

**FINAL APPROVED 16 MARCH 2022**

**Minutes**

**Nov. 18, 2021 Meeting**

**UChicago Charter School Board of Directors**

Nov. 18, 2021 at 5:05 p.m.

The University of Chicago Charter School

At Chapin Hall, First Floor, Room 119, 1313 East 60<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, IL 60637

**Attendees**

Board of Directors Members in attendance in person: D. Abebe (presiding), T. Island-Childress, P. Ziegler, Ivan Samstein

Board of Directors Members present via remote per vote of the Board: K. Callow-Wright

Board of Directors Members absent: Vice President of the Board Dean Gorman-Smith; S. Vasquez

Also in attendance in person: UCCS Staff Director Sergeant, Director Woods, Todd Barnett and UEI staff C. Epstein, U. Mardyla, J. Nowaczewski.

**President's Opening Remarks & Vote to Allow Remote Participation**

President Abebe welcomed everyone to the meeting and noting that a quorum was present of four members, he asked for a motion to allow Member Callow-Wright to participate via remote means. Treasurer Samstein so moved, Ms. Ziegler seconded the motion, and all Board members present voted to allow remote participation. Ms. Callow-Wright joined shortly thereafter.

President Abebe acknowledged the serious tragedy of a fatal shooting of a University of Chicago graduate student on 53<sup>rd</sup> street in Hyde Park just a few days earlier in November. He also recognized that this horrible event was one of the many instances of gun violence that continues to impact our entire community. He expressed gratitude to the UCCS leaders for doing all that they were doing to stabilize and contribute to a safe environment inside and around UCCS' campuses for UCCS students.

**Review of Nov. 4, 2021 Advisory Council Meeting**

Board and Council Member Patrice Ziegler provided a summary of the Advisory Council Meeting of Nov. 4, 2021. Ms. Ziegler noted that the Advisory Council had discussed UCCS' COVID-19 safety protocols and current vaccination efforts for staff and students. She noted that it appeared that parents were supportive of the protocols, and that UCCS was pleased that to date, it did not appear that there was any transmission of COVID in UCCS schools.

Ms. Ziegler noted that the Council had also discussed partnerships and how the Council could help strengthen partnerships at all UCC campuses. Ms. Ziegler shared that more would be forthcoming on this topic in future meetings.

**Approval of Sept. 23, 2021 Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting**

President Abebe asked for a Motion to approve the Sept. 23, 2021 Board Meeting minutes. Treasurer Samstein made a Motion to approve the Sept. 23, 2021 minutes as presented, and Ms. Ziegler 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 Chapin Hall 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**

CEO Tanika Island-Childress took a moment to acknowledge and introduce Director Shamilya Woods, who had presented at the Nov. 4 Advisory Council Meeting, with Director Sergeant, and who would be presenting later at the Board meeting, as the new Director of the UCCS Donoghue campus. The CEO said Director Woods had hit the ground running and was doing an excellent job leading the campus, especially in light of the continuing demands of running a school during a pandemic. The CEO highlighted that Director Woods had just hosted a Vaccine Clinic at Donoghue to offer pediatric vaccines to UCCS' elementary students.

### **NKO**

The CEO asked Director Sergeant to begin the presentation with information on attendance at NKO. The Presentation of the Elementary Schools Data is attached hereto as Exhibit A. Director Sergeant noted that NKO's year-to-date attendance was at 90.6% compared to 96.9% last year. She also presented data on attendance during NKO's remote days vs in person days in the current school year. The Board discussed whether it would be helpful in the future to present different comparisons of UCCS' attendance to CPS, or other charters.

Director Sergeant reviewed academic data for NKO, noting that it was important to remember that because of the pandemic and the requirements of remote learning, students now in the third grade had had very little in person school time in their first and second grade years. She also noted that the numbers of students with IEPs was growing at NKO, which meant that it was likely another teacher for students with special needs would need to be hired. The Board discussed IEPs, and the time and processes used to create special education plans.

The Board discussed NKO's current and desired future partnerships. The CEO shared that the examples named on Exhibit A were illustrative only, and not a full listing. Board members asked how the University could do more in some areas. Ms. Ziegler noted she was working with UCCS leadership on partnership issues as part of her service on the Board and Council.

Director Sergeant shared with the Board that the mental health and wellness needs of staff and students were demanding and challenging due in large part to the pandemic, as well as societal stresses. NKO was using all resources, including outside referrals, as well as internal projects, such as a Kindness Club, art therapy sessions and dress down days as a morale boost for staff.

### **Donoghue**

Director Woods thanked the CEO for her kind introduction and expressed her gratitude to Director Sergeant for serving as her mentor. She noted that Donoghue's attendance had just reached 92% year-to-date; this compared to 96% in 2021-2022. Director Woods noted that Donoghue was also experiencing slower gains in students' reading as they returned from the pandemic's remote learning program. She noted that Donoghue has a higher number of students with special needs, and more special needs staff than NKO, and also discussed IEPs in process. Director Woods, like Director Sergeant, highlighted the many social and emotional needs of staff and students this school year. She related that she has tried to address staff needs in a variety of ways, such as bowling outings and social workers brought in for small

group work with Donoghue staff. To reward student behavior and boost student morale, Donoghue has created “Donoghue Dollars” which can be earned in a variety of ways, with the ability to “go shopping” once certain levels are reached.

### **Finance Report FY22 Budget**

UEI CFO Mardyla reported that the Charter School is presently showing a “profit,” but that the budget will even out and be balanced soon. She noted that revenue appeared to be up because spending was slower due to pandemic-related issues. She noted that school fees had been budgeted for a smaller amount due to the certain activities having been cancelled due to the pandemic. She noted that some philanthropic dollars were still expected.

The CFO noted that expenses were lower than anticipated, especially in the personnel lines, due open positions and fewer applicants for some positions. Vacancies still remain for aides, for example, and for certain specialty teacher positions, such as the High School sciences. The technology budget appears overspent, but this was a deliberate attempt to secure technology resources early in the year.

The CFO addressed the distribution of ESSA funds of approximately \$500 to \$750 per child from the federal government through CPS for COVID-19 related supports. These funds are meant to “supplement, not supplant” and to assist with and accelerate learning to diminish any pandemic-caused learning gap while also helping to maintain a safe school environment. The funds can be used for academic support personnel, such as tutors, social workers, lunchroom and other support staff. It is also appropriate to use the funds for COVID-19 related needs, including supplies for safety and for cleaning. At UCCS, some of these funds have been used to cover teachers who cover for other teachers as substitutes, when substitutes are not available from UCCS’ substitute teacher vendors. Teachers are paid a stipend of \$30 an hour for these subbing services.

### **Executive Session**

At approximately 6:18 p.m. Treasurer Samstein moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter as allowed by the Open Meetings Act exceptions clause, and Ms. Ziegler seconded the motion. All Board members present in person and via zoom voted in favor, and the Board entered into Executive Session. The Directors Woods and Sergeant were excused from the Board Meeting.

### **Return to Open Session and Motion**

At approximately 6:32 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 Nov. 18, 2021 Meeting at 6:35 p.m.

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