



**Cottonwood Classical Preparatory School  
Governing Council Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 17, 2020  
Virtual Meeting**

**I. Call to Order, Confirmation of Quorum, and Roll Call**

5:01 pm start time.

Quorum established – voting members present were Jill van Nortwick, Andrew Bundy, Wes Burghardt, Rahni Kellum (joined at 5:05), Rathi Casey, Connor Brashar, and Susan Labarge. Non-voting members present were John Binnert, Louis Papponi, Peter Lukes, Liz Titus, Ray Wang, and Michael Vigil.

**II. Approval of Minutes: October 20, 2020**

Motion to approve meeting minutes for October 20, 2020, by Andrew. Approved with no updates. Votes For: Jill van Nortwick, Andrew Bundy, Wes Burghardt, Rahni Kellum, Rathi Casey, Connor Brashar. Votes Against: None

**III. Public Comments –** (GC policy is to make available 3-5 minutes of public comment per person at the beginning of each meeting. Once this portion of the meeting has ended, the GC will generally not entertain public comments for the remainder of the meeting)

- Public comment from special guest Hannah Hurtado, Student Council President
  - o Hannah came to provide some school-wide updates to the GC
  - o Community-bonding activities planned by Student Leadership Council (SLC)
  - o Senior class has setup a Discord to allow them ways to connect with each other
  - o Concern from some students about “community time” and how it is spent and when it occurs. Feedback has been given to John by SLC.
  - o Hannah noted under John’s administration the ability for the SLC and students in general to communicate with CCPS leadership/staff has greatly improved.
- The following virtual attendees were noted:
  - o Alejandro Torres
  - o Andrew Foster (will be the new student GC rep, welcome!)
  - o Annette Karre-Rasmussen
  - o Arian Roefs
  - o Cathy Gutierrez
  - o Catherine Noble
  - o Courtney Fish
  - o Igor Dernov
  - o Jennifer Dennison
  - o Joseph Tracy
  - o Mark Lozoya
  - o Mike Blatchford
  - o Monica Huff



#### IV. Standing and Ad hoc Committee Reports

##### Finance (Wes Burghardt)

- Wes noted that the Finance Committee met 11/17/20 and reviewed CCPS's bank statements for the prior period with zero irregularities noted.
- Still slow to collect revenues from the state, but our excellent cash position has helped us weather the issue.
- CARES Act money is currently frozen while the State determines how much money schools will be receiving. CCPS has likely exceeded the amount it will be allotted.
- Still awaiting possible early release of our annual Audit, could come to us in the next 30 days or so.

##### Facilities (Rathi Casey)

- Tentative start date to parking lot project is November 25<sup>th</sup>

##### Policy Review (Susan LaBarge)

- Covid-related policies have been a focus for the group

##### Strategic Planning (Andrew Bundy)

- Peter asked whether Environmental Sustainability would fall under the new Strategic Plan. Andrew noted that while this topic didn't come up during the all-stakeholder meetings related to the plan update, the core Strategic Planning team is planning to discuss possible gaps that need to be addressed when finalizing the plan. Environmental issues is one of the gaps planned for discussion.

##### ED Outcomes (Connor Brashar)

- No Update

#### V. New Business

- Welcoming a new non-voting representative to the GC, Andrew Foster, an 11<sup>th</sup> Grader at CCPS.
- **Action:** Motion to approve new GC Member, Yuriria Morales, by Rathi, seconded. Votes For: Jill van Nortwick, Andrew Bundy, Wes Burghardt, Rahni Kellum, Rathi Casey, Connor Brashar, and Susan Labarge Votes Against: None
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#### VI. Executive Director's Report (John Binnert, special guest Jennifer Dennison – CCPS Nurse)

- John noted Speech and Debate Team has been awarded one of the highest levels of distinction for the amount of points they've scored. Also, several students selected for All-State Choir.
- John noted CCPS seniors are at about 2/3 that will be either diploma candidates or course candidates that will have taken at least 3 exams. This is great progress compared to last year, which is good since it is one of CCPS's KPIs with our authorizer.
- CCPS applying for Harvard DataWise program – 10 week program on data training for diversity and inclusion efforts.
- The newly issued stay-at-home order doesn't have specific new closures for schools, but can only maintain whatever is currently in place.



- Reopening toolkit for middle schools is anticipated to be launched, but has been delayed with the uptick in cases. This means there's still no guidance on what would be expected of CCPS to allow middle school students back to school. Jennifer did note she's been told the elementary toolkit contains many of the elements that will exist in the middle school toolkit. She also noted she is confident in the school's readiness plans/procedures when the school is ready to open.
- Jennifer noted some of her top concerns right now related to Covid are the rate of spread, and that CCPS hasn't been given its PPE allotment from the State.
- Jennifer noted that other schools that have opened are seeing cases particularly amongst staff as opposed to students. Causes challenges in having to close classrooms, find substitutes, modify learning schedules.
- John noted that all charter leaders he's been in contact with that had opened into some kind of hybrid format have reverted to online. Further, other charter leaders have been looking to extend reopening beyond January.
- Discussion was had that staff, while they've been challenged with extra work/hours to provide students education, wouldn't want to risk a hybrid format given the spread currently hitting the state.
- Lunches, bathroom usage, and cohorts are some of the big concerns that John has in the school being ready to reopen. The logistics on these items, and policies related to them, are not feasible to be sorted out by early January.
- John noted consistency is key to provide to students, staff, and families. Reopening in some kind of hybrid format, only to have to close classrooms or the entire school again, wouldn't be optimal.
- John noted that regardless of how the GC might vote to reopen the school, approval from the Governor and PED would still be required. Further, no counties have opened public middle or high schools at this time.
- Much discussion was had by GC members about delaying the decision to reopen the school beyond January. In addition to all of the concerns/challenges noted above, it was noted that it would help provide some certainty for people to plan around the holidays, and remove some stress from staff during a busy time (finals, etc).

**ACTION:** Motion to delay the GC's reopening decision to January 19<sup>th</sup> 2021, with an actual open decision date being no sooner than 2 weeks after January 19<sup>th</sup>, by Susan, seconded. Votes For: Jill van Nortwick, Andrew Bundy, Wes Burghardt, Rahni Kellum, Rathi Casey, Connor Brashar, Susan Labarge. Votes Against: None

## VII. Stakeholder Reports

### PTO Report (Liz Titus)

No questions

### Foundation Report (Ray Wang)

No questions

### Faculty Report (Peter Lukes)



No questions

PAC Report (Louis Papponi)

- No questions

**VIII. Unfinished Business**

- N/A

**IX. Board Development**

- Rathi noted the formation of a new Academics Committee
- GC pulse coming again in December
- Rathi working on a competency matrix to identify strengths/gaps that might help drive future GC recruitment, and reminded committee chairs to complete their position descriptions.

- X.** Vote to close the meeting and proceed in Executive Session  
Discussion and determination where appropriate of Administrative  
Deliberations as permitted by Section 10, Article 15, NMSA (1978)

- XI.** Vote to re-open meeting and certification that only those matters described in Agenda Item IX were discussed in Closed Session and if necessary, final action with regard to those matters will be taken in Open Session.

**XII. Next Governing Council Meeting: December 15, 2020**

**XIII. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:54 pm by Jill, seconded. Votes For: Jill van Nortwick, Andrew Bundy, Rahni Kellum, Rathi Casey, Connor Brashar, Wes Burghardt and Susan Labarge. Votes Against: None