

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

January 18, 2017

6:00 pm

Christopher House Administrative Offices
1611 W. Division Street, Suite 207
Chicago, IL 60622

Board Attendees Present: Rolando Acosta, Ronit Barrett, Rob Buono, Dee Dee Chesley, JoAnne Cicchelli, Jordan Hadelman, Jeff Kemerley, Tom O'Neill, Nana Owusu, Steve Raquet, George Reimnitz, Dave Rodin, Greg Spitzer, Nicole Toalson, Lizzy Whitehorn

By Phone: Rick Smirl, Barbara Stewart, Tom Woodrow

Kellogg Board Fellow Present: Corey White

Christopher House Staff Present: Lori Baas, Julie Dakers, Gloria Kuechenberg, Krissy Novy, Karen Ross-Williams, Asheley Smith, Traci Stanley, Katheryn Steward, Matt Stokes

Minutes Recorder: Matt Stokes

Proceedings

- Meeting Called to Order at 6:01 p.m.

Minutes and Consent Agenda, presented by Lori Baas

Motion was made by Tom O'Neill, seconded by Rob Buono, and carried unanimously to approve the November 14, 2016 Board of Directors meeting minutes.

Motion was made by Rob Buono, seconded by Dave Rodin, and carried unanimously to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- YTD FY17 Financials
- Final FY16 BDO Audit and Tax Return
- Elementary School Discipline Report
- ERSEA and New HS Eligibility Rule Training
- Paid Sick Leave Policy
- Personnel Policy for Early Head Start and Head Start Programs

President Remarks, presented by Tom O'Neill

- As Board President Tom would like to focus on 3 priorities. They are:
 - the expansion of the middle school to complete our birth through 8th grade continuum of education;
 - Expand the Board of Directors with a priority on increasing racial and ethnic diversity, engage more corporate leaders and individuals with capacity to help secure resources to achieve Christopher House's vision; and
 - Developing succession plans for leadership to assure sustainability into the future.
- Christopher House establishing itself as a thought leader in closing the opportunity gap for children and families could help to attract donors.

- Tom would like to meet individually with Board members to discuss their give/get commitment.
- Tom is in the process of meeting individually with board members to discuss their feedback on the priorities.
- Tom reviewed the CEO's FY 17 meets and exceeds goals vetted through the Executive Committee that align with the strategic priorities and organizational performance.
 - Motion was made by George Reimnitz, seconded by Jordan Hadleman, and carried unanimously to approve the FY17 Goals for the Chief Executive Officer.

CEO Report, presented by Lori Baas

- Update on the recruitment of the Director of External Affairs.
 - Christopher House contracted Koya Partners to lead the search to fill this position.
 - The applicant pool was narrowed from 14 candidates to three finalists. The three finalists will be interviewed by the external affairs and leadership teams on Thursday, January 19th and Friday, January 20th. Following these interviews, the candidates will meet with Tom O'Neill and Dee Dee Chesley.
- Jordan Hadelman suggested that Lori check references for the three finalists.

Education Council Report, presented by Krissy Novy and Karen Ross-Williams

- Krissy stated DESSA (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment) is a tool Christopher House teachers use to assess students' skills related to social-emotional competence, resilience, and academic success. It has been designed to help schools meet emerging social-emotional learning standards.
 - This tool will be introduced in early childhood classrooms.
 - This school year's theme is Growth Mindset, modeled after Dr. Carol Dweck's book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*.
- Karen informed the Board that Christopher House's pre-school teachers recently made a transition from hourly to salaried compensation. The transition will help the organization with staff retention and recruitment.
- The elementary school has been using UChicago Impact's STEP assessment to help students develop and achieve their literary skills and goals. This year her team will introduce this assessment in classrooms at Christopher House's Uptown location.
- The Stewart campus has already received accreditation from NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). Karen is confident the Uptown location will receive it as well.
- Karen presented the following early childhood strategic goals:
 - Child Growth Outcomes
 - The early childhood team has upped its goals on all child growth domains of its strategic goals. They are working to make sure all children who have been enrolled at Christopher House for two or more years are prepared to enter kindergarten and be successful.
 - Across all schools, the team is implementing strategies that are supporting these goals.
 - Increasing Instructional Support
 - Monthly Learning Communities for All Teachers
 - Promote Self-Awareness and Reflection on Teaching Practices

- CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) Indicators and Application in Classroom/Interactions
- Collaboration with Elementary School
 - Focus on Building Partnerships with Kindergarten Teachers
- Krissy informed the Board that it is crucial for students to perform better every time they take the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) test. The instructional team has set a goal for last year's third grade students to improve their reading and math scores.
 - Students need to study what is covered on the test in order to perform well. She emphasized that the elementary school teachers focus on depth of knowledge in student curriculum. As a result, Christopher House student might not perform as well as their peers at schools that focus on skill drills.
- There is a social worker working one-on-one with fourth grade students to reach their academic goals. Lori informed the Board that these students transferred to the elementary school from other schools. Tom suggested teachers generate data to track the academic performance of these students as they move through the continuum of education.
- Rolando and Tom suggested using academic performance data to inform stakeholders about our program model and launch the thought leadership conversation.
- Krissy invited Board members to visit the elementary school.

External Affairs Committee Report, presented by Dee Dee Chesley and Nicole Toalson

- As of mid-January Christopher House has achieved 38% of the annual fund-raising goal, compared to mid-January of last year when 55% of the annual goal had been secured.
- Donors have been increasing their giving year over year.
- There will be an upcoming educational and cultivation event in the spring.
- Dee Dee expressed that the 2017 Read-A-Thon program has been successful in securing cash and book donations to support improvement of students' literacy skills.
 - The Board is invited to read to kids and take a tour of one of Christopher House's three sites.
- Nicole stated the 27th Annual Benefit will be hosted this year at the Four Seasons, Chicago on Thursday, April 27th. Christopher House has a goal of raising \$700,000.
 - Christopher House has secured a \$25,000 sponsorship from Exelon and a \$10,000 sponsorship from Wintrust.
- Christopher House would like to raise \$150,000 for the live auction compared to \$125,000 raised last year. The Board is asked to consider items to donate to the live auction.
 - Christopher House will be selling raffle tickets for the golden paddle to be used in the live auction. Asheley explained that the winner of the golden paddle, credited at \$10,000, could use it to bid on an item(s) during the live auction.
 - The silent auction will be smaller this year.

Expanding Facilities for Elementary School, presented by Lori Baas and Corey White

- Lori and Corey presented various options for raising/borrowing the \$6.5 million in capital funding required to expand Christopher House's Stewart Campus.
- The expansion will include additional classrooms for grades six through eight, a science lab, creative space, and parent engagement space.
- The goal is to complete the project by August 2018.

- The elementary school currently has the capacity to accommodate students K through fifth grade.
- Christopher House entered into the charter agreement with Chicago Public Schools in 2013 to serve 540 students grades Kindergarten through 8th.
- Corey White, Kellogg Board Fellow, gave the Board a presentation on:
 - the organization's past financial performance
 - projections of the impact of the school's expansion on the agency's financials
 - a cash flow analysis ,and
 - risk factors to be considered
- The board reviewed a draft drawing of the expansion including classroom layouts
- The Board agreed to move forward on exploring the expansion project. A request was made for the following:
 - a formal capital campaign fundraising plan, and
 - The External Affairs Committee has agreed to assemble marketing materials for the campaign.

Motion was made by Rob Buono, seconded by Jordan Hadelman, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.