



**Regular Meeting of the  
Board of Directors of Citizens of the World Kansas City**

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(301) 715-8592 | Meeting ID: 948 6988 5164  
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**\*\*Please mute your microphone upon entering the meeting\*\***

**Date:** Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm

**Proposed Minutes**

1. Call to Order

Mr. MacDonald called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Mr. MacDonald welcomed the members of the public in attendance and gave an overview of the meeting order.

2. Roll Call by Board Chair

Mr. MacDonald called roll as follows:

Present:

Ms. Brandi Finocchario  
Dr. Sarah Hicks  
Mr. Jim MacDonald  
Mr. Miguel Meneses  
Mr. Luke Norris  
Mr. Jeff Phillips  
Ms. Maria Salcedo

Absent:

Mr. Emanuel McCrainey  
Ms. Selina Rios

Mr. MacDonald determined that with 7 of 9 Board Members present, a quorum is established for purposes of holding the meeting and voting.

### 3. Review & Consideration of Proposed Agenda

Mr. Norris asked if discussion could be held around the school's weapons policy. Mr. MacDonald asked Dr. Vansaghi to add to the Executive Director's Report.

*Mr. Phillips moved to approve the agenda as modified and Mr. Norris provided a second to the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

### 4. Public Comments

Mr. MacDonald introduced himself, thanked the public on the call, and provided an overview of the public comment process and guidelines. Mr. MacDonald then invited public comment.

Ms. Jolly (CWC Parent) provided feedback regarding the Parent-Teacher Conference structure and requested additional communication from school staff.

### 5. Consent Agenda

- a. Review & Consideration of minutes from the January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022 regular meeting of the Board
- b. School Dashboard
- c. Strategic Plan Dashboard
- d. Board & Committee Calendar
- e. Closed Session Instructions

Mr. MacDonald presented the Consent Agenda and asked the Board if any member wanted to remove an item off of the Consent Agenda in order to further discuss and/or solely vote on that item; no member did.

*Ms. Finocchario moved to approve the Consent Agenda as proposed and Dr. Hicks provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

### 6. Monthly Finance Report (Mr. Jeff Phillips)

- a. Finance Committee Report

Mr. Phillips reported that the Balance Sheet shows the school with a \$665k cash balance and all Accounts Payable in good order.

Actual year-to-date revenue is \$3.9m against a \$3.8m budget due to donations tracking behind target. Actual year-to-date expenses are \$4.4m against a budget of \$4.0m. Within expenses, salaries are on track, and food service is higher than budgeted, but offset by additional federal revenue. The largest expense budget difference is in student support and will be shored by upcoming ESSER-III funds, which are not yet denoted in revenue. Current Net Income is (-\$556k) compared to a (-\$200k) budget. This again is due to lagging donations and lower-than-budgeted FRL participation.

Forecasted end-of-year revenue is \$6.6m against a budget of \$6.8m with the shortfall continuing to be in ADA (a \$750k difference). Forecasted end-of-year expenses are \$7.6m against a \$6.9m budget, almost exclusively in student services/ESSER-III. Without ESSER revenue, projected net income is a \$1m loss against a break-even budget.

Mr. Phillips reported the forecasted low cash balance will be \$225k in June and the school is projected to end the year with 11 days of cash on hand, a critically low amount compared to our target of – “critically low.” (target 30-60 days).

In regards to this projected loss, the school has been expending expenses that qualify for ESSER-3 funding and expecting about \$450k to be reimbursed this fiscal year. The lag has created a cash flow concern and EdOps has been providing school staff with a six-week cash flow forecast. Staff is prioritizing vendor payments accordingly. Additionally, the school is completing the Line of Credit renewal and expect that to be available in a critical moment, if needed.

Committee discussion was also held around donations and fund-raising as well as future facilities planning. Additionally, the 2022-2023 budget was initially discussed and the Committee is hoping to have a draft to the Board in April or May.

Mr. Norris noted that part of the fund-raising gap is \$150k of Charter School Growth Funds that CWCS committed to us, and we therefore budgeted for. He suggested that the Finance Committee discuss tightening payment controls and asked if there was an approval process built in for the Executive Director to access the Line of Credit, if needed.

Dr. Vansaghi clarified that ESSER-III funds are in the state's “supplemental budget” which cleared the House earlier this week and is now in the Senate. Historically, that supplemental budget is approved before mid-March.

Dr. Hicks asked if the cost of the Executive Director search transitioned to CWCS reimbursing the school, rather than CWCS paying the firm directly? Dr. Vansaghi confirmed that he and CWCS agreed to the reimbursement arrangement and the first portion of that expense has both been incurred and reimbursed.

Mr. Norris suggested being proactive in communicating with our sponsor regarding projected end-of-year cash balance.

Mr. Norris also suggested that the Board direct school staff to begin invoicing CWCS for future expenses to begin drawing on the CSGF grant. He also strongly advocated that the school put in writing that the Search Firm expense is not within the CWCS/CSGF grant. Dr. Vansaghi said CWCS has not delineated either way and reported that he is working with Dr. Miles on identifying up to \$150k to submit to CWCS.

Mr. MacDonald commented that as the school moves into the next budget cycle, staff needs to draft a budget reflective of a conservative ADA estimate. He also suggested researching peer schools to ascertain if Citizens' attendance this year is an anomaly or if peer schools are also experiencing a lower-than-expected ADA.

Mr. Norris added that Citizens' diverse-by-design, SEL/DEI-led program is-and-requires a different level of staffing to support the needs of those students. The school's revenue tends to be lower (per student) and expenses higher, so underlying lower enrollment puts significantly stronger pressure on our budget and puts the school in a uniquely disadvantaged position.

b. Review & Consideration of Monthly Financials (January 2022), including Check Register

Mr. Phillips reported there was no unusual accounts payable nor checkbook register entries in January.

*Mr. Phillips moved to approve the Finance Report and Check Register as proposed and Dr. Hicks provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

Mr. Norris again reiterated that Board needs to direct staff to begin requesting funds from CWCS. Additionally, in expectance of a letter of concern, he suggested that the Finance Committee begin additional oversight of financial controls.

7. Board Committee Reports

a. Academic Excellence Committee

i. Review & Consideration of Revised "Age Criteria for Kindergarten Admission" Policy

Dr. Miles reported that the Academic Excellence Committee met this past week. One discussion item was modifying the current Kindergarten age policy – in which a student must turn 5 years of age before October 31<sup>st</sup> – to turning 5 on/before August 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. This aligns with KCPS. Additionally, she is seeing there is a group of children with September and October birthdays that are not socially or academically quite ready.

Mr. Norris asked how many students have applied for next year that this would affect? Mr. Brennan replied that it would affect half of our current Pre-Kindergarten students and a very small number of incoming Kindergarteners.

Dr. Hicks noted the written proposed policy denoted an incorrect date and asked staff to update to accurately reflect the proposal of August 31<sup>st</sup>.

*Dr. Hicks moved to approve the proposed policy as proposed and Mr. Norris provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

8. Executive Director's Report (Dr. Thomas Vansaghi)

a. Staffing Changes on February 28, 2022

Dr. Vansaghi shared that Mr. Johnson will transition off the team at the end of February rather than his planned transition at the end of May. Staff is preparing plans to cover his work. Dr. Vansaghi commended Mr. Johnson's work with the start-up of the school and his skills and abilities as the school has grown.

Dr. Vansaghi also shared that Mrs. Gripp will transition out of the Middle School leader role to a part-time status at the end of February. He also commended her work in the founding of the Middle School and the amazing community she built amongst the faculty and students. Mr. Troy Butler will assume the Middle School leader position for the remainder of the year on an interim basis.

He is planning separate celebrations to honor both employees in the coming weeks and again expressed appreciation for both of their service.

b. Employee Value Proposition (Dr. Danielle Miles)

Dr. Miles presented the "Employee Value Proposition." She shared that she and Mr. Brennan worked with EdFuel, through a grant provided by SchoolSmart KC, to work through specific HR goals. One of those deliverables resulted in the creation of the Employee Value Proposition and the process included staff feedback. The Employee Value Proposition will be included on staff recruiting materials (website, etc.) and job descriptions.

Mr. Norris asked how to incorporate the Strategic Plan pillar of anti-racism and encouraged that aspect to be specifically called out.

c. Update on Executive Director Search Committee & Process

Dr. Vansaghi thanked Dr. Hicks and Ms. Finocchario for co-chairing the committee and Mr. MacDonald, Ms. Salcedo, and Mr. Meneses for also serving. The Search Committee is meeting weekly with the search firm. To date, the firm has received 36 applicants and pre-screened 9. From those, they have identified 2 to move forward and 1 is ready to move to interviews with Board members.

After that meeting, the next step is a "thought exercise," then the process will be stakeholder interviews (Board, parents, staff, etc.), and a reference check. The overall timeline is flexible, but aiming to wrap up between April-June.

Mr. Norris asked for a demographic breakdown of the applicant pool, specifically women and candidates of color. Dr. Vansaghi did not have specifics at his fingertips but affirmed that he is aware that the pool is diverse.

d. Update on Middle School Facility Search & Process

Dr. Vansaghi reported that, since January, the Facility Committee has had an interesting turn of events, both with KCPS and recently with Metropolitan Community College. He was hoping to have something to present for approval tonight, but the team is still hard charging on details. He is very aware of the need to be able to communicate to current and prospective families.

e. Board Nominations & Elections Update

Dr. Vansaghi reminded the Board that next month is Board elections for a new Chair, other Officers, and possibly additional Members.

Mr. Meneses shared that he is in discussions with Board Members for future officer positions and expects to give a full report next month.

Mr. Norris also shared a student of Dr. Vansaghi's is creating a Board matrix that will be a valuable tool in recruiting and replacing Members who may term off. Dr. Vansaghi elaborated that his student will, in addition to a matrix, also create Board job descriptions, and a codified Board onboarding process.

f. Student Recruitment Update (Ms. Katherine Corliss)

Mr. Corliss reported that since last month, she has continued to hold weekly school tours, participated in "School Saturday," and held tabling opportunities at "earlySTART." Upcoming weeks will entail continued tours and a focus on the SchoolApp's lottery deadline approaching on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Additionally, she'll host a table at Operation Breakthrough on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Lottery offers will be sent via SchoolApp on March 7<sup>th</sup>. She reported that the school is on track with how SchoolAppKC is seeing applications city-wide, with received applications currently being above all other school years except the pre-pandemic timeframe of the 2019-20 season.

Mr. Norris asked for a detailed analysis of annual declining trend in Kindergarten applications, specifically is the trend a macro-system issue? Is it a neighborhood access issue? Is it a brand/school issue? Ms. Corliss and Mr. Brennan affirmed they would send an analysis.

g. Annual Fundraising Plans, Read-A-Thon, and Event (Ms. Katherine Corliss)

Ms. Corliss shared that the annual campaign is still tracking behind projection, and is still aiming for 100% of Board support. She is starting to plan a Spring Event with the PTO Committee and is planning "Read-a-Thon" from April 4-15. Read-a-Thon is an outside organization that does fundraising opportunities for schools and is a student-centered approach in which students read for donations, instead of selling cookie dough or coupons.

She suggested the Board continue to share Citizens with their networks, attend Friday morning Sing, give to the Annual Campaign, help her identify potential donors with a >\$5k capacity, and share any potential organizations for her to connect with their philanthropy committee.

h. Discussion on Summer School 2022

Dr. Vansaghi reported that the school leadership team (Dr. Vansaghi, Dr. Miles, Mr. Brennan, Ms. Nelson, Mrs. Gripp, and Ms. Gibbs) is recommending that the school not hold summer school in 2022. This would be a change to the school calendar and therefore require a Board vote.

Dr. Vansaghi said that the school staff and faculty does not have that capacity to provide a robust and high-quality experience this year. Last summer was a poor experience, especially at Elementary; coupled with leadership transitions, the lack of a confirmed middle school location, and very low interest from faculty, he is asking the Board to cancel. Dr. Miles affirmed that Special Education would still provide Extended School Year services in the building.

Mr. Norris asked how many students enrolled last year; Mr. Brennan said about 225. Mr. Norris expressed concern with doing this cancellation without a level of parent input or awareness of the impact on parents. Dr. Vansaghi confirmed that he has already asked Mrs. Chambers to create a robust list of alternatives with partners. Mr. Norris inquired if those programs would be free; Dr. Miles replied that they would be free or have scholarship opportunities, they would be throughout the summer, and be 5 days a week. Mr. MacDonald asked if KCPS programs would be an alternative; Dr. Miles affirmed that KCPS would be an alternative along with YMCA, Campfire, Upper Room, Boys & Girls Club, and KC Young Audiences.

Mr. Norris asked for clarification on the revenue/expense of summer school and the potential budget impact of a cancellation; Dr. Vansaghi presented a breakdown from the 2019 and 2021 sessions.

Mr. MacDonald asked to postpone a vote to March and in the meantime, have staff do family engagement and provide families with information on where to go/how to apply. Mrs. Chambers confirmed she and her team are already putting together those details.

Dr. Hicks asked to continue with the Board vote and questioned why school staff is creating and presenting families with alternative resources if the school has not given clarity on its own summer program. Mr. Norris agreed and said with student conferences coming up next week, ask staff to inform parents that the school cannot provide a safe, effective, mission-aligned summer program, ask families "how can we help you" to determine what support level we can provide to them, staff can gather that information with a targeted approach, then staff can disseminate those supports and opportunities broadly.

*Mr. Norris moved to direct the Executive Director to begin the process of engaging with families to help ascertain the level of needs the school community has with the goal of formalizing the school's approach to summer school.*

Dr. Hicks asked what happens when staff polls families and find they need our summer program? School leadership is saying it cannot happen, so then what does the school do? Why are we not being decisive now so we can focus and help families together and earlier? Dr. Vansaghi agreed; it sets families back a month, they lose a month in making plans.

*Mr. Norris withdrew his motion.*

*Mr. Norris moved to cancel summer school, modify the academic calendar accordingly, and direct school leadership to begin immediate plans to begin supporting families. Dr. Hicks provided a second.*

Mr. MacDonald asked to include an amendment that, as an accountability for leadership, school leadership provide the Board with written supportive plans, to include multiple parent meetings to learn about options, a couple of in-person assistance clinics, and written communication on other options.

Mr. Norris noted that he is concerned about losing re-enrollment and requested Ms. Corliss and Mr. Brennan to continue to provide that data as we approach June. He also wants school leadership to begin Summer School 2023 planning this summer.

*The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

i. **Weapon Incident on Campus**

Dr. Miles shared with the Board that yesterday, a student brought a BB gun to school. It was reported to school leadership and the BB gun was immediately confiscated. Dr. Miles researched Board policies as well as communicated with legal counsel; as a result, the student is on long-term suspension while she is investigating further.

Mr. Norris asked if the policy also stipulates what happens around on-campus communication (i.e. among teachers); he wants to ensure we have tight communication resources to disseminate information quickly and not promote rumor-mills. Dr. Miles agreed that communication and the

response policies need to be bolstered. We do have a communication resource that we can employ for staff.

Mr. Norris encouraged Dr. Miles and school leadership to consider how they can use this opportunity to reinforce our social-emotional learning and core values and urged leading from that lens.

#### 9. Closed Session

Pursuant to § 610.021(2) & (13) RSMo, the Board of Directors of CWC Kansas City will enter into closed session to discuss matters related to contracts and personnel records.

Mr. MacDonald invited Dr. Vansaghi, Dr. Miles, and Mr. Brennan into Closed Session.

*Dr. Hicks moved to go into Closed Session and Ms. Rios provided a second. A roll call vote was taken as follows:*

<i>Ms. Brandi Finocchario</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Dr. Sarah Hicks</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Jim MacDonald</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Miguel Meneses</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Luke Norris</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Jeff Phillips</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Ms. Maria Salcedo</i>	<i>Aye</i>

*The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

#### 10. Return from Closed Session; report on any action taken as required.

Mr. MacDonald welcomed members of the public back into Open Session and reported that discussion related to contracts and personnel records. No actions were taken that require reporting.

#### 11. Adjourn

*Mr. Meneses moved to adjourn and Ms. Finocchario provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.*

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