



Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School
Minutes of the Board of Trustees

Draft

Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2021
Time: 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom Video Conference
Members present: Keith Blanchette, Pam Boisvert, Vivian Brooks, Linda Denault, Louis Fazen, Amy Herman, Jim Korman, Richard McGrath, Jennifer Melendez, Jessica Miller
Members absent: None
Staff present: Lisa DeTora, Jim Donahue, Melissa Hogan, Tina Krasnecky, Alex McConnon, Jasmin Rivas
Also present: Jessica Cournoyer

Order of Business:

Public Access 1 on Docketed Items*

1. Approval of minutes – October 27, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees.....Richard McGrath
 - **Motion: Approve the minutes of the October 27, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees**
2. Report of the Academic Excellence Committee.....Linda Denault
3. Report of the Finance Committee.....Keith Blanchette
 - **Vote to add signatories**
 - **Vote to accept the October 31, 2021 Financials**
4. Building Update.....Jim Donahue
5. Report of the Governance Committee.....Pamela Boisvert
 - **Vote to add Reed Hillman and Margo Ferrick to the Academic Excellence Committee**
 - **Update on process for nominating new board members**
6. Report of the Institutional Distinction, Dissemination, & Replication Committee...Vivian Brooks
7. Report of the Academy Culture & Community Committee.....Jessica Miller
8. New/other business

Public Access 2*

Adjournment

Documents and Exhibits:

- Draft minutes of the October 27, 2021 meeting
- FY22 Financial Performance – Ending October 31, 2021

- Authorized Bank Signers – Proposed Revision November 2021

Mr. McGrath called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Mr. McGrath conducted a roll call of the Board. Quorum was established.

Public Access 1 on Docketed Items

Mr. McGrath asked if there were any comments from members of the public. There were none.

1. *Approval of minutes – October 27, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees*.....Richard McGrath

- **Motion: Approve the minutes of the October 27, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees**

Motion: Approve the minutes of the October 27, 2021 meeting of the Board of Trustees.

By: Mr. Blanchette made the motion.

Second: Ms. Boisvert seconded the motion.

Mr. McGrath conducted a roll call of the Board.

Vote:

Mr. Blanchette: Approve.

Ms. Boisvert: Approve.

Ms. Brooks: Approve.

Dr. Denault: Approve.

Dr. Fazen: Approve.

Ms. Herman: Approve.

Mr. Korman: Approve.

Ms. Miller: Approve.

Ms. Melendez: Approve.

Motion passed.

2. *Report of the Academic Excellence Committee*.....Linda Denault

Dr. Denault said her committee met on November 2, 2021 and focused on MCAS results. Dr. Denault reported that OSA did very well with the exception of grade 3 math and grade 5 science. Dr. Denault said the goal remains the same which is for the students to exceed the state in achievement. Per Dr. Denault, the faculty is working on taking the analysis and turning it into instruction for each student. Ms. DeTora is meeting with the teachers/math coordinators to see what students need to succeed better. Ms. DeTora gave a brief presentation from the November 2, 2021 Academic Excellence Committee meeting.

Ms. Boisvert asked if there was somewhere where charter schools are compared to each other as opposed to the broader public school system. Dr. Denault said it can be broken out into to similar districts. Ms. DeTora said some are charter some are district which is matched by demographics. Ms. DeTora said she will find it for the Board and send it to them.

Dr. Fazen asked if they were teaching to the test. Dr. Denault said that they were teaching to the standards, not to the test. Per Dr. Denault, items will express a certain aspect, so OSA knows from standards what it needs to do but is not teaching to the test.

Mr. McGrath thanked Ms. DeTora for a wonderful report.

*3. Report of the Finance Committee.....*Keith Blanchette

Mr. Blanchette said the Finance Committee met on November 10, 2021. At that meeting, the committee voted to discuss adding an authorized signer to the account. Mr. Blanchette said currently for small checks, Mr. Donahue is a signer as long as the limit is under \$5,000. The Committee proposed Ms. DeTora as a new additional signer because she is the principal of OSA. Mr. Blanchette can sign up to \$100,000 and Mr. McGrath can sign unlimitedly. Mr. Blanchette said this request is specifically referencing the person in that position (OSA Principal).

Motion: Dr. Denault moved to recommend to have a vote to add the principal as an authorized signer and approve the authorized bank signers as revised in 2021.

Second: Dr. Fazen seconded the motion.

Mr. McGrath conducted a roll call of the Board.

Vote:

Mr. Blanchette: Approve.

Ms. Boisvert: Approve.

Ms. Brooks: Approve.

Dr. Denault: Approve.

Dr. Fazen: Approve.

Ms. Herman: Approve.

Mr. Korman: Approve.

Ms. Miller: Approve.

Ms. Melendez: Approve.

Motion passed.

Mr. Blanchette said the Committee also reviewed the October financials and the balance sheets are still healthy.

Motion: Mr. Blanchette moved to accept the October 31, 2021 Financials for OSA.

Second: Ms. Brooks seconded the motion.

Mr. McGrath conducted a roll call of the Board.

Vote:

- Mr. Blanchette: Approve.**
- Ms. Boisvert: Approve.**
- Ms. Brooks: Approve.**
- Dr. Denault: Approve.**
- Dr. Fazen: Approve.**
- Ms. Herman: Approve.**
- Mr. Korman: Approve.**
- Ms. Miller: Approve.**
- Ms. Melendez: Approve.**

Motion passed.

4. Building Update.....Jim Donahue

Mr. Donahue said he met with the Architects who have been engaged to do design work on the permitted buildings potentially for the school. Mr. Donahue updated the Architects on the amendment requests that were submitted through DESE and will be meeting with a team to walk the sites to look at different locations. Mr. Donahue hopes that by end of December, he will have a report laid out with options, schematics, and phases and will be in touch with the Chairman to see if there should be a special Board meeting.

Dr. Fazen asked if it would be possible to combine kindergarten through eighth grade or high school for the use in the Resource Center or the Library. Mr. Donahue said the research library at OSV is available for students when they are age appropriate. Per Mr. Donahue, they discussed a space for the middle school/lower levels where students would have access to technology, the ability to work with other students, and have materials/equipment they could use. Mr. Donahue said he would discuss this further with Ms. DeTora.

5. Report of the Governance Committee.....Pamela Boisvert

Ms. Boisvert said the Governance Committee is in a process of creating a draft policy to present to the Board. Per Ms. Boisvert, the policy is on identifying in recruiting and selecting future Trustees for OSA. It will also address the onboarding process once a candidate has been selected. Ms. Boisvert said it is critically important to get the right people on the Board and the process is part of that.

Ms. Boisvert said at their last meeting, the Governance Committee voted to recommend two new members for the Academic Excellence Committee: Reed Hillman and Margo Ferrick. Per Ms. Boisvert, Ms. Ferrick is currently working at Boston College, is a licensed social worker, and would bring a variety of strengths and skills to the OSA and Academic Excellence Committee. Mr. Donahue agreed that it would be a great opportunity to have Ms. Ferrick join the Committee. Ms. Rivas said she worked under Ms. Ferrick in Southbridge and with her experience, she would be a great addition.

Dr. Denault said it would be great to have these additions with Ms. Ferrick and Mr. Hillman for broadening input with people from the community. Ms. Boisvert said the Board already knows Mr.

Hillman’s commitment to OSA and he has a public service and educational background. Ms. Boisvert recommended these two candidates for appointment to the Committee.

Motion: To add Reed Hillman and Margo Ferrick to the Academic Excellence Committee for this coming year.

By: Dr. Denault made the motion.

Second: Mr. Blanchette seconded the motion.

Mr. McGrath conducted a roll call of the Board.

Vote:

Mr. Blanchette: Approve.

Ms. Boisvert: Approve.

Ms. Brooks: Approve.

Dr. Denault: Approve.

Dr. Fazen: Approve.

Ms. Herman: Approve.

Mr. Korman: Approve.

Ms. Miller: Approve.

Ms. Melendez: Approve.

Motion passed.

6. Report of the Institutional Distinction, Dissemination, & Replication Committee.....Vivian Brooks

Ms. Brooks said on November 11, 2021 she met with Christine Freitas and Chris Tieri and they spent time reviewing the finalized strategic plan and the spreadsheet for tracking. Per Ms. Brooks, the Institutional Distinction, Dissemination, & Replication Committee had a meeting scheduled for November 16, 2021 which they had to reschedule but in the meantime, she asked the Committee to look at their responsibilities and to provide input. Ms. Brooks noted that one of the first action items on the strategic plan sheet is brand structure and Mr. Donahue and Ms. Tieri have a meeting on that November 30, 2021 and will provide further updates at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Korman asked if repetitiveness on replication is something that has been added to the new strategic plan. Ms. Brooks said it was part of the discussion and what the Board approved for the 2021 to 2026 strategic plan. Mr. Donahue said it was not part of the early vision back in 2010. Mr. Donahue said OSV has interest in supporting the replication of OSA and talked about the idea of items being added to the management contract that individual schools might not be able to afford themselves. Mr. Donahue noted the importance of specialized education shared among a network of schools and said there is a lot of possibility.

Dr. Fazen said “replication” sounds like “duplication” and said that it sounded tight rather than trying to inspire and have other places emulate. Mr. Donahue there could be another word that might better characterize it. Ms. Herman suggested the word “collaboration”.

Ms. Brooks said “institutional distinction” brings together OSA of how it started to where it is now. Ms. Brooks noted that “replication” is about sharing the story and best practices so other schools

are not starting from scratch and can share in the learning experiences that OSA had. Ms. Brooks said this term is about replicating the spirit of the school and the successes of it.

Dr. Denault asked if the original plan noted that there would be dissemination and replication by DESE. Mr. Donahue said distinction and dissemination and emphasized the importance of having something for charter schools that does not exist in public schools and sharing practices that are part of innovation. Per Mr. Donahue, Ms. DeTora is reaching out with student-led conferences and sharing that aspect with schools. There have been conversations with Leslie University to offer classes, but Mr. Donahue wants to ensure the ascending districts have information on it. Mr. Donahue said DESE thinks dissemination is important and he added in replication.

Ms. Boisvert said OSA is unique with collaborating with a Museum and this model has been successful. Ms. Boisvert suggested looking ahead. Ms. Brooks said in the approved 2021 to 2026 strategic plan and charter renewal, the first two sentences talk speak on the vision. Ms. Brooks said the Committee is moving in the right direction and encouraged everyone to use final and approved strategic plan to refer to in terms of the vision, mission, and objectives. Mr. Donahue said there were a few museums who have reached out with interest.

Mr. McGrath noted the importance of the students' success and ensuring the fostering of good educators. Mr. McGrath said he is in favor of helping out other communities.

7. *Report of the Academy Culture & Community Committee*.....Jessica Miller

Ms. Miller said the Academy Culture & Community Committee has their first meeting on November 18, 2021. At the meeting, the Committee will be receiving roles and responsibilities, reviewing the strategic plan, and looking at action items/prioritizing work for the rest of the year.

8. *New/other business*

Mr. McGrath asked each member if they had any more input. There was none.

Public Access 2

Mr. McGrath asked if there were any comments from members of the public. There were none.

Adjournment

Mr. McGrath asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Ms. Herman moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Mr. Blanchette seconded the motion.

Mr. McGrath conducted a roll call of the Board.

Vote: All in favor.

OSACPS Board of Trustees minutes – 11/17/2021

Mr. McGrath adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.