

Board Meeting Minutes January 19, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Directors for KIPP Chicago Schools (collectively, the “Board” or “Directors,” and individually each a “Director”) was held via conference call on Wednesday, January 19, 2022. Board members present and participating in the meeting were Zaid Alsikafi, Suzanne Campion, Benjamin Chereskin, Paris Clark, and April Montgomery Goble.

Also present for all or portions of the meeting by invitation of the Board were: Domonique Battle (A Better Chicago), Shanan Egger (Accountant), Peter Gooden (VP for Equity & Inclusion), Jennifer Hodges (VP of Whole Child Fund & Community Impact), Amy Pouba (Superintendent), Milton Rodriguez (Senior VP of Growth Strategy & Development), Michael Salmonowicz (VP of Operations), and Mariah Schroeder (VP of Impact & Innovation).

The meeting commenced at 10:04am CT. Mr. Chereskin stated that the meeting had been called for the purposes stated in the notice of meeting previously given to each Director and confirmed that all members could hear and be heard. Mr. Chereskin also noted that a quorum was present at the meeting for purposes of conducting business of the School, under the adjustment to the Open Meetings Act (due to the COVID-19 situation) that waives the requirement for a physical quorum.

Mr. Salmonowicz noted that the meeting of the Board was advertised to the public both online and at school sites in accordance with OMA regulations. No members of the public attended.

Review of Minutes

Mr. Chereskin directed the Board to the previously circulated minutes for the September 22, 2021 and November 1, 2021 meetings. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for both meetings.

KIPP Chicago Update

Ms. Montgomery Goble expressed that “the center is holding,” as the organization continues to navigate the challenges of the COVID landscape. She also expressed appreciation for Ms. Pouba’s leadership in the work of keeping students in school while also prioritizing teacher safety.

Ms. Pouba provided an update on the January 6 return to school. She noted that KIPP Chicago’s schools were prepared for Omicron prior to the spike occurring, with approximately 60% of students being PCR tested each week for entire school year. In the days leading up to January 6, 75% of students and nearly 100% of staff members were tested via SHIELD Illinois.

Ms. Pouba reviewed YTD attendance and highlighted the impact of Omicron on daily attendance rates due to positive COVID cases and the resultant quarantines.

Ms. Pouba relayed that TNTP survey results and teacher retention numbers show that staff culture remains strong.

Ms. Pouba reviewed fall MAP data for reading compared to that of fall 2019.

Mr. Chereskin asked about interventions and additional instructional time for students.

Ms. Pouba replied that she anticipates offering additional after school academics – in addition to existing extracurriculars – as well as summer academic programming.

Ms. Pouba reviewed fall MAP data for math compared to that of fall 2019.

Ms. Pouba noted that SEL programming has continued to progress despite the obstacles from COVID, e.g., RULER SEL curriculum, sexual health education, and enrichment programming.

Mr. Alsikafi inquired about the teacher pipeline.

Ms. Pouba replied that this is always a focus, but the organization will need to focus even more on teacher development as more teachers potentially leave the profession across the country and candidates are potentially less experienced.

Mr. Salmonowicz noted that a high number of new teachers are referred by current staff members.

Mr. Rodriguez provided a development update, and noted that due to COVID it is unlikely that an in-person fundraising event would be held in the spring.

Mr. Rodriguez expressed appreciation for the generous support from A Better Chicago in launching a new food pantry.

Ms. Hodges noted that the physical pantry is at KIPP Academy Chicago.

Ms. Hodges provided a Whole Child Initiative update, including an expansion of the Penn Foster program to support parents in earning their high school diplomas; a parent identity program in partnership with Stedman Graham, who facilitated the first session at KIPP Ascend Primary; and holiday meal distribution for students & families via a partnership with Chi Fresh Kitchen.

Mr. Salmonowicz provided an update on the KIPP Academy Chicago Primary facility.

Finance Update

Mr. Salmonowicz provided an FY22 funding update.

Mr. Egger reviewed Q1 financials.

Board Governance

Mr. Salmonowicz reviewed the timeline for completing the Illinois charter training modules.

New Business

Mr. Chereskin expressed appreciation to the leadership team for keeping things moving forward and exhibiting resilience and focus during a very challenging time.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:39am.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 30 at 10:00am.

Michael Salmonowicz
Michael Salmonowicz, Secretary