



Equity and Excellence for All Students

Old Town Academy K-8 Charter School Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting

MEETING LOCATION

2120 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, CA 92110

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

6:00 p.m. PDT

Call to order

A regular meeting of the Old Town Academy K-8 Charter School Board of Directors, held at 2120 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, CA 92110 on Wednesday, March 15, 2017, was called to order by Ken Morris at 6:09 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Heidi Callan.

Attendance-Board Members

Board Member	Present	Absent
Kenneth Morris, President	X	
James Gartland, Vice President	X	
Ryan Callan, Treasurer	X	
Cathie Berlin, Secretary	X	
Jon Centofranchi, Principal	X	
Gabriel Solis, Teacher Seat	X	
Sarah Ozeroff, Member	X	
Chris Celentino, Member	X	
Christopher Cole, Member	X	
Mark Burgess, Member	X	
Elio Celentino, Student Member (non-voting)*		X
Emma Denton, Student Member (non-voting)*	X	

*Eighth grade students will be sharing one position, which is a non-voting position

10 of 10 Voting Board members were present, constituting a quorum.

Members of the public in attendance (as noted from sign-in sheet):

- Bob Hamm
- Nathalie Hirsch
- Laura Studebaker
- Monika Hanft
- Heidi Callan
- Delano Jones
- Sandra Gartland
- Natalie Holford
- Rose Denton

Public comment

Rose Denton commented (in response to Chris Cole’s board member comment below) that she believes that there is a bill currently proposed in California related to later start times for schools.

Board member comments

Chris Cole mentioned that he recently saw board member Emma Denton do magnificently at the karate event. He also asked the board to consider whether it would make sense for the school day at OTA to start 30 or 60 minutes later. There have been studies done which show positive results from such a change. After discussion by several board members about different aspects of such a change, Mr. Centofranchi commented that such a change involves a lot of input and wouldn’t occur for another school year. He suggested that we gather opinions from all of our various stakeholders, beginning with the OTA staff.

Chris Celentino complimented the school and Mr. Centofranchi by noting that Our Lady of Peace has invited OTA to its annual private leadership conference for 6th and 7th grade students. He noted that this is the first time in 20 years that the school has invited a public school to this event. He also encouraged the school to keep in mind its traditions (available to read in the handbook under “OTA Traditions”). These are written in the original charter. One example is that the school has always held the gala event the same weekend as Grandparents’ Day. This was done for good reason, the least of which is that it allowed more parents to attend the gala as several grandparents traveled to San Diego for the special day, allowing the possibility of babysitting for a greater number of families.

Ken Morris acknowledged all of the hard work that’s going into this year’s gala, and encouraged everyone to support the event and to buy their tickets!

Approval of minutes

Minutes of the prior meeting of February 15, 2017 were available for any members of the public to review and comment on. Motion to approve the minutes of the prior regular meeting of the board dated Wednesday, February 15, 2017, was made by Ryan Callan, and seconded by Chris Cole.

Vote results: 9 board members voted in favor, and Cathie Berlin abstained due to absence at the last meeting. The motion carries.

Reports/Presentations for Discussion items only (with possible action to be taken)

OTA Parent Foundation Update: Monika Hanft and Sandra Gartland

This item was moved up in the agenda by request from the Foundation.

Monika Hanft mentioned the community-building event which happened this month at Skate World in Linda Vista. This was a popular event for all ages, was really well attended and was lots of fun. Monika presented the board with the research the Foundation has done on different playground options. The proposals included an improvement of the kindergarten play area, installation of some type of play structure, etc. Monika discussed the various costs, risks, and benefits of each option.

Sandra Gartland then gave the board an update on the work going on behind the scenes for the gala. She presented the board with the results of their survey of parents in regard to the “funded item(s)” for the auction. The top items important to parents were: (1) a play structure; (2) specialty programs, especially music, technology, and foreign language; and (3) project-based learning. Sandra is seeking guidance from the board as to which items to highlight for the fundraising, especially as the Foundation will be putting together a video to highlight these items.

Treasurer/Fiscal Report: Ryan Callan/Delano Jones.

Ryan Callan presented the board with the high-level view from the interim Q2 quarterly report, which shows the district where we are vs. where we said we'd be. Things are looking great financially, especially because of the extra revenue the school received from the delayed SB 740 funds.

Delano Jones further explained the interim report, and confirmed for the board that this sent to the school district today. The school is trending with its goals and is on budget.

Motion was made to approve Delano submitting the report to the school district.

Motion made by: Chris Celentino

Motion seconded by: Ryan Callan

Vote: All board members approved the motion, the motion carries.

Principal's Report: Jon Centofranchi.

Jon Centofranchi updated the board on the most recent staff meeting regarding restorative circles. We had a professional representative guide the discussion and the topic was 'doing things with students vs. to students'. April's staff meeting will be related to a professional development session on Project Based Learning. The prospective parents' tours have ended for the year, and overall he gave a tour to approximately 150 - 180 parents. He had a visit recently to the Health Science Middle & High School, which was very positive. He was impressed with the school, and thought that what they are doing very much lines up with OTA. They are open to being a feeder from OTA. Spring break is coming up, and Friday is a spirit day (and not a minimum day). He spoke about the upcoming talent show, but noted that Emma will speak further to it.

Ken Morris mentioned that the tax lien of approximately \$17,000 on the school has now been resolved thanks to the hard work of Chris Celentino, Jon Centofranchi, and Nathalie Hirsch. The issue sprung from the transition to and from Tri Valley, and the state didn't recognize that certain taxes had been paid. Everything is straightened out now.

Jon spoke about the struggle the school has been having related to excessive student absences, which has caused the school to lose a tremendous amount of funding. The board discussed various ways of solving the issue, and Ken Morris suggested that we look at the handbook as it relates to excused vs. non-excused absences, and perhaps require a doctor's note at a certain point. Also, if a student is sick a lot, the school should know so that we can make the appropriate accommodations.

LCAP Advisory Panel Update: Jon Centofranchi.

Nothing new to report.

Teacher Liaison Report: Gabriel Solis.

Gabriel Solis reported that there will be a staff meeting tomorrow, the topics will be Grandparents' Day, the gala, and the annual poetry contest. He reported on the events from "Pi Day" (March 14th), and noted that one 7th grader memorized 206 digits of pi. He also gave highlights of the various projects that the students are working on.

The minutes note that Ryan Callan left early after this presentation, 9 voting board members remain, constituting a quorum.

Office Manager's Report: Nathalie Hirsch.

Nathalie Hirsch reported that 4 students as of right now, who will not be returning next year. Next year's incoming students will include 22 siblings (16 in kindergarten alone). We have received 245 applications so far, and 118 of those are from kindergarten. The school is getting rid of the Macs and moving to PCs. To date, the school has lost about \$16,500 due to excessive student absences. As Ken mentioned, the EDD lien has been dismissed.

Nathalie updated the board on the Form 700s, which are due by Monday of next week and there are still a few board members who have to submit theirs.

Student Representative Report: Emma Denton

Emma Denton spoke about the upcoming talent show, an event created and run solely by students. They have had 30 students try out, and 18 were selected to perform. The show will be on 4/14 at Pacific Martial Arts karate studio, thank you to this studio for generously allowing this use. 4/14 is also a half day and a spirit/free dress day. 3/24 is also a spirit/free dress day (pajama themed), but is not a half day. Pi day was great, several parents brought in pies, and the day was a hit. The bake sale raised \$447 for the upcoming Yosemite trip.

OTA Strategic Planning Advisory Panel Report: Ken Morris.

Ken Morris updated the board. The panel consists of Cathie Berlin, Sarah Ozeroff, Jon Centofranchi, and Ken Morris, with help from Meredith Lurie. He explained how each item from the brainstorming session was assigned to certain vision statements. Meredith will be meeting with Mr. C to assign any remaining goals. We are hoping to present this to the board in draft format at the next meeting.

Safety Advisory Panel Update: Sarah Ozeroff

Nothing new to report.

Real Estate Advisory Panel Update: James Gartland

James Gartland updated the group on the Prop 39 sites which have been offered to us by the district. The deadline to respond is April 4th. Our CCSA representative recommends that we keep our options open. We are pursuing a few other options, it's very early on right now for specifics.

Chris Celentino gave an update from Washington, and the new administration. Washington D.C. is

challenging school districts, like ours, who are having budgetary issues, to make underutilized space available to charter schools like ours. He encouraged us all to keep vigilant, because we have a great thing going with our school. He wonders what will happen if students are offered a monetary voucher to go wherever they please. This will be a fundamental challenge that we will face.

OTA Board Election Advisory Panel Update: Laura Studebaker

We have one candidate, Sarah Ozeroff. Voting will go live soon. Laura mentioned that she has her notes put together in a way which will make it easy to hand off to another parent next year.

New business action items and Advisory Panel reports requiring action

Action Item: SDUSD Proposition 39 Decision.

Jon Centofranchi reported that the school district has offered OTA a shared site with Walker Elementary and Wangenheim middle school in Mira Mesa. It is a shared space of approximately 11 classrooms total. He has not yet reached out to either school's administrators to let them know that this is on the table.

The board discussed not rejecting the current offer, but to keep the door open regarding options that are agreeable to us.

Motion was made to delegate to the advisory committee, in conjunction with Mr. Centofranchi and our advisor at CCSA to draft a response which keeps the dialogue open and does not terminate the transaction without binding the school.

Motion made by: Chris Celentino

Motion seconded by: Cathie Berlin

Vote: All 9 remaining board members approved the motion, the motion carries.

Action Item: Action Item: Approve 2/10/17 to 3/10/17 Check Register listing (distributed in advance of Wednesday, March 15, 2017)

Motion was made to approve the check register as presented.

Motion made by: Chris Celentino

Motion seconded by: Chris Cole

Vote: All 9 remaining board members approved the motion, the motion carries.

Action Item: Approve Christy White and Associates as Auditors for the 2016- 2017 school year audit report.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by: Chris Celentino

Motion seconded by: Cathie Berlin

Vote: All 9 remaining board members approved the motion, the motion carries.

Public Comment on Closed Session Items

None.

Closed Session – With possible action to be taken

The board entered closed session at 8:00 p.m. regarding:

- 8a. Conference with Legal Counsel; Pending litigation--OTA v. FPLG (legal counsel related to former Donahue matter)
- 8b. Conference with Principal on student issues
 - IEP provision dispute
- 8c. Conference with Principal on staffing and salary issues

Report on closed session items

The board came out of closed session at 9:30 p.m. and had the following information to report:

Item 8a: nothing new to report.

Item 8b: the board agreed to retain the legal services of Gerard, Edwards, Stephens & Tucker to represent OTA.

Item 8c: nothing new to report.

As to the OTA Parent Foundation request from earlier in the meeting regarding the fund a need items for the Gala, the board agreed to have the focus be on the playground structure, humanities items (like art and music), and project-based learning.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.