



## **KIPP New Orleans Schools Board Meeting Minutes: October 20, 2021**

A public meeting of the Board of Directors (the Board) of KIPP New Orleans Schools (KNOS) was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 5:45 p.m., at Booker T. Washington High School, 1201 South Roman Street, New Orleans, LA 70125.

The meeting was called to order at 5:50 p.m.

The following members were present: Donnell Bailey (arrived at 6:03pm), Sherice Clark, Lauren Hitt (arrived at 6:00pm), Robert Hudson, Bruce Hurley (arrived at 5:57pm), Drew Marsh, and Larry Washington.

The following members were absent: Stanwood Duval, Roddrick Jones, Kelt Kindick, Steve Usdin and Danielle Willis.

The following members of KNOS staff were present: Rhonda Kalifey-Aluise, CEO; Katie Walmsley, CFO; Todd Purvis, CAO; Joey LaRoche, CSO; Jamiela Sekou, Director of Finance; Kristen Chawla, Director of Engagement and Events (departed at 6:30pm), and Shawanda Raphael, Executive Assistant.

There were no guests in attendance at the meeting,

### **Welcome**

Mr. Washington welcomed everyone to the meeting. He also stated that because there was not a quorum, the approval of the August board meeting minutes would be held later once there was a quorum of attendance. The quorum was reached at 6:03 pm.

### **CEO Report**

Ms. Kalifey-Aluise provided an update to the board regarding Covid-19 quarantines and cases, transportation challenges, and hurricane damages to Frederick A. Douglass High School. Currently, the organization is conducting weekly Covid testing at all sites. Quarantines and positive case numbers are decreasing. Staff vaccinations are at approximately 98% and approved exemptions are at approximately 2%. Additionally, eligible student vaccinations are at approximately 47%, according to the state database. There continue to be bus transportation issues that include longer wait times, fewer routes, and less consistent service due to the ongoing driver shortages. KNOS has been assisting families by offering stipends and communicating regularly with providers to provide support to affected families.

Due to damages caused by Hurricane Ida, Frederick A. Douglass High School has been temporarily relocated to the Ellis Marsalis building on Loyola Avenue. Ms. Kalifey-Aluise thanked members who participated in the recent volunteer day to prepare the Marsalis building for student entry. KNOS is working together with insurance representatives and NOLA Public Schools to ensure all damages are repaired and FDHS can return to its original location as quickly as possible. However, due to the significant damages, faculty and students may not return to the original campus until December. Ms. Kalifey-Aluise will keep the board informed of updates.

Lastly, Ms. Kalifey-Aluise and Mr. LaRoche advised the board of the status of potential partnership with Capitol High School in Baton Rouge. Mr. LaRoche advised that KNOS continues to be deeply engaged in supporting Capitol High School and with elected officials, partners, and funders. Additionally, there will be engagement meetings with board members and additional stakeholders, and discussions in the upcoming weeks to further discuss the partnership. The board will be updated on the status at the December board meeting.

### **Academic Committee Report**

Mr. Purvis provided an academic update detailing post-Hurricane Ida school focus areas which include attendance, mental health and family supports, and joyful, inclusive school environments. Staff continue to monitor success metrics to ensure that KNOS schools are successful in achieving the three-year goals by meeting or exceeding performance from the 2019-2020 school year in year 1, meeting or exceeding the pace of growth from the 2021-2022 school year in year 2 and maintaining the pace of growth and set a new bar of performance in year 3.

### **Staff and Teacher Appreciation Proposal**

Ms. Hitt thanked the board members for their quick response to contribute and/or attend the appreciation event being held for identified staff members on November 18<sup>th</sup>. An invitation will be sent to the board members. Board members will also be asked to write a personal note of appreciation to the attendees.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Mr. Marsh opened the Finance Committee report and advised that the Finance Committee met on October 18<sup>th</sup>. He then advised that Ms. Walmsley would provide a detailed report of the current financial status of the organization.

Ms. Walmsley first noted that the FY21 audit is progressing as expected, and that the board can expect an audit report by December 31, 2021. Ms. Walmsley then reported the FY21 financial summary, noting that the projected change to adjusted fund balance continues to represent a large positive variance from the original FY21 board approved budget. Ms. Walmsley reminded the board that they had originally approved an almost \$3 million operating deficit, before the majority of federal relief in response to the COVID-19 pandemic had been passed by Congress, but that the organization expects to close FY21 with a positive variance to adjusted fund balance. Ms. Walmsley relayed that this projected position is approximately a \$300k reduction since the last finance committee meeting, at which point the organization planned to claim \$1.75 million of ESSR II funds in FY21. Given an extended delay in the closure of the Louisiana Department of Education's grant management portal since mid-summer, instead KNOS claimed \$1.1 million of these funds for FY21; Ms. Walmsley noted that the timeline for resuming claims remains unknown. The \$650 thousand variance created by this lapse was offset by nearly \$350 thousand of revenue increases from MFP payments and HB393-related payments for John F. Kennedy High School.

Ms. Walmsley then turned to the FY22 revenue and budget targets. Ms. Walmsley described to the board that KNOS continues to pace toward board approved targets, but that there is underlying variability in the forecast. She exclaimed that the source of this underlying variability stems from a myriad of sources: (1) new expenses related to mitigation response to COVID-delta variant community spread, (2) new school incentive strategies intended to mitigate COVID related impacts by encouraging student vaccination, (3) new expenses from the emergency relocation of FDHS to the Ellis Marsalis Building due to the impacts of Hurricane Ida, (4) savings from recruitment challenges that have hindered a fully utilized staffing model, (5) savings from operational challenges with bussing that led to a reduction in planned bussing expenses, and (6) recent wins from new revenue sources including FEMA reimbursement for COVID related PPE materials and supplies, student device subsidization through the Emergency Connectivity Fund, and a new federal Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL) grant that will be split over three years to respond to teacher recruitment and retention challenges.

### **Governance and Nominating Committee Report**

Mr. Bailey advised that several board members' terms are expiring and will be up for re-nomination; he will be following up with members regarding their nominations. Additionally, Mr. Bailey will be communicating with board members regarding engagement meetings. He also reminded members that annual Ethics training must be completed by the end of the year. A reminder will be sent to members to ensure completion before the deadline. Lastly, Mr. Bailey will send the resume of a board candidate to members for consideration.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Washington introduced a vote to approve the minutes from the August meeting. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mr. Bailey. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

After there were no public comments, Mr. Washington introduced a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bailey and seconded by Mr. Marsh. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Shawanda Raphael

Approved by:

  
Larry Washington, Board President