



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

**Location:** Westport Plexpod, Meeting Room #1-M  
300 E. 39<sup>th</sup> St.  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Zoom Link (Audio Only):  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/94869885164> | Passcode: 189708

(301) 715-8592 | Meeting ID: 948 6988 5164

**Date:** Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 5:30pm

**Proposed Minutes**

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Finocchario called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

Ms. Finocchario welcomed the members of the public in attendance and gave an overview of the meeting order.

**2. Roll Call by Board Chair**

Ms. Finocchario called roll as follows:

Present:

Ms. Brandi Finocchario  
Dr. Sarah Hicks  
Mr. Jeff Phillips  
Ms. Selina Rios

Absent:

Mr. Jim MacDonald  
Mr. Emanuel McCrainey  
Mr. Luke Norris

Ms. Finocchario determined that with 4 of 6 Board Members present, a quorum is established for purposes of holding the meeting and voting.

### 3. Review & Consideration of Proposed Agenda *[Board Action]*

Ms. Finocchario requested one modification to the agenda – Move the approval of the Academic Calendar to the consent agenda.

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

### 4. Public Comments

Ms. Finocchario introduced herself, thanked the public on the call, and provided an overview of the public comment process and guidelines. Ms. Finocchario then invited public comment; no public comment was made.

### 5. Consent Agenda *[Board Action]*

- a. Review & Consideration of minutes from the May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 regular meeting of the Board
- b. School Dashboard
- c. Strategic Plan Dashboard
- d. Board & Committee Calendar
- e. Approval of 2022-2023 Board Meeting Calendar
- f. Review & Consideration of 2022-2023 Academic Calendar

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

*Ms. Rios moved to approve the Consent Agenda as proposed and Mr. Phillips provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

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

- a. Finance Committee Report *[Information/Discussion]*

Mr. Phillips reported that Cash on Hand as of May 31 totaled \$570k. Year-to-date actual revenue was \$6.1m against a budget of \$6.2m. Year-to-date expenses totaled \$6.8m against a budget of \$6.3m. That resulted in a Net Income of just over (-\$600k), compared to budget of (-\$80k), with the same reasons for deviations (WADA, ESSER-III payment timing). Looking ahead to year-end, the school is forecasting \$6.9m in revenue against a \$6.8m budget and \$7.4m in expenses against a \$6.9m budget, resulting in a (-\$500k) net income against a break-even budget.

The projected End-of-year cash balance is \$675k, translating to 33 days of cash on hand. There has been some savings realized throughout the past 1-2 months.

Dr. Hicks clarified that this means the school will end the year with a \$500k loss? Mr. Phillips confirmed that the \$675k projection takes into account the \$500k loss, which means cash reserves will be reduced from \$1.1m to \$675k.

- b. Review & Consideration of Monthly Financials (May 2022), including Check Register *[Board Action]*

Mr. Phillips reported that the Finance Committee did not denote anything on the Financials or Check Register out of the ordinary and recommended acceptance.

*Ms. Rios 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.*

## **7. New Business**

- a. Board Retreat scheduled for Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:00a-4:00p at Plexpod.

Ms. Finocchario confirmed the retreat date/time, while allowing that the time may be shortened and the agenda will be shared prior to the retreat.

- b. Acknowledgement that MCPSC is waiving the annual Executive Director Review (Dr. Thomas Vansaghi) *[Information/Discussion]*

Dr. Vansaghi shared that, since he has served specifically on an interim basis, MCPSC is waiving their requirement that the Board complete and provide an Executive Director evaluation.

- c. Review & Evaluation of CWCS, due July 1<sup>st</sup> (Dr. Thomas Vansaghi) *[Board Action]*

Dr. Vansaghi submitted that he would like to open the floor for a Board discussion to suffice as the annual evaluation. He shared that from his perspective, the working relationship has turned around in the last year, especially with Ms. Furlong assuming the Executive Director role. He especially pointed to the financial support (OnRamps and future promised support to underwrite administrative roles) that will come from the long-disputed Charter School Growth Fund grant.

Dr. Miles shared that, with the team that Ms. Furlong is building, there has been lots of discussion about how we all can make the model more consistent across regions (Los Angeles – Kansas City - Cincinnati); how CWCS can provide professional development, data review, coaching, and allow space for best practice collaboration.

Ms. Finocchario confirmed that CWCS is in a period of rebuilding, as is CWC Kansas City. Ms. Furlong has been supportive and communicative and Ms. Finocchario is encouraged about the place the relationship is in.

Ms. Rios asked for a context of the difficulty. The Board shared that the relationship transition from start-up (handshake understandings) to governing (what to the words actually say and what will be delivered) was rocky. The relationship got to a place where it was more about the individuals in the discussion, rather than the outcomes of the discussion.

At the Board retreat, time will be spent codifying relationship deliverables and develop an evaluation tool.

*Mr. Phillips moved to approve this discussion as the annual evaluation of CWCS and Ms. Rios provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining.*

## 8. Executive Director's Report (Dr. Thomas Vansaghi) *[Information/Discussion]*

### a. Discussion of Board Governance (Dr. Thomas Vansaghi)

Dr. Vansaghi reported an excellent meeting yesterday between himself, Dr. Miles, Ms. Finocchiaro, and Mr. Peterson (Board consultant). The discussion focused on five areas:

1. Recruitment of new Board members. Mr. Hile has expressed agreement to come forward for nomination in July (approval in August), two other candidates are being considered, and then another candidate from the Charter School Draft on July 30<sup>th</sup> will be considered for nomination in August (approval in September). Dr. Vansaghi will update the Board recruitment matrix, so Board can reference during the retreat.
2. Board Priorities. Dr. Vansaghi will provide the Board a list of priorities to suggest the Board/senior staff focus on for the next year, with an eye toward ensuring completion and compliance for 2025 renewal.
3. The Board have a purposeful plan to listen to 1) staff 2) families and 3) students. Mr. Peterson is working with SchoolSmartKC on a city-wide communication platform and has invited Citizens to participate in that launch.
4. Dr. Vansaghi recommends that Board does a short educational piece (i.e. video watching) of best practices. SchoolSmartKC has them available.
5. Continue focusing on Board Committee development to include multiple Board members, multiple parents, and community members.

### b. Review Spring 2022 NWEA Assessment Data (Dr. Danielle Miles)

Dr. Miles presented the Spring 2022 NWEA Assessment Data to the Board. She reminded the Board that NWEA does two things: measures student academic performance at a moment, and also compares to growth across time. Specific to this testing cycle, she reported that the Spring reflected consistent themes from Fall and Winter administrations this year: lower relative performance in Math, and lower relative performance across all student populations in both Math/ELA with the exception of white students. However, Spring showed a higher percentage of students meeting projected growth targets in Math than in Reading and a higher percentage of students met projected growth targets from Fall to Spring than earlier in the year, from Fall to Winter.

The percentage of students on or above the national average (by quartile, from highest to lowest) was 15-19-21-45% (Math) and 22-18-21-39% (Reading). These are comparable to the Fall and Winter assessment periods. Dr. Miles presented a grade-level distribution, with the reminder that 3<sup>rd</sup> graders missed 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in person. Additionally, 8<sup>th</sup> graders missed 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> with Citizens and have not had any in-person at Citizens.

Moving to growth, 45% of students met their projected growth target in Math from Fall to Spring 2021-22 and 40% met in Reading. Dr. Miles noted that this is the first year the school has had a higher growth rate in Math than in Reading. Reading is consistent with previous years, but Math is usually in the 30s, so she is excited about this tentative first step.

In Reading, as in Math, there was a higher percentage of students meeting growth targets across all grade levels, compared to the Winter. The only exception was Grade 5, which has the lowest percentage across grade levels. Dr. Miles noted that the school should specifically celebrate Grade 4, as many students there started the year very behind.

In evaluating Race/Ethnicity data, in math there was a lower percentage of Black, Hispanic, and Multi-ethnic students meeting projected growth targets relative to White students. In Reading, however, the percentages of Black/African-American students meeting projected growth targets was higher than the percentage across all students. This is the first time Black/African-American has been this high; historically been in the 30s and not consistent with White students. Ms. Rios led a Board discussion on underlying causes and requested additional data on ethnicity subgroups.

Looking at additional sub-groups, in Math, students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch performed nearly in-line with all students overall. In Reading, students with additional identifiers all had significant proportions of students in the lowest quartile. Additionally, in Math, FRL students had a slightly lower percentage meeting growth targets than the overall student population. In Reading, students designated as English Learners demonstrated a very high percentage meeting growth targets.

Dr. Hicks asked if the school budgeted for resources to continue this support? Dr. Miles confirmed that in K-1, the Instructional Coach (new position) will focus on instruction and Tier 1 strategies. She will work on Professional Development and coaching/feedback methodology in order to teach the teachers how to provide Tier 2 support. In 3-4<sup>th</sup> grade, the Coach will work with teachers to support pullout/push-in intervention. In 5-6<sup>th</sup> grade, teachers will co-teach those classes (ELA and Math), hopefully with two adults in classes to focus in small groups.

Dr. Hicks further asked if the the school has the needed materials/resources? Dr. Miles replied that staff needs training and leadership needs to prioritize grade-level standards in math (i.e. a Kindergartener *must do* this by end-of-year, with the goal of hitting it in January and going beyond in the spring.

Ms. Rios noted that she appreciated the differentiation in planning.

c. Special Education Department Update (Dr. Danielle Miles & Ms. Sara Nelson)

Ms. Nelson introduced herself as the Director of Special Education and presented a department update. The mission of the Special Education department is to ensure life success for all students through providing quality instruction to all students in the least restrictive environment. They support all students with IEPs to master strategies and skills necessary to compensate for their disability, enabling them to meet the goals described in their IEPs as well as to have access to grade-level standards in the least restrictive environment. The team continues to work on rebuilding inclusion with the flexibility of non-cohorts for classrooms.

Ms. Nelson provided the Board with a historical trend over the past three school years: the percentage of Special Education students has risen from 9.6% (2019-20) to 13.5% to 15% (2021-22), with 18% of new-to-Citizens students in 2021-22 identifying as Special Education.

Ms. Nelson presented a continuum of RTI for Identification of Special Education students, with the underlying takeaway that there is a methodical process in-place for identifying and qualifying for the program.

Ms. Rios asked clarifying questions on data collection, with Ms. Nelson answering. Ms. Rios further noted that she does not believe the school is over-qualifying students, but rather serves the population well, so Citizens' reputation is growing. Lastly, Ms. Rios – requested a discussion about what the Tier 2 strategies look like, perhaps in an upcoming Academic Excellence Committee meeting.

Ms. Nelson presented a breakdown of the various identified disabilities served, as well as an overview of the services provided, which includes:

- Push-In Services
  - Special Education Teacher will support students in a general education setting through a collaboration of lesson planning, objectives, and IEP goals with the general-education teacher.
- Small-Group Special Education Instruction
  - Direct Instruction
  - IEP goals and/or grade-level content
- Small-Group Specialized Verbal Behavior Instruction
  - Applied Behavior Analysis principles
  - Autism or other moderate to significant developmental delay diagnosis
  - Targeted skills are taught with an errorless teaching method
  - Supports language development, academic skills, occupational and physical goals, social connections, and attention maintenance.
- Functional and Adaptive Curriculum
  - Creation of a student-run business
  - All students deserve a chance to engage with the community
  - Students need specialized skills – planning for transition IEP for later in school
  - Individualized direct instruction and real-life practice.

Ms. Nelson then highlighted a few students and shared their stories with the Board. She then shared staffing levels and service provider levels. Lastly, she shared department goals for 2022-23, including:

- Improve overall instruction for Special Education
- Increase funding outside of State/Federal funds
- Citizens store or coffee shop (creation/implementation of IEP goals for authentic learning)
- Revisit inclusion for students
- Increase ability to share data for reading, writing, and math within the department and to the Board and outside stakeholders.

Miles then asked the Board for any potential specific funding referrals.

Dr. Hicks asked if there are existing Special Education partnerships with peer charter schools? Ms. Nelson and Dr. Miles replied yes, but it's more of a long-term vision. There has been a lot of turnover in the Special Education space across the city, so she is working on developing relationships.

d. Student Recruitment Update (Mr. Ryan Brennan)

Mr. Brennan reported that a mailer was sent city-wide and a digital campaign featuring Facebook and geo-fencing is underway. Ms. Nowlin is currently working on reaching out to the active student pipeline and Ms. Katy Lineberry will shift into a full-time Recruitment & Enrollment Coordinator role later this month.

Lastly, Dr. Vansaghi shared an announcement that Mr. Brennan was selected as the winner of the "Excellence in Education" Administrative Team Member of the Year award that he was a finalist for. The Board shared congratulations and pride.

**9. Adjourn** *[Board Action]*

*Dr. Hicks moved to adjourn and Ms. Rios provided a second. The motion was unanimously approved with none abstaining. The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 pm.*

*[/rb]*