

#### **IV. Finance Committee: Discussion and Actions**

##### **A. Review and Approve One City's October 2021 Financial Report**

T. Jaeckle reported that an interview team is working with a candidate for the Director of Finance position.

Numbers4NonProfits are working on getting Quickbook licenses in order.

The Finance Committee will review the October and November financials in December and will share the final audit report at the January Board meeting

D. Ledesma asked if there are parent representatives on the interview team. K. Caire replied that parents are involved in hiring teachers, but not administrative positions such as the Director of Finance. Finance Committee members and representatives from Afton Partners may participate in interviews, along with Joanne Holland, Chief Financial Officer of Access Community Health Center and Afton Partners.

Afton is a public sector consulting firm and certified woman-owned business in the State of Illinois. Founded in 2011, they provide advisory services to charter school operators, school districts, early childhood providers, state agencies, and institutions of higher education. Afton's advisory services are grounded in principles of financial sustainability, viability, equity, and effectiveness. Afton's services to One City are being funded by the Charter School Growth Fund.

D. Ledesma, PhD made a motion to approve the report by Board Treasurer Torrey Jaeckle.

W. Akhtar seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

#### **V. Highlights of a One City Classroom**

##### **A. Highlights of a One City Classroom - 5K Jackie Thompson**

5K teacher Jackie Thompson gave a presentation on work being done in the 5K classroom. She thanked the Board for having her present and stated that she feels blessed to be part of One City.

Ms. Thompson's focus has been on building relationships with her students and creating community. She has created a learning environment that allows scholars to get excited about learning, including a "jungle theme" in the classroom.

Ms. Thompson shared copies of classroom newsletters and talked about the importance of continuing the AnjiPlay activity of play stories.

T. Pedracine asked who created the norms in the classroom. Ms. Thompson replied that norms were created as a classroom activity, during the first two weeks of school.

T. Jaeckle wondered what the most difficult challenge is in her classroom. Ms. Thompson replied that keeping a mask on a 5 year old is challenging.

T. Pedracine asked what parent support is needed. Ms. Thompson replied that she has never worked in a school where parents have been so involved and have offered so much support.

K. Caire asked Ms. Thompson to share what it is like, in general, to be a teacher at One City Schools. Ms. Thompson said that she appreciates the daily meals and snacks, the supplies provided, the support system and the relationships that exist among team members.

K. Caire asked for her opinion regarding some turnover in teachers. Ms. Thompson stated that it is her belief that change is hard and not everyone is prepared to change the way they are used to doing things. She believes that the mission and vision of One City is bigger than any changes that must be worked through along the way.

## **VI. CEO Update and Organizational Report**

### **A. CEO Departmental Reports: Key Topics and School Highlights**

### **B. One City Student Enrollment Update for the 2021-22 School Year**

M. Ruffin reported that there are currently 40 students enrolled in the preschool.

Recently, three families had to leave because of issues around transportation. Staff is currently working through the waitlist to fill those spots.

The elementary school enrollment breakdown is:

4K: 38 (full)

5K: 47 (1 space open)

1st grade: 47 (1 space open)

2nd grade: 34 (14 spaces open)

3rd grade: 42 (6 spaces open)

4th grade 21 (3 spaces open)

K. Caire asked M. Ruffin to share more about the 3 families that had to leave One City, and why transportation was an issue for them.

M. Ruffin replied that families moved further from One City and moved their children to neighborhood schools.

W. Akhtar asked if staff is working to fill the open spaces in each section using the waitlist. M. Ruffin replied that staff is working through the waitlist. She noted that some of

the applications on the waitlists may have never finished enrollment or the students may not have been the right age on September 1 to join that grade.

M. Ruffin stated that word of mouth is important. She also noted that some families will only come to OCS if all of their children can move at the same time, so the names on the waitlist may not always be families that are actually ready to move to OCS.

W. Akhtar stated that one of the things she appreciates the most about OCS is that it removes every stressor for parents, including safety, 2 healthy meals and snacks per day and more. She is hopeful that we can revisit how to service transportation in the Madison area at some point in the future.

D. Ledesma asked if families leave because they can't meet the pick up/drop off expectations, or because they want OCS to provide transportation. M. Ruffin responded that she has seen both situations and pointed out that while we can assist with bus passes or the parent council can assemble carpools, parents need to take responsibility to do what they can to get their students to school on time.

T. Pedracine asked if OCS is still considering a shuttle between both school sites. M. Ruffin replied that staff will need to determine how many families attend both the preschool and elementary school before considering a shuttle.

S. Martyniak wondered how OCS' enrollment rates compare to other charter schools? K. Caire replied that it's difficult to measure. We budget at a 90% enrollment rate because that's standard for us, but it's hard to know. S. Martyniak asked if the Board should start asking questions if the number gets below 85% and K. Caire agreed that that would be concerning.

W. Akhtar suggested that it might be interesting to compare attrition rates with MAP test scores.

### **C. Staffing Updates**

K. Caire reported that we are currently interviewing for Director of Finance and that one candidate is moving through the process. We might have to think about how to recruit future candidates to net the caliber of team members we're looking for. While there is some urgency to fill the HR Manager and Director of Finance positions, there is also a need to find the right person to fill those positions.

S. Martyniak wondered if we might receive a different level of candidates if we ask for a Chief Operating Officer instead of a Director of Finance. D. Stephan replied that the salary we can offer is in line with a director position, but that we will consult with Afton Partners regarding the title.

K. Caire pointed out that there is a shortage of people willing to change jobs, and of people working in education in general. Schools all over the country are struggling to fill positions. This point was a topic of discussion during his meeting with State Superintendent Jill Underly last week.

#### **D. Secondary School Planning Updates**

D. Davis shared that staff has reached out to all of the alternative educational entities to determine interest in hosting an Edfest where all of the educational options gather at one venue annually to spread the word about their schools, providing the public with an opportunity to attend and learn more about the different options available for their children.

EdFest is similar to the Kids Expo but specifically for K-12.

We have so far invited 24 schools, and have heard back from over half of them. We are hoping to hold the event in February, right before open enrollment begins.

W. Akhtar asked how the event will be marketed. D. Davis replied that we will create a flier for every participating school to share with their community.

D. Davis reported that we have hosted 2 visioning sessions (1 virtually, 1 in person) with parents and students in hopes of gaining insight in what parents and students want in our secondary school. Findings will be reported at the next Board meeting.

K. Caire asked staff to share their experiences traveling to Washington DC.

D. Davis said that it was helpful to visit early college model schools as we continue to visualize the possibilities of our secondary school. It was valuable to meet with a number of universities to discuss partnerships that may allow One City graduates to attend out of state schools at in-state tuition.

F. Knepp said that she learned that the barriers that exist in Madison do not exist everywhere and that she has a better understanding of what high expectations and more resources can do for a community.

K. Caire suggested that it would be beneficial for Board members to join future trips as schedules allow, to help expand our perspectives on possibilities for One City as we move forward.

#### **E. Facilities Update**

D. Stephan reported that we are wrapping up the negotiation of the budget for phase I of the renovation and that the fixed maximum price is \$26M.

S.Martyniak shared that tomorrow is a big day because representatives from Old National Bank, the investor we're working with for new market tax credits, will be touring our school and meeting with members of the leadership team.

She reported that Old National Bank has committed to great pricing for the NMTC, and we are hoping that they can help us close the gap in what we need to bring to the

table. This will be the first project to close in Madison, and it looks like we're going to close in February.

G. Wiseman reported that we received a grant from the Rennebohm Foundation which will allow us to make necessary renovations to the preschool. D. Stephan said that we are working to install new windows and doors and a new dishwasher, along with heating and air conditioning.

S. Martyniak wondered if we will continue to use the kitchen at the preschool or serve all scholars out of the kitchen at the elementary school. D. Stephan replied that we will continue to use the kitchen at preschool, as we will have 82+ children in the building and transporting food is costly and may lower the quality of the food served.

S. Martyniak suggested that it might be worth exploring as some charter schools turn providing food for other schools into a source of revenue.

#### **F. Fundraising Update**

G. Wiseman thanked Board member C. Zdeblick for hosting a fundraising event at her home two weeks ago. The event raised \$20,000 in donations to One City Schools.

G. Wiseman informed members that One City's Chef Nick Johnson will provide meals to participants for any Board member hosted event, whether in-person or virtual. All Board members are encouraged to invite members of their community to an event to learn more about our schools.

G. Derzon and K. Caire will attend (virtually) the upcoming Caritas Foundation Board meeting. We submitted a proposal to them for \$250K.

G. Wiseman thanked J. Krupp and S. Martyniak for agreeing to participate in the tour with representatives from Old National Bank.

K. Caire reported that a proposal has been submitted to the W. Jerome Fraitshi Foundation requesting \$10M. We hope to hear from the Foundation this month or early next month.

K. Caire stated that we have raised \$1.3M of the \$2.4M we need for this school year. We are hoping to get to \$1.9M by the end of December.

W. Akhtar asked how parents can help. G. Wiseman replied that parent testimonials are very helpful, and thanked W. Akhtar again for her heartfelt presentation at the recent event hosted by C. Zdeblick. G. Wiseman said that staff will be reaching out to parents for testimonials to share on our Capital Campaign website. She suggested that parent



members of the Board may also wish to write personal thank you's to One City donors and provided thank you cards to D. Ledesma, T. Pedracine and W. Akhtar.

### **G. Policy and Advocacy Update**

K. Caire met with State Superintendent Jill Underly to discuss the possibility of securing additional funding to support our longer school day/year.

K. Caire extended a thank you to everyone who participated in the interviews with representatives of the Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF). CSGF plans to delay their decision on providing additional funding for our schools until June, to give us time to get through the early interest phase for the secondary school, to determine how many staff we will be able to hire and to confirm which grade levels we will be able to offer.

CSGF, the Kern Family Foundation, and the Bradley Foundation have all invited us to submit proposals to support our advocacy work and/or operations.

## **VII. Other Business**

### **A. Other Business**

G. Wiseman reminded members that the Board will not meet in December but we may have a special meeting toward the end of the month to review the purpose of each entity that exists under One City Schools, Inc.

G. Wiseman reminded new Board members of the orientation dates scheduled for next week.

## **VIII. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

G. Derzon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

W. Akhtar seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

G. Wiseman

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For more information, please contact Gail Wiseman, Vice President of External Relations at [gwiseman@onecityschools.org](mailto:gwiseman@onecityschools.org) or (608) 514-6119.