

# Ka'ōhao Public Charter School

## Minutes of Board Meeting, August 26, 2020 – via Zoom

### Board Members Present:

Philip Whitesell, President  
Winston Sakurai, School Director  
Celia Miner – absent  
Espie Chapman  
Cynthia Hunter, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Jim Sweiter, Treasurer – absent  
Laura Young  
Jared Underwood, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Jill Oliver

### Community Members Present:

Callie Lewis, Scribe  
PJ Foehr, Commission Interim Dep. Dir.  
Amy Brislin, KSO  
Angela Xoinis, KSO  
Kevin Brindock  
Rebecca Tang  
Melissa Iwamoto  
Sylvie Rusay, KSO  
Christina Millard  
Mark Lesar

### 1. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes of August 22, 2020.

- Meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Dr. Whitesell.
- Approval of the July Minutes was postponed to the September meeting.

### 2. New Officer Appointment: Philip Whitesell

- Ms. Chapman nominated the following officers: President – Dr. Philip Whitesell. 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Dr. Cynthia Hunter. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Dr. Jared Underwood. Treasurer – Jim Sweiter. Secretary – Laura Young. Dr. Oliver seconded. Dr. Hunter asked when this would be effective, Dr. Whitesell confirmed that it takes effect tonight. Motion carries unanimously.

### 3. PCNC Report: Espie Chapman, PCNC

- Nothing to report.

### 4. Ka'ohao School 'Ohana Report: Amy Brislin, KSO Treasurer

- Ms. Brislin gave a history of the funds raised and spent by KSO over the past 7 years. She noted the impressive history and explained that the KSO has already contributed \$20K toward the school's iPad purchases. They also purchased "welcome back" packages for the staff since they were unable to provide any luncheon or snacks.
- Ms. Xoinis said that they are still collecting paperwork, but they are hoping to have 100% participation this year because the fee has been waived.

### 5. New Business: Dr. Underwood

- Dr. Underwood asked if there would be a time for public comment during Zoom board meetings. Dr. Whitesell explained that prior to Zoom, we always had a time for community input, but requested that community members give notice prior to the meeting. With Zoom, Dr. Whitesell does not know how to implement this. Mr. Foehr said that the Commission allows public input via Zoom with a 2-minute limit that must be topic-relevant. Zoom chat will not be considered. Dr. Hunter said that it is important to hear the voices of the community. Dr. Hunter will draft a policy to allow for this.

### 6. Community Input:

- Mark Lesar, Parent: Mr. Lesar chose the blended model. He has been surprised by the content in Acellus and disappointed that parents can't be involved in choosing the curriculum, or able to review things that the student has already seen. He also mentioned some potentially

inappropriate content that has been circulating around in the media. Mr. Lesar would like to know how the program was chosen.

- Kevin Brindock, Parent: The KVA program provides a disconnect from being a part of the school, and Acellus does not provide enough of a learning benefit. He is very unhappy with the program.

#### **7. Director's Report: Winston Sakurai**

- We are currently in 100% distance learning mode. Our current enrollment is 326 students. We did a car line for students to pick up technology and supplies and wave to their teachers. Dr. Sakurai appreciates the sacrifices that our parents have made as their kids are not afforded the chance to attend school in-person at this time.
- Acellus is our online learning platform with 985,000 lessons. Currently over 6,000 schools and 3,000,000 students participate in Acellus. There have been issues that have been circulating in the media about content and rigor. The HDOE has been using Acellus for 10+ years and this is the first time that they have received complaints. Online learning platforms are very different from in-person instruction, which has emphasized project-based learning and hands-on activities.
- The DOE has vetted the program and has committed to working with Acellus to change and remove the inappropriate sexist or racist content. They are also working on changing the intuitive settings that adjust rigor and looking into manual rigor adjustments that can be made. It is disappointing that they have to go through this process but the videos were made in a different time.
- We are making adjustments and the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester may not look exactly like the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester. This first week of instruction has been spent primarily sorting out technical issues and logistics. We are committed to making distance learning better for our students.
- Dr. Whitesell asked if teachers were vetting videos and if they are able to alter the content. Dr. Sakurai said that there is a way to reposition the lesson, but it is not easy to do. Some teachers have chosen not to use specific lessons. Dr. Whitesell asked if there were alternative programs. Dr. Sakurai has used Edmentum but prefers Acellus. The price of Acellus is lower as well. Ultimately, online programs are not where they should be, and perhaps the bigger question is whether we should be using online programs. The school is looking at Khan Academy's Learnstorm. Dr. Oliver asked if teachers could record their lessons for asynchronous viewing rather than relying on Acellus. Dr. Underwood commented that he has been impressed with the Face-to-Face content offered by the teachers and it has been a good experience, even if challenging at times. Currently 1<sup>st</sup> grade Face-to-Face is the only group not using Acellus. Dr. Oliver asked how difficult it would be to get the Blended/Virtual students back into the classrooms so they could get some teacher interaction. Dr. Sakurai explained that this is tricky and we are only allowing movement at the trimester if space is available. Our current model does not allow for additional students in the Face-to-Face program.

**8. Adjournment:** Members recessed the executive session to September 2, 2020 following the Director's briefing.

**Next Meeting Scheduled for September 23, 2020, 6:00pm via Zoom**

Submitted by Callie Lewis, Scribe

**Be it resolved that:**

- The Board approves the appointment of the following officers: President – Dr. Philip Whitesell. 1st Vice President – Dr. Cynthia Hunter. 2nd Vice President – Dr. Jared Underwood. Treasurer – Jim Sweiter. Secretary – Laura Young.

In witness thereof, the undersigned members of the Board have duly executed this resolution on August 26, 2020.

*Philip Whitesell, Espie Chapman, Celia Miner, Cindy Hunter, Jim Swieter, Laura Young, Jared Underwood, Jill Oliver*