APPROVED

City on a Hill Charter Public School

Minutes

June 2022 Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday June 28, 2022 at 9:00 AM

Trustees Present
Andres Tejeda Soto (remote), Brooke Fincke (remote), Jack Gearan (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Jessica Yang (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote), Ollie Osinubi (remote), Robyn Shahid (remote)

Trustees Absent
Edelyn Contreras, Massiel Eversley, Sarah Griffin, Ted Gildea

Ex Officio Members Present
Sonya Pratt (remote)

Guests Present
Jordan Lopez (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Melisa Lemire called a meeting of the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Jun 28, 2022 at 9:11 AM.

C. Approve May 2022 Meeting Minutes

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to approve the minutes from May 2022. May 2022 Board Retreat on 05-16-22.
Jack Gearan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Ollie Osinubi	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Jessica Yang	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye

II. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to enter Executive Session citing purpose #5 under Open Meeting Law. The Board will return to Open Session.
Jack Gearan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Robyn Shahid	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Jessica Yang	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Melisa Lemire	Aye

Open Session adjourned at 9:16am. Executive Session began at 9:17am.
Melisa Lemire made a motion to adjourn Executive Session and return to Open Session.

Jack Gearan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Jessica Yang	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye

Executive Session adjourned at 9:53am. Open Session began at 9:54am.

III. School Year 2021-2022 Academic Results Discussion

A. School Year 2021-2022 Academic Results Discussion

Melisa Lemire, Board Chair, directed the attention of the Board to the School Year 2021-2022 Academic Results Discussion. Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, shared that while final grades were not yet available as make-up final tests were still ongoing, she would share preliminary trends that had also been discussed at the June 2022 Academic Excellence Committee meeting with the School's Principal. Pratt committed to having fully complete and analyzed data by the time the Committee meets next.

Pratt reminded the Board of the School's Academic Action Plan goals created in collaboration with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which included: 70% of students meet or exceed expected growth in ELA and Math, and 50% of students meet or exceed expected growth in Science. Pratt confirmed that the School met goals for both Math and Science, but did not meet the ELA goal with 50% of students meeting or exceeding their expected growth in the subject. Pratt noted, however, that other preliminary ELA data continues to show a positive trend for students over the last two years, and that the Senior Leadership Team has met several times to discuss a plan to meet the goals for school year 2022-2023.

Pratt also noted that the School's graduation rate had risen over 20% since last school year, with 98.7% of seniors graduating this month, and that this trend was also reflected in an increase of college acceptance to 95.7%. She shared that Summer School is still in the process of being set up but that she would share those trends at an upcoming meeting.

Next, Pratt shared that the School is overhauling its grading practices to be aligned across departments and focus on mastery of a subject. She explained this shift to "mastery" as an opportunity to focus on revision, incentivize students to continue to work to grow within a class, and make it possible for a student who does grow to be able to demonstrate mastery at the end of the quarter to be able to pass the course. Pratt also noted that many peer schools, particularly those who are highest performing, have made the shift to this type of grading policy.

Finally, Pratt noted that the School has hired a full-time writing teacher for school year 2022-2023, who will be focusing on strengthening writing skills as students continue to take the ACT and the School works to meet ELA growth goals. Pratt then invited questions from the Board.

The Board inquired into the results of the CoaH Climb Program, which included ACT Prep and STRIDE virtual tutoring free of charge for all students. Pratt shared that similarly to the rest of academic results, there is still work to be done to analyze the data, but preliminary looks at the data seem to see an alignment with heightened utilization of the program in Quarter 3 with higher scores.

Trustees asked if the program would continue next year. Pratt affirmed that it would, as she believed multiple years of data are necessary to determine the overall efficacy of the program and named that there is currently restricted funding remaining for it to continue. Pratt named advertisement and ensuring student follow-up as areas of focus from the upcoming year.

IV. Collective Bargaining Agreement Ratification Discussion and Vote

A. Executive Session

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to to enter Executive Session citing purpose #3 of Open Meeting Law. The Board will return to Open Session.
Jessica Yang seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Jessica Yang	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Edelyn Contreras	Absent

Roll Call

Brooke Fincke	Aye

Open Session adjourned at 10:09am. Executive Session began at 10:10am.
Jack Gearan made a motion to adjourn Executive Session and return to Open Session.
Jessica Yang seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Jessica Yang	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Aye

Executive Session adjourned at 10:19am. Open Session began at 10:20am.

B. Vote on Ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement

Jacqueline Bennett made a motion to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreements between City on a Hill Charter Public School and its Unit A and Unit B bargaining units.
Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Sarah Griffin	Absent
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Ollie Osinubi	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Ted Gildea	Absent
Jessica Yang	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye

V. Circuit Street Renovation / Construction Update

A. Circuit Street Renovation / Construction Update

Next, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the Circuit Street Renovation / Construction Update. Pratt shared that there has been an accepted bid for the upcoming renovation work to take place in Summer 2022. She reminded the Board that this initial renovation was to create additional classroom space by creating movable partition walls, and one additional administrative office.

Pratt also shared that the architects were also able to share preliminary visualizations of several options for the new construction that the School is pursuing due to continued space constraints for both students and staff. She noted that several of the options seem untenable due to cost or logistics related to the zoning of the School's parking lot. She also noted that additional fundraising would be needed for this project, and is an initiative on which management would need to collaborate with both the School Board and the City on a Hill Foundation Board.

Trustees inquired as if there were options the School was leaning towards. Pratt shared that there remain multiple strong options, and that management will present them at the upcoming August 2022 Board Retreat and will also be soliciting feedback from School Leadership over the summer before sharing more widely when School returns in the fall.

VI. Board Committee Updates

A. Executive Director Support Committee

Jacqueline Bennett, ED Support Committee Chair, shared that the Committee met with Pratt for an opportunity for her to reflect on her goals from her first year as Executive Director, review 360 review survey data from Board members and Pratt's direct reports, and determine to what degree the Committee believed Pratt met her goals, as well as addressing her bonus potential.

Bennett reminded the Board that Pratt had 5 goals as approved by the Committee in Fall 2021, which focused on probationary conditions, enrollment, staff engagement, budget and her own professional development as a leader. She confirmed that the Committee believed Pratt to have successfully achieved 4 of the goals, with the remaining goal around staff engagement very coming close to the goal. Bennett also noted that the Committee felt, however, that given the context of the School's leadership transitions that the movement still made on the goal was still a win.

Finally, Bennett confirmed that in reviewing the survey data, the ratings of the Board, Pratt and her direct reports were aligned and consistently high. She pointed to the School's current academic status to be the lowest rating, which the Committee believed to be understandable given the School's probation and the Board's ongoing conversations about the growth work currently in place. Bennett shared that given the discussion the Committee voted to recommend a satisfactory performance evaluation for Pratt and full payment of her $7,000 bonus potential, and called for any questions or comments from the Board.

Other Trustees shared their appreciation for Pratt's Leadership, and affirmed their satisfaction with what she was able to achieve in her first year as Executive Director.

B. Vote to Approve Recommendation of Executive Director Evaluation

Jacqueline Bennett made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Executive Director Support Committee to approve the satisfactory results of the school year 2021-2022 Executive Director Evaluation for Sonya Pratt and full payment of her bonus potential.
Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Jessica Yang	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Absent

C. Academic Excellence Committee Update

The Committee and Pratt confirmed that all updates were included in the previous discussion about School Year 2021-2022 Academic Results.

D. Governance Committee Update

Jessica Yang, Governance Chair, shared that the Committee met to discuss the continued need to recruit additional trustees, and noted that there were two candidates in the pipeline who have already spoken with management to discuss the School and basic responsibilities of the Board. She called for any Trustees with other recommendations to share them with the Committee.

Lemire also shared that Gary Morton stepped down from the Board this week, and was appointed to the City on a Hill Foundation Board of Directors. She noted that Governance believes this to be a positive change, not only as Morton has previous experience running foundations, but also to increase the collaboration between the School Board and Foundation Board. She noted, however, that this adds to the number of trustees that need to be recruited, and reiterated current skills gaps as folks with legal, operations and finance background.

Lemire also noted the need to discuss the School Year 2022-2023 Board of Trustees calendar, and noted that Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, also had additional updates relating to the current suspension of elements of Open Meeting Law. Pina shared that while the displayed proposed school year 2022-2023 calendar takes into account Board deadlines, student data timelines and school milestones, the timing assumes the continued ability to hold meetings remotely. She noted that at this time, the Executive Order in place suspending the requirement to hold in-person meetings is set to expire on July 15, 2022, and as of yet the Massachusetts Legislature has not pass the bill in consideration to make these changes permanent.

The School expressed their hope that the changes would be made permanent in the future given the accessibility and flexibility it gave to attendees, but Pina shared that management's recommendation to the Governance Committee was to move forward assuming in-person meetings. She shared that the Board would return to the process used before the suspension to gauge availability of all Trustees for both Board and Committee meetings and create a calendar to be shared at the August 2022 Board Retreat.

E. Finance Committee Update

Andres Tejeda, Committee Member, shared that the overall financial position of the School remains strong and that there have not been significant changes since the Board met to discuss the school year 2022-2023 budget in May 2022. He noted, however, that the Committee and management discussed the increased transportation costs for this school year and confirmed that the School would be submitting for reimbursement.

Next, Tejeda reminded the Board of the need to select a new auditing firm as the School's previous auditors, AAFCPAs, acted as the School's accountant for two months of this school year. He shared that the School's finance vendor, CentralSource, put out a request for proposal for this year's auditing service and received a bid from Daniel Dennis CPAs, who came recommended to the School. Tejeda shared he would be calling for a vote to accept the recommendation of the of the Finance Committee to approve Daniel Dennis as auditors, and asked if there were any additional questions.

The Board inquired as to who recommended Daniel Dennis and the comparison to the cost of previous audits. Pratt shared that the recommendation was from CentralSource, who have worked with Daniel Dennis previously, and that the cost was a savings over previous audits.

F. Vote to Accept the Recommendation of the Finance Committee

Melisa Lemire made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve Daniel Dennis CPA as City on a Hill's auditor.
Ollie Osinubi seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call	
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Ted Gildea	Absent
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Jessica Yang	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Aye

VII. The CoaH Effect

A. The CoaH Effect

Next, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the CoaH Effect, a management-produced dashboard which reviews the School's annual goals and milestones. Pratt began by sharing that while these were the metrics set this year, the School currently has multiple dashboards and plans with many varying goals, which the Senior Leadership Team is hoping to shift away from by creating a single set of goals to maximize alignment and the ability to prioritize. Pratt noted this work has already been done through several Senior Leadership Team meetings, and that this approach has been shared with DESE who believed it to be a positive shift. She shared that updates would be shared with the Board at the August 2022 Board Retreat.

Then, Pratt began walking the Board through the dashboard, noting that much of the information had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. She pointed to the School's positive trend in applications for the lottery applications and confirmed that over 80% of school year 2022-2023's seats have been filled, and shared that there would be additional lotteries that will include outreach to previous applicants and radio advertisements promoting the School.

Next, Pratt highlighted the School's chronic absence rate which has risen 50% above the stated goal this year. Pratt noted that while chronic absence rates are a concern across the Commonwealth given that for much of the year it was encouraged for students to remain home if they felt ill, the School made the decision to hire a Family and Community Engagement Coordinator for the upcoming school year. This person is a returning staff member, and will be tasked with following up on absences in addition to general community engagement work. She also noted that while there was a slight increase in suspensions in comparison to last year which was virtual learning, we have remained under the goal by 7%.

Then, Pratt noted that slides about academic results were covered in previous discussions, and reminded staff that MCAS data is only released annually in October and while the School has received preliminary data for this year, it is still embargoed and will be shared later in the fall.

Finally, Pratt reiterated the Schools strong financial position and shared that the School has completed or is on track to complete all compliance submissions. She also shared that this school year was the first in two years in which the School was able to safely include community jurors for student's final oral exams, which allowed for a wide range of community partners to come engage with the School.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melisa Lemire

Documents used during the meeting

- Draft MOU COAH Unit B-2.pdf
- Draft MOU COAH Unit A-2.pdf
- 2022.06.28- COAH Effect.pdf