



OLIVE GROVE CHARTER SCHOOLS, INC.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, August 16, 2023, 4:00 pm (Pacific Time)

## MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Deb Willems called the meeting of the Olive Grove Charter Schools, Inc. Board of Directors to order at 4:01pm.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Deb Willems, Board Chair	present
Terry Dickinson	present
Hank Gallina	present
Jackie Heidt	present

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve the agenda as presented.

**SECONDED:** Jackie Heidt

**DISCUSSION:** None

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

5. **CLOSED SESSION**

The Board entered closed session at 4:05pm.

- Conference with Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation  
(Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Government Code Section 54956.9)  
Name of case: OAH Case No. 2023070437

### RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to open session at 4:43pm.

### ROLL CALL

Deb Willems, Board Chair	present
Terry Dickinson	present
Hank Gallina	present
Jackie Heidt	present

6. **REPORT ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION**

Deb Willems reported that no action was taken, there is nothing to report.

## 7. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve the consent agenda as presented, which included the minutes from the Board meeting on June 15, 2023 and the check registers for the month of May and June.

**SECONDED:** Hank Gallina

**DISCUSSION:** None

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

## 8. REPORTS/ TRAININGS/ PRESENTATIONS

### A. Reports

#### i. Executive Director's Report

Meg Rydman reported that school year 2023-24 is off and running as of last Thursday, August 10. Teachers and staff started before that to work to get things set up for the start of school. The new year began with 38 staff members, many of whom are returning but we have three new faces.

As of today, we have 339 students enrolled.

- 35 are elementary (TK-5),
- 53 are middle school (6-8) and
- 251 are high school (9-12).
- We have 65 sped and 21 EL/1 tbd students across the schools.

Current capacity is around 380.

Enrollment fluctuates a lot at this time of year as we learn students chose a different school or moved away. Meg expects that all available openings will be filled soon - there are currently about 134 students interested. Olive Grove is actively recruiting so we can bring in more students from our waitlists.

FlexPoint implementation going fairly smoothly. There have of course been hiccups here and there, but staff is managing it all splendidly.

No other major programmatic changes necessitated by summer trailer bills, but the trailer bill did extend the terms of charter schools who expire on or between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2027, by one additional year. So all 4 OGCS charters now expire June 30, 2026.

The schools have not received spring 2023 state assessment results.

Meg warmly welcomes students, family, and staff back, and she encourages students to take advantage of all the LCs have to offer.

#### ii. Board Members' Reports

Hank Gallina introduced the Board to a book titled Everyday Ubuntu and provided the Board members with a copy of the epilogue.

#### iii. Financial Report - *through May*

Kristin Nowak referred to the financial report available in the Board packet and took questions on it. She did not provide a verbal report. There were no questions.

### B. Presentations

None

C. Trainings

None

9. ACTION ITEMS

A. Recognize continuing OGCS, Inc. Board members Hank Gallina and Jackie Heidt

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to recognize continuing Board members, Hank Gallina and Jackie Heidt for another three year term through July 2026.

**SECONDED:** Terry Dickinson

**DISCUSSION:** None

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

B. Approval of OGCS Inc. Safe Return to In Person Plan

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve the OGCS Inc. Safe Return to In Person Plan.

**SECONDED:** Hank Gallina

**DISCUSSION:** Adoption of this plan was required as a condition of receiving ESSER III Federal COVID funds. LEAs are required to review this plan at least every 6 months until September 30, 2023. This version reflects the most recent “CDPH Guidance for K–12 Schools to Support Safe In-Person Learning, 2022-23 School Year” (updated May 23, 2023) and “COVID-19 Protocols for TK-12 School Settings in Santa Barbara County” (revised July 20, 2023)

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

C. Approval of the pursuit of the application for title funding: Title 1, Title 2, and Title 4

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve the application for title funding, to include Title I, II, and IV.

**SECONDED:** Jackie Heidt

**DISCUSSION:** Kristin Nowak explained that this action allows the Olive Grove schools to apply for these Federal funds.

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

D. Approval of FY23 Retroactive Stipends for Certificated Faculty

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve \$200,000 in retroactive learning recovery stipends for instructional staff for the 2022-23 school year.

**SECONDED:** Terry Dickinson

**DISCUSSION:** Kristin Nowak explained the requirements for nonclassroom-based charter school spending in order to qualify for full funding. This action will recognize the dedication of the OGCS certificated faculty during the 2022-23 school year as well as aid in ensuring our instructional spending meets targets.

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

E. Approval of FY24 Stipends

**MOTION:** Hank Gallina moved to approve learning recovery stipends for the remainder of the staff employed as of the end of the 2022-23 school year.

**SECONDED:** Jackie Heidt

**DISCUSSION:** This action will recognize the dedication of other OGCS staff members during the 2022-23 school year.

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

- F. Approval of increase to maximum annual employer contribution to employee health benefits, effective July 1, 2023

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve an increase to \$11,000 as the maximum employer contribution to employee health benefits, effective for the 2023-24 school year.

**SECONDED:** Hank Gallina

**DISCUSSION:** Meg Rydman explained that insurance costs are rising dramatically for the 23-24 school year. The schools are just heading into open enrollment. She proposed increasing the max employer contribution to \$11,000 annually, which is an increase just over 15% from the current contribution of \$9,500, to match the increased costs of benefits. This contribution will cover the full costs for an average-aged, individual employee choosing a silver medical benefits plan, basic dental benefits, and vision coverage. If we do not increase the employer contribution, these individuals' costs will average \$200 per month for these basic benefits where they were likely paying \$0 previously.

It is important to Meg to cover the cost of at least basic medical, dental, and vision for an individual employee with no out of pocket contribution from them. It is critical for employee retention and just good practice, in Meg's opinion. Costs for richer plans and/or for covering family members will likely still require an employee's contribution.

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

- G. Board Chair: Required Oral Report Regarding Board Approval of Executive Director Contract  
Deb Willems reported out the fiscal components of the Executive Director's contract in item 9H, including base salary, benefits, and STRS.

- H. Board Ratification/Approval of Executive Director Contract

**MOTION:** Deb Willems moved to approve the Executive Director contract, retroactive to July 1, 2023.

**SECONDED:** Jackie Heidt

**DISCUSSION:** None

**APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0

Deb Willems (Y) Terry Dickinson (Y) Hank Gallina (Y) Jackie Heidt (Y)

## 10. DISCUSSION/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Board Business

i. Mari Michel is stepping away from the role of treasurer. We thank her for her service to the Board.

- B. New Business/Future Agenda Items

i. Deb reminded the Board members to refer to the 2023-24 Board Meeting Dates and contact Meg to avoid conflicts or if they foresee needing to reschedule.

- ii. Deb also mentioned that we are trying to grow the Board, so please consider anyone you know who might be interested in joining the Board.

**11. NEXT MEETING DATE**

- September 14, 2023, 4:00pm

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:21pm.