



Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School  
Minutes of the Academy Culture & Community Committee

DRAFT

**Meeting Date:** Tuesday, January 17, 2023  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Zoom Video Conference  
**Members present:** Linda Denault, Jessica Miller, Geraldo Maldonado  
**Members absent:** Richard McGrath, Zaina Rivett\*  
**In attendance:** Lisa DeTora, Jamie Greenthal, Alex McConnon, Jasmin Rivas  
**Also present:** None

**Order of Business:**

Public Access 1 on Docketed Items\*

1. Approve the minutes of the November 1, 2022 meeting of the Academy Culture & Community committee.....Jessica Miller
2. Update on adding an assessment to the diversity plan.....Jasmin Rivas
3. Discussion of developing a community engagement strategy.....Committee
4. New/Other Business.....Jessica Miller

Public Access 2\*

Adjournment

**Documents and Exhibits:**

- Draft minutes of the November 1, 2022 meeting of the Academy Culture & Community Committee
- DEIAOSAggoalsbenchmarks

Ms. Miller called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

A Quorum was established and the minutes were presented.

*Public Access 1 on Docketed Items*

Ms. Miller asked if there were any comments from members of the public. There were none.

1. *Approve the minutes of the November 1, 2022 combined meeting of the Academic Excellence and Academy Culture & Community Committees*

Ms. Miller asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2022 meeting of the Academy Culture & Community Committee.

**Motion: Dr. Denault** moved to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2022 meeting of the Academy Culture & Community Committee.

**Second: Ms. Miller** seconded the motion.

**All in favor. (Mr. McGrath and Ms. Rivett – ABSENT)**

**Motion passed.**

2. *Update on adding an assessment to the diversity plan*

Ms. Rivas said she connected the benchmarks with the diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) goals and objectives plan.

Ms. Rivas went through the following benchmarks:

**DEIA Goals/Objectives #1: Awareness/Cultural Competence of staff:** Per Ms. Rivas, the assessment tool was created from a grant that was written through the Greater Worcester Community Foundation. OSV hired two consultants: Angele Goss and Soudie Tahmassebi-pour. The consultants and Ms. Rivas and working together as a pilot group which is participating in the assessment. Once the assessment tool/evaluation is complete, it can be utilized at the Village and OSA to measure cultural competency. The staff would take a pre and post survey that can be measured in pieces which is all connected to the assessment. The five year goal is to show 100% of the staff in the assessment.

Discussion ensued about the tool being measureable. Ms. Rivas will share the assessment tool once the pilot program is completed. Per Ms. Rivas, the tool can measure who has taken the assessment. There is also a Harvard Implicit Bias test so people can recognize theirs. Per Ms. Rivas, demonstrating empathy is connected to SEL and the SEL requirements in the curriculum. There will also be trainings in between these assessments to show improvement.

Ms. Rivas asked about adding another goal/objective “Awareness/Cultural Competence of board”. Ms. Miller said it is important that the Board is aware of resources available and said perhaps it could be added to the yearly Trustee survey.

**DEIA Goals/Objectives #2: Establish accessible resources:** Ms. Rivas said these questions can be put into already existing surveys that the school does for its families and students. For example, “How many of these books were read to students?” Ms. Rivas will also track whether families are familiar with the DEIA newsletter that will be created and circulated in the next year or so.

**DEIA Goals/Objectives #3: Enhance board, staff and student diversity in alignment with Strategic Plan:** Ms. Rivas said currently, Management does not ask for the demographic information and suggested adding it to a Board questionnaire.

Mr. Maldonado asked Ms. Rivas if there was a ceiling she was trying to reach. Ms. Rivas said a ceiling has not been defined but could be added if that is what the Board wanted.

Dr. Denault suggested that the word “marginalized” not be used. Ms. Rivas emphasized the importance in keeping up with the change in diversity in the student population.

*Mr. Burris joined the meeting at 3:23 p.m.*

**DEIA Goals/Objectives #4: Expand Curriculum and Instruction around DEIA:** Ms. Rivas said this comes from the DESE evaluations which connects back to DESE and their benchmarks. The goal is to exceed the accountability measure.

Ms. Miller asked if this was on the website. Ms. Rivas will send it over. Per Ms. Rivas, when DESE did a site visit for renewal, those are the indicators. Cultural proficiency is one of the indicators in the list of items that they look for.

Ms. Rivas will present this to the Board at their next meeting and added the pieces that were discussed.

*3. Discussion of developing a community engagement strategy*

Ms. Miller suggested looking at expanding members in the group and that having someone from the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) or [REDACTED] (PTSA) would be beneficial. Ms. Rivas suggested adding students as well.

Mr. Maldonado said the Fall Festival for Sturbridge and Southbridge would be a good way to engage the community. Ms. Miller emphasized the importance in getting more organized to figure out how to do outreach in the communities and develop a stand-alone plan for community engagement.

Dr. Denault suggested a simple survey of parents to see what will interest them in terms of attendance or participation with projects or events. Ms. Miller said the dances, math night, art night and Christmas by Candlelight are all popular. Per Ms. Miller, OSA is starting to do more outreach with the YMCA in Southbridge and suggested looking at other community and what they have in their areas. Ms. Miller emphasized the importance in getting a vision on what the strategy should be.

Ms. DeTora said the eighth grade would be a great class to pilot this with. Ms. Rivas suggested getting student projects on cable access television.

Mr. Burris suggested thinking about the timing if students join this committee and perhaps having a representative from each town. Ms. Miller suggested a mix between parents/students from all nine districts. Dr. Denault said there could be a liaison from each community even if they are not on the committee.

Mr. Maldonado had the idea that students could do a project researching math in 2023 vs. math in the 1830's. Per Mr. Maldonado, this could be an entire event.

Ms. Miller said she will work with Ms. Rivas, Mr. Donahue, and Ms. DeTora to produce draft goals for community engagement to form a draft to look at in March.

*4. New/Other Business*

Ms. Miller asked if there was any new or other business.

Dr. Denault asked if there were any updates on the gym/café space. Ms. DeTora suggested that this could go on the Board of Trustees agenda for January 25, 2023.

Mr. Maldonado asked if not expanding on the grades at the moment would have an effect on the café/gym. Ms. DeTora said once a decision is made on the expansion, there will be a brick and motor building but OSA will still have an additional space.

*Public Access 2*

Ms. Miller asked if there were any comments from members of the public. There were none.

**Motion: Mr. Maldonado** moved to adjourn the meeting.

**Second: Dr. Denault** seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**Motion passed.**

Ms. Miller adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.