



## **Board Meeting Minutes**

An in-person meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of Creative Minds International Public Charter School (the “School”) was held on May 22, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

The following Board Members participated: Tim Abram (virtually), Heather Curtis, Imani Davis (6:03 pm), Dr. Art Fields, Corey Gordon, Manny Hernandez, Dr. Lynn Jennings (virtually), Mike Liddell, Navin Nayak, and Holly Oliver.

Also participating from CMI school leadership and staff: Chuck Jackson, Executive Director and ex-officio board member; Nayamka Long, CAO, and Craig Bednarovsky, COO.

### **1. Opening Items**

- Heather Curtis, filling in for Secretary, conducted a roll call of Trustees in attendance.
- With a quorum present, Board Chair Navin Nayak called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and provided opening remarks.
- March 2023 Board Meeting Minutes were presented for consideration.
  - Motion: Approve March 2023 Board Meeting Minutes (Motion by Corey Gordon, Second by Mike Liddell). Motion passed unanimously (Holly Oliver abstained as she was not in attendance at the March meeting).

### **2. Executive Director Report (Chuck Jackson)**

- Enrollment
  - 100% fully enrolled meeting CMI’s internal target which is more than the city target
  - 613 students next year
- Staffing updates
  - On track to exceed 90% staff retention rate
    - 3rd year in a row to exceed 90%
  - Investing \$2.5 million into teachers salaries next year
  - Lorna Dill has been promoted to Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction - she will directly manage the 3 school directors and focus on pedagogy and IPC
  - Dr. Taiwo has been promoted to Executive Director of Inclusion
  - Jessie Curry will return to CMI to a new position of Director of School Performance

- CMI working with consulting firm, See Honor, to work on workplace culture work
- Academic
  - PARCC testing completed
  - End of Year assessments beginning
  - Hired consultants to do DEI work with 4th grade team and students - behavior support; slurs racial, ethnic and homophobic that has led to fights on playground and now seems to be calming down - "middle school issues with 2nd grade emotions"
  - New accountability framework for charters schools
    - Lots of questions still unanswered
    - Lots of dysfunctions
- Other school notes
  - Gala was wonderful
    - First attempt for school to raise money - \$24k
  - Cinco de Mayo community meeting was great
    - Mandarin and Spanish teachers shared native dances
  - Mr. Garwin has turned his studio into a disco and will be used around 6/14 to celebrate end of school
  - US Armed Forces brass band came in to play for students
  - Field trips have begun
  - Teacher Appreciation week was fantastic
  - Summer ESY 50 students enrolled and planned
  - DPR Boost Camp is fully enrolled and our staff will be tutors - focus on literacy
  - 8th grade graduation is coming up - board invited 6/9 10 am
    - Manny Hernandez will be keynote speaker
- Facilities
  - Can use existing space but tight for 2 more years
  - Staying would require converting teacher lounge space into a classroom
  - Would have to remove office space for classrooms; lack of pull out rooms
  - Parent/staff survey results are back
    - Town hall meeting on 5/31 to discuss this virtually
    - Options and timelines will be discussed
    - State of the school - plans of the summer and staff reorganization
- City-wide
  - Massive turnover in Mayor's leadership team - lots of interim staff
  - OSSE adjustments and DCPCSB changes are unknown
  - CFSA hasn't been responsive or has offered bad advice - intake not better but followup is better
  - Teacher Retention has gotten DC City Council's attention
  - Crime bill debacle on Capitol Hill
  - Other school leaders are reporting serious increases in behavior issues, mental health crises for students and staff, and a large number of staff departures.

### 3. Committee Reports

- Academic Excellence Committee Report (Corey Gordon)
  - Met on May 12
  - Dug into staff culture survey - what did people share?; do people feel safe to speak out? How can this be addressed?
  - [Accountability changes](#) - Corey to share link to go into minutes
    - Tiers are becoming levels (3 tiers to 4 levels)
    - Decisions about renewals, growth, replications of charters will be based on these levels
    - These systems are hard to make fair, equitable and transparent
      - Data accuracy can be hard as well
      - How do you decide on if you meet goals - right now, for us, they are based on our charter goals and whether we are meeting or making progress
      - Growth and proficiency goals are different and how much does % of students at proficiency count toward the goal and how much does student growth from their baseline count
    - We think the direction they land on will be to meet our charter goals or make significant improvement
    - Remaining question - If charter makes their individually-set goals, how does that match levels?
    - Timeline- to be in place for next year but not enforcement Board is to vote 6/26
- Finance Committee Report (Craig Bednarovsky) (report in dropbox to copy and paste - meeting packet for May)
  - 118 days of cash (~\$5.2 million)
  - Still gauging ability to pay end of year bonuses
  - Three budget scenarios presented:
    - We receive ERC approval in FY24 and we pay off loan balance early
    - ERC is delayed until FY25 and we don't pay off loan balance early
    - ERC is rejected and we don't pay off loan balance early
  - Each scenario has unique consequences
- Governance Committee Report (Navin Nayak)
  - Committee has met with one candidate and Chuck to meet with next week
  - 6 parents applied for the parent board member so hope to have new members in on board in June
  - Mike and Jenni stepping down soon
  - Emergency succession planning for Executive Director
    - Passwords
    - Plan
  - ED job description update

- Board retreat date needs to be reschedule so maybe in first of September - summer doesn't look great
- Chuck's evaluation should come to board members in the next couple of weeks
  - Ideal to have it finished by June board meeting
- Development Committee Report (Holly Oliver)
  - Gala
  - Special thanks to:
    - Margaret Ward for her expert event management, sales and coordination
    - Chuck and Craig for their community outreach
    - Nayamka for her thoughtful interview
    - Development Committee members for their work planning:
      - Mike for building the website to sell the sponsorships and tickets
      - Navin's wife Shannon for "volunteering" to design our Save the Date
      - Navin for selling more sponsorships than any other Board member
      - Lisa for her sponsorship
    - All of our Board members for their enthusiastic participation, sponsorships and ticket purchases to this special event!
  - Friend-raising event - introduce CMI to more in the community including new families
    - Spend time at retreat to dive in to see what more could have happened; better enrich; do we do it again?
  - Feedback from Board:
    - Got to spend time with staff (Heather)
    - Felt like a great connection - like the auction before (Nayamka)
    - Video was inspirational; Kwame's remarks; but could we add more students voices there - poetry, band, step team? (Corey)
- Growth Advisory Committee Report (Mike Liddell)
  - Evaluate facilities needs and lack of space
  - Different options but still high level and competitive so keeping it secret
  - Very fluid because things come and go
  - Survey to parents and staff about space results (Navin presented)
    - 144 participate
      - 100 parent
      - 44 staff
    - Most people were relatively new to school who participate
    - 25% staff gave current space a positive review
    - 66% parents gave it a positive review
    - Security was a leading factor
    - No gym/library was the leading complaint
    - 81% drive to school
    - 10% metro

- Not a ton of interest in commuting further
  - 56% said 5-10 minutes further was ok from current commute
  - No one said more minutes past that
  - Anecdotally - families identify CMI as a Petworth school/neighborhood school and love the perception of security/safety of campus
- School contracted with Charter Development Corp. group to help plan, figure out and project scope if we move
- Town Hall will be next step to communicate to community
  - Nothing we could do would affect families until SY24-25 at the earliest

#### 4. Response to questions from CMI community

- Concerned about where CMI is going to move to and concerned that we might stay at Soldier's Home
  - Continue to share about the process
  - Discuss development in lower portion of AFRH property
- Vandalism
  - CMI is taking it seriously but vandalism doesn't seem that bad - more details
  - Graffiti wasn't aimed at school but more about the person
  - Soldiers Home didn't catch it but our guard caught it
  - Staff concerned - how did this person get so close to the school
  - Using this to hold Soldiers Home feet to the fire

#### 5. Closing items

- **Board voted unanimously to accept all reports as given** (Mike Liddell moved, Art Fields seconded).
- **There being no further public business to be transacted, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 pm.**
- **June 20th is the next Board Meeting.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Heather Curtis