

FINAL APPROVED 19 MAY 2022

Minutes

March 16, 2022 Meeting

UChicago Charter School Board of Directors

March 16, 2022 at 5:04 p.m.

At The Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice, Classroom W1b,
969 East 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637

Attendees

Board of Directors Members in attending in person: D. Abebe (presiding), T. Island-Childress, P. Ziegler, K. Callow-Wright; S. Vasquez

Board of Directors Members absent: Ivan Samstein

Also in attendance in person: UCCS Staff: T. Barnett, T. Pajakowski; UEI staff C. Epstein, U. Mardyla, J. Nowaczewski.

President's Opening Remarks

President Abebe welcomed everyone to the meeting and noting that a quorum was present of four members. President Abebe acknowledged that three instances of gun violence had touched UCCS' students and their families. He extended his condolences to the families and to the UCCS community. He expressed gratitude to the UCCS leaders, especially Woodlawn Interim Head of Campus Donald Gordon, Interim High School Director Eugene Robinson and CEO Tanika Island Childress, stressing that they were three shining examples of how UCCS extends itself for its families. He noted that the CEO would share more during the meeting regarding UCCS' support for its families.

Approval of Nov. 18, 2021 Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

President Abebe asked for a Motion to approve the Nov. 18, 2021 Board Meeting minutes. Ms. Callow-Wright made a Motion to approve the Nov. 18, 2021 minutes as presented, and Dean Gorman-Smith seconded the Motion. All members present voted in favor of approval.

Public Participation

The Agenda for the Meeting of the Board of Directors noting the meeting was in person at the Crown Family School was published on the UChicago Charter's website and at its campuses. However, no member of the public came forward to speak during the Public Participation section of the meeting.

CEO's Report

Support for Families (5:09 p.m.)

The CEO took a moment to thank Director of Partnerships and Community Engagement Todd Barnett and Coordinator of Community Engagement Latonya Hill for their support of the UCCS families whose lives had been touched by the violence of the last few weeks. The CEO noted that one of our Directors has had experience with this kind of trauma, and has been invaluable as a guiding force in this time. The CEO also thanked the University for its continued support and resources provided to UCCS in so many ways. When Board Member Ms. Callow-Wright asked what Board members could do, the CEO noted that often support is truly welcomed in the months after the initial incident, when attention has waned, but the grief and hardship are still present.

Attendance, Testing & College Reports (5:15 p.m.)

The CEO shared attendance data with the Board via a power-point that is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The CEO noted contrasting directions from CPS about reporting attendance during periods of quarantine, compared with UCCS' attendance records, which was still under investigation. The Board discussed the data regarding attendance at CPS schools, and the relevance of attendance data during renewal.

The CEO referenced slides 4 through 7, indicating that these slides gave a preview of the academic reporting for the year that would be provided in more depth at the May Annual Meeting. Slide 7 previewed College readiness data and FAFSA completion rates, at 86% as of the March Board Meeting.

Quarterly Budget Report FY22 (5:38 p.m.)

UEI CFO Mardyla reported that the Charter is projecting a balanced budget for FY22. She noted that UCCS had received ESSR funding in the amount of \$2.9 million a year, of which \$2 million is designed to cover special costs related to COVID-19. She noted that these funds were provided to UCCS in December by CPS. Chief Operating Officer Charna Epstein of the Urban Education Institute noted that funding for the new Woodlawn building was impacted favorably by these additional funds.

CFO Mardyla noted that personnel costs were under budget, and, that while this saved funds, it was not the problem that the school wanted to have, given that some positions had remained open for the entire school year. Expenses for substitute teachers, due to open positions, and increased absences have seen an increase in FY23, especially at the Woodlawn Middle and High School campus. The CFO noted that UCCS would use funding this year to buy ahead for next year in terms of improving its academic programs.

The CFO noted that CPS holds charters harmless in terms of enrollment, so that even though the actual UCCS enrollment is currently 1407, the count for revenue purposes is 1469, which will not be adjusted. The CFO noted that all campuses were actively working to boost enrollment numbers, and accepting students into grades previously not open to new students, such as 4th and 5th grades at the elementary schools, and all grades of the high school.

The CFO noted that it was especially important to reach a balanced budget by year end, given that this summer, UCCS must file its 5-Year application for renewal.

FY23 Budget Assumptions (5:48 p.m.)

CFO Mardyla presented the UCCS FY23 Budget Assumptions via a power point, which is attached as Exhibit B. The CFO shared that no guidance had yet been provided by CPS regarding the per pupil amounts for FY23 or the ESSR funds that charters can expect in FY23; the budget has built in a 2% increase as an estimate, along with a conservative amount for philanthropic giving. The CFO noted that the public funds depend on enrollment, which was addressed separately earlier. In terms of increased expenses, the FY23 budget includes a 3% increase for all Charter employee salaries, and a 5% increase in facilities costs. Health care benefits are still under negotiation, but a 20% increase was budgeted. Similarly, the University's Risk Management is budgeted for a 20% increase. Summer programs are also still under review. On page 6 of the Exhibit, philanthropic support is displayed over time, noting the height of giving was \$6 million in 2009. The CFO also highlighted certain other decreases, such as CPS' coverage of special education costs, noting that CPS pays \$1 million less than in previous years. The timing of staff offer letters, anticipated to be given to staff on April 8, was discussed, as was the fact that a 3% raise is higher than the past half-dozen years, some of which featured a 0% or 1% increase

only. The variability of benefit costs was also discussed. Finally, the CFO noted that a one-time technology program to obtain more home learning devices for UCCS students was being pursued.

COVID19 – Test to Stay, Vaccination Clinics (6:05 p.m.)

Special Topic: Renewal – Overview of Process (6:07 p.m.)

CEO Tanika Island-Childress shared with the Board that a memo providing an overview of the Renewal process had been included in their Board Books. She previewed for the Board that the UChicago Charter School was up for its 5-year renewal with the Chicago Public Schools in 2022. She shared that for the past several years, CPS had been changing its focus away from Academics, Finance and Operations, to a in-depth focus on Special Education Services and Disciplinary Rates. She shared key timeline dates, which include preliminary findings from CPS regarding UCCS’ performance in May 2022, UCCS’ application for renewal due on July 29, 2022 and an eventual vote on UCCS’ renewal for a term of years, anticipated for December 2022. The CEO asked Ms. Nowaczewski to review a power point with more detailed information concerning the Renewal process, and UCCS’ Renewal Lead Team and their approach. Ms. Nowaczewski shared the power point with the Board and answered questions. The power point is attached as Exhibit C.

Executive Session (6:21 p.m.)

At approximately 6:21 p.m. Ms. Callow-Wright moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter as allowed by the Open Meetings Act exceptions clause, and Ms. Vasquez seconded the motion. All Board members present voted in favor, and the Board entered Executive Session.

Return to Open Session and Motion

At approximately 6:37 p.m. the Board returned to Open Session.

New Business & Adjournment.

President Abebe asked for any new business, but hearing none, asked for a motion for adjournment. On a voice vote of acclimation, the Board adjourned the March 16, 2022 Meeting at 6:39 p.m.

FINAL Minutes 16 March 2022 Regular Meeting FINAL APPROVED 19 May 2022