

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### February 2022 Executive Director Support Committee Meeting

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##### **Date and Time**

Wednesday February 9, 2022 at 1:00 PM

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This meeting took place remotely pursuant to An Act Extending certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency signed into law by Governor Baker on June 16, 2021.

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##### **Committee Members Present**

Andres Tejeda Soto (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote)

##### **Committee Members Absent**

Sarah Griffin

##### **Guests Present**

Jordan Lopez (remote), Maddie Collins (remote), Sonya Pratt (remote)

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#### **I. Opening Items**

##### **A. Record Attendance**

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

Jacqueline Bennett called a meeting of the Executive Director Support And Eval Committee of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Wednesday Feb 9, 2022 at 1:04 PM.

##### **C.**

### **Approve December 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to approve the minutes from December 2021 Executive Director Support Committee Meeting on 12-01-21.

Melisa Lemire seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Andres Tejeda Soto Aye

Jacqueline Bennett Aye

Melisa Lemire Aye

## **II. Executive Director Evaluation**

### **A. Executive Director Evaluation**

Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, outlined each of her goals that were presented and approved by the Committee in Fall 2021. Jacqueline Bennett, Committee Chair noted that the progress towards these goals in School Year 2021-2022 will be used to vote upon the recommendation of the bonus amount to the full Board.

Pratt began discussion by overviewing each goal and sharing context around the work that she and the City on a Hill team have accomplished this school year as it relates to each goal. Pratt shared that for her first goal, following through on next steps related to the City on a Hill Charter probation, that all probation-related submissions and deadlines have been met to date. Pratt shared that she will continue to work with the Chief of Staff, Jordan Pina, and the COAH Senior Leadership Team to stay on track with all probation related items.

Pratt shared goal number two, to ensure that over 85% of teachers at City on engage in leadership opportunities during SY22. Pratt noted that in the Fall teacher climate survey, teachers responded 75% favorable to the question that asked if COAH was a school that provides leadership opportunities to staff. Pratt shared that with several opportunities coming in the spring for staff to lead professional development sessions and Spring activities, she believes that this number will be at the goal of 85% when teachers are surveyed again at the end of the school year (2021-2022).

The Committee asked Pratt more specifically about COVID-19 restrictions affecting leadership opportunities for teachers. Pratt shared that because of high COVID-19 cases in Boston earlier this year, many regularly scheduled in-person events at COAH were cancelled for student and staff safety. Pratt shared that closely following DESE guidelines, there are numerous opportunities projected to occur in the Spring for staff to lead.

Pratt shared goal number three, that COAH operates within its budget and a new Finance function staffing is in place for FY23. Pratt reminded the Committee that COAH's finance

services are currently being contracted. Pratt shared that AAF, COAH's former auditors, are working to create a budget for next school year (2022-2023). Once this budget is received, Pratt and the Senior Leadership Team will evaluate what the finance function for COAH should look like for FY23.

The Committee asked management why AAF was selected to contract financial services for COAH. Pratt shared that COAH has worked with AAF in the past to complete the school's audit, and the contractors have a diverse knowledge of the charter school landscape as they work with other charter peers as well. With COAH's Business Manager transitioning out in October 2021, the Senior Leadership Team selected AAF to contract as the contractors had the context the team believed would create the smoothest transition. Pratt added that the draft budget for FY23 is set to be completed by AAF this week.

Pratt then shared progress towards goal number four, to stabilize hiring for all roles at COAH. Pratt reminded the Committee that when they first came together to review this ED goal, the school had several vacant positions for academic and operations roles. In early November 2021, the Senior Leadership Team came together for a professional development and planning session in order to build a plan to stabilize hiring. This plan included but was not limited to, making Spanish 1 into an online course that is overseen by the lead Spanish teacher, hiring an additional tutor, hiring a building substitute and consolidating select classes. The result of this plan is that COAH no longer has open positions posted and hiring has been stabilized.

The Committee asked for further details about the role of a building substitute. Pratt shared that the COAH building substitute is an individual who is contracted to be in the building every day if faculty is not there. Pratt shared that many other districts use staffing companies, but COAH has seen success in having an onsite building sub as it allows for an individual to know both the building and students as well as be used as an additional support when all faculty are present that day.

The Committee asked about the progress on recommitment for next school year (2022-2023). Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, shared that all mid-year reviews are occurring now and recommitment letters to staff will follow those conversations in early March. Pina shared that there will be an update to the Committee when those contracts are collected later this school year.

Pina shared a brief timeline of the recommitment process and that the COAH team has had more capacity to intentionally recruit this year as well as visit hiring fairs. Pratt noted that mid-year conversations are trending positively with many current teachers asking for more leadership opportunities and seeking to grow in their teaching practice.

The Committee asked how the changes in leadership, particularly the shifting to an Executive Director-led single school model, has affected the staff environment. Pratt

shared that there has been a positive change this school year, as she has been able to be in the building and engage in one on one conversations with teachers who desire to provide feedback. Pratt also shared that she is teaching a class on a daily basis, and has instituted a meeting with the Principal and COAH union representatives once a month to discuss concerns and feedback the faculty may have. Pratt also shared that with the COVID-19 pandemic rapidly changing, the COAH team has made a point to hold meetings with faculty to thought partner on strategic plans for the safety and success of students.

Pratt shared progress towards her final goal, completing a professional development cohort with peer leaders to hone skills her skills as an organizational leader. Pratt shared that she has been engaging in multiple cohorts in order to learn new skills in her role as Executive Director.

These cohorts include, but are not limited to, the Leaders of Color cohort, a group of charter leaders of color in Massachusetts that meets monthly, New Leaders Cohort, a group of new charter leaders in the Boston Charter School Alliance that engage in informational sessions on a monthly basis, and the Boston Charter School Alliance, a group of Boston Charter leaders to discuss various topics. These cohorts spend time problem solving school related issues, meeting with mentors to seek best practices, and sharing and hearing feedback with other charter peers.

## **B. Vote to Recommend Approval of Potential Bonus Outlined in Sonya Pratt's ED Contract**

Jacqueline Bennett reminded the Committee that the decision is based upon progress in School Year 2021-2022 towards the five Executive Director goals outline by Sonya Pratt's presentation and opened up discussion.

The Committee discussed that the context given by Pratt exhibited progress towards all five ED goals. The Committee discussed goal number two, noting that while the COAH's draft FY23 budget is behind schedule, that this was not due to Pratt's performance as Executive Director and that she took satisfactory action to progress the process.

The Committee agreed unanimously to vote to recommend to the full Board that Pratt receive 100% of the potential bonus as outlined by the Executive Director contract.

Melisa Lemire made a motion to Vote to Recommend Approval of 100% of the Bonus Outlined in Sonya Pratt's ED Contract.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

### **Roll Call**

Melisa Lemire Aye

Jacqueline Bennett Aye

Andres Tejeda Soto Aye

### **III. 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 1:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jacqueline Bennett

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#### **Documents used during the meeting**

- ED Support Committee Presentation February 2022.pdf