

APPROVED



City on a Hill Charter Public School

Minutes

April 2022 Academic Excellence Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday April 7, 2022 at 5:30 PM

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.

Committee Members Present

Edelyn Contreras (remote), Massiel Eversley (remote), Robyn Shahid (remote), Sarah Griffin (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

Jordan Lopez (remote), Laura Edouard (remote), Maddie Collins (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Sarah Griffin called a meeting of the Academic Excellence Committee of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Thursday Apr 7, 2022 at 5:31 PM.

C.

Approve February 2022 Minutes

Robyn Shahid made a motion to approve the minutes from February 2022 Academic Excellence Committee Meeting on 02-10-22.

Edelyn Contreras seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Robyn Shahid Aye

Edelyn Contreras Aye

Massiel Eversley Aye

Sarah Griffin Aye

II. School Year 2022-2023 Recommitment Process Update

A. School Year 2022-2023 Recommitment Process Update

Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, shared School Year 2022-2023 recommitment updates with Committee, sharing that the COAH team has taken feedback from hiring in SY22 to adjust the hiring process and internal communications for this year's process.

Pina reminded the Committee that in March 2022, all COAH staff received either an unconditional offer, conditional offer, non-renewal based on the mid-year review with the staff member's manager. Pina shared that as Chief of Staff, she manages non-academic performance evaluations, while COAH's principal and vice principal managed the academic staff performance evaluations. Pina shared that these offers were sent out after mid-year evaluations were conducted with each staff member in early March 2022.

Pina shared that of the unconditional offer letters that were sent out in March 2022, 89% of those staff plan to return to COAH in SY23. Pina noted that the three staff members who did not sign contracts for SY23 are either leaving the state or leaving education.

Pina noted that the staff members who received conditional offers, offers based on conditions towards performance progress, have had ongoing meetings with their managers about performance before receiving the offer in March 2022. Pina also shared that the final group of staff in the recommitment process were staff who received non-renewal letters. These positions will be eliminated from the COAH program in SY23 due to programmatic shifts.

Pina shared the the COAH leadership team has continued to brainstorm how to open up channels of communication throughout the school to encourage staff retention. Pina shared that the school has already posted for sixteen full time positions, with screening calls and interviews already well underway. Pina noted that according to data published by the Massachusetts Charter Association, COAH is ahead of the curve compared to other charter peers as COAH's open roles were posted two weeks ago.

Pina shared that the COAH team has spent time reviewing feedback from SY22 hiring to maximize capacity and tighten up hiring processes for SY23. Pina also shared that the team has removed past barriers to the barrier pool. These revisions include, but are not limited to, removing a cover letter in the application to eliminate the opportunity for unconscious bias from the hiring manager, and moving to a three stage hiring process that includes a phone screen with HR, a hiring manager discussion, and a work simulation for finalists.

Pina shared these tightened systems have already shown a positive impact, as there has been a large increase of the amount of applications that have been submitted in the last two weeks as compared to SY22. Pina also shared an overview of the new roles that will be added to the COAH program next school year (SY23), which include a full-time data manager, a physical education teacher, and a special services coordinator.

The Committee asked management more specifically how the COAH Team has refined some of the recruiting messages moving into SY23. Pina shared the hiring team has been focusing messaging on highlighting COAH as a small, tight-knit community that is focused on the civic development of all students. Pina shared that in interviews, hiring managers share about COAH specific programs that highlight this mission, including, but not limited to, COAH's City Project class, diversity, inclusiveness, civic engagement and equity (DICEE) initiatives, as well as the Fellows Program.

Pina shared that the Fellows program is well underway in hiring as well. Pina shared that when conducting initial phone screens, she has highlighted the longevity of fellows who have stayed at City on a Hill for years to come and become embedded in the City on a Hill community. The Committee discussed the longevity of COAH's school leaders setting COAH apart from other charters. Pina noted that the management team is planning for a full step back at the May 2022 Board retreat to look at the mission of COAH within the context of 2022 to align on who the school is now.

The Committee asked about degree requirements for staff as it related to hiring. Pina shared that the process for hiring in SY23 has been for HR to align with the hiring manager on the responsibilities for each open role in order to determine the education requirement for the role. The Committee discussed how this creates a more dynamic pipeline and allows for growth within the organization. The Committee also discussed sharing open roles with their network and how they could assist with recruitment.

The Committee asked if the job market has changed due to COVID-19, specifically, if Pina was seeing different requests for hiring in SY23. Pina shared that because COAH is a school setting, there is no work from home option for teaching positions. Pina shared that while she has not seen any unusual requests, one request that always is a topic of discussion with candidates in compensation.

The Committee asked management about dual enrollment partnerships for next year. Laura Edouard, Principal, shared that COAH will be partnering with UMASS Boston, a university that COAH has partnered with historically, for dual enrollment courses in SY23.

The Committee asked what the plan is for tutoring with tutorial eliminated in SY23. Pina shared that the Fellows Program is relaunching in SY23 and the program is built around the model that when a mentor teacher is paired with a mentee teacher, there is more capacity in that classroom for remediation in class. In addition, COAH will have a trained full-time teacher teaching remediation classes throughout SY23 as well. Pina also noted that programs like Stride, an online tutorial program that has been utilized in SY22, will also be available for students next year for any support needed outside of school.

III. Quarter Two & MAP Data Deep Dive

A. Quarter Two & MAP Data Deep Dive

Laura Edouard, shared updates around Quarter Two data, noting that Quarter Three was just completed, and that data update will be shared with the Committee at the May 2022 Academic Excellence Committee meeting.

Edouard shared trends in the Quarter Two data, which included, but were not limited to, averages continuing to be higher than SY21 in the majority of classes, 12th graders continuing to perform best, followed by 11th graders, as well as a general decrease in student performance from Quarter One.

Edouard noted that this is typical according to historical data, as well as there was a high spike of absences in Quarter Two due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Edouard shared that because of the amount of COVID-19 related absences, midterms had to be pushed back in order to allow for the most amount of students to take them.

Edouard shared comparative data in NWEA MAP, a nationally normed growth exam, and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) subjects comparing SY21 to SY22. Edouard noted that in the majority of those courses, students have shown improvements as compared to SY21.

Edouard shared comparative data in non-MCAS subjects as well, noting that the ELD targeted course has two students, as well as reminding the Committee about the ongoing action plan related to Spanish 1 which has been shared in prior Academic Excellence Committee meetings.

Edouard shared that the areas of concern are continuing to be addressed by the COAH leadership team, sharing that a trend in Quarter Two for lower performing biology students was poor attendance. Edouard shared that at Quarter Two parent/guardian

night, Biology teachers attempted to meet with each student's guardian who had been chronically absent in order to address the problem.

Edouard shared that parents were also given the resource an additional time to sign their students up for Stride tutoring for additional Biology support. Edouard shared that in Spanish 1, another 8 students were tested and moved up to Spanish 2, allowing the classes to combine into two sections. Edouard noted that both of these Spanish 1 sections have had a consistent teacher from the end of Quarter Two.

Edouard shared the the new teacher professional development group has also continued to meet throughout Quarter Two and Quarter Three, with new instructors receiving support through training sessions geared towards first year teachers.

Edouard also shared MAP data, noting that while the scores were generally low, the COAH team does not have growth data yet, just raw data for students. Edouard shared that students will take the growth exam again in Spring 2022, allowing for the team to have growth data to analyze.

Edouard shared that with the data the COAH team has, the team has worked with teachers in each subject area to teach them how to read and analyze their data, worked with teachers to parse out standards that need the most work and plan MAP re-teaching lessons for students, and have had students complete a reflection sheet to give them the opportunity to analyze their own MAP data.

Edouard shared that preparation for the Spring 2022 MAP test has already begun, with the Leadership team planning a schedule for the Spring 2022 that allows students to have time to take the test without rushing, as well as adjusting the messaging around the test to increase student buy-in.

IV. 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 6:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Edouard