

Board of Trustees—Minutes
January 18, 2024

Trustees Present: Tracy Hampton, Tasheem Quayenortey, Peggy Culver, Eric London & Evena Everett (video conference)

Absent: Basil Smikle, Jon Sichel, Rodney Capel & June Smith,

Executive Staff Present: Leonard Goldberg, Emily Samuels, Jessica Marcu, Joanne Hazel, Kaitlin Francis & Sade McCaw

Public Notification: Notice of meeting sent to Amsterdam News for addition to Events Calendar (January 10, 2024) and added to OCS website (January 10, 2024). Attending Members of the Board of Trustees met via Zoom at 5:00pm.

Adoption of December Board of Trustees’ Minutes

A vote to approve the minutes from the December 14, 2023 BOT meeting was taken with all in favor and no dissensions.

OCS Report to the Board

- Leonard Goldberg, CEO
 - Admission Department Update
 - New team will be introduced at the February Board meeting. Applications have begun to come in for the 24-25 School Year and we continue to accept and enroll students for the 23-24 School Year.
 - OCS School Update and Differentiation Professional Development, Joanne Hazel, Middle School Principal
 - Teachers tend to “teach to the middle”. Differentiation usually happens to the “bottom” while the “top” students tend to be left on their own. Beginning this month, a series of Professional Development sessions for teachers will concentrate on developing intentionally differentiated lesson plans and classroom instruction.
 - Middle School Computer Based Testing, Sade McCaw, Deputy Head of School
 - OCS is all set with both bandwidth and technology to administer Middle School Math & ELA (April and May) and Science (May and June) computer-based state tests. Teachers have students practicing in classes and the first simulation of the tests will take place the week of January 29, 2024. Students are already used to typing responses and most are very comfortable with this form of testing. A major benefit to this form of testing will be for students with IEPs that allow for the test to be read and reread to them. They will be provided with headsets and the computer program will read the passages to them as many times as necessary. October PSAT testing was computer-based and beginning in March the SATs will be also.

- January Regents, Kaitlin Francis, High School Principal
 - There will be no High School classes in session next week due to Regents' administration. The January Regents are offered as "retakes" for students who have not passed a particular Regents or if they wish to get a higher score. Approximately 70 High School students are scheduled to take the tests next week.
- SEL Program Update, Victoria Findley, School Psychologist
 - Last year students and staff voiced concerns over previous Social Emotional Learning Curriculum. They found it repetitive and student engagement was low. In response, a change was made to We Do It For The Culture curriculum, which is rooted in hip hop culture/current events, is created for black and brown students and provides interactive activities.
 - 2 Professional Developments were held before implementation of new curriculum. We conducted a feedback survey after Q1 and students expressed they prefer homogeneous gendered classes; as they feel more comfortable with difficult conversations. We have since implemented these changes and will follow up to be sure that the new curriculum is meeting the social emotional needs of OCS students.
- Finance Update, Anthony Napolitano, Arabella Advisors
- OCS 20th Anniversary
 - Board Sub-Committee Meeting call will take place on Tuesday, January 22, 2024

Executive Session

The Board moved to Executive Session to discuss Legal and Personnel Issues.

Communication from the Public

There were no communications from the public.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.