



**Cleveland Transformation Alliance
Minutes of the Board of Directors**

April 27, 2020 | 5:30 PM

Via Public Cisco Webex Event Hosted by Cleveland Metropolitan School District

In Attendance

Baumgartner, Mark
Bingham, Anne
Downing, Diane
Gibson, Richard
Gordon, Eric
Friedman, Lee
Heard, Robert

King, Brooke
Jordan, Sharon Sobol
Klupinski, Stephanie
Marbury, Shana
Mullin, Ann
Patterson, Jeff
Price, Monyka

Randel, Erin
Rosskamm, Alan
Ruiz, Victor
Tenney, Turkessa
Williams, Helen
Zachariah, Sajit

Absent:

Jackson, Mayor Frank
Napoli, Augie

Reyes, Jose
Payton, Kevin

Cleveland Transformation Alliance Staff

Meghann Marnecheck

Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Dr. Monyka Price called the meeting to order at 5:39 PM. She announced Mayor Jackson is unable to join the board meeting and sends his regards. At 5:40 PM, Dr. Monyka Price introduced the meeting minutes from the March 2nd, 2020 board meeting. The Board reviewed and voted on the minutes from the March 2nd, 2020 meeting. Lee Freedman moved to approve the minutes, Alan Rosskamm seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

At 5:41 PM, Meghann Marnecheck acknowledged the extreme changes as a result of COVID-19 and referenced the passage of Ohio H.B. 197 to allow for public meetings to be held virtually. The Transformation Alliance will continue to work remotely and will continue to follow the guidance of the Governor's and Mayor's office.

1st Quarter Financials

At 5:41 PM, Meghann Marnecheck presented the 1st quarter financials. The Transformation Alliance received a \$35,000 operating grant from the William J. & Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation. The award will be included in the next financial report since it was received in April. At this point in the year, the Alliance should have about 75% of revenue remaining for the year. 'Program Expenses' and the 'Other' categories are below 75% because of the expense of the 2020 School Quality Guide (Program

Expenses) and up-front costs of annual subscriptions (Other). We will monitor our spend in these categories, and dollars from the O'Neill grant may be allocated here if necessary.

The Transformation Alliance is continuing to pursue grant dollars and has been ramping up efforts to gain new funders. There are three requests in process or already submitted to support the Ambassador Program, and two requests being drafted to support the Navigator Program. In terms of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan, established by the Small Business Administration (SBA) in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Transformation Alliance's 2019 financials may not put the Alliance in a place that makes sense to pursue applying for the loan. The Economic Injury Disaster Loan through the SBA may be an option. The Transformation Alliance will continue to monitor these options, but the SBA is not currently accepting new applications.

Introduction: Eli Stacy

At 5:45 PM, Meghann Marnecheck introduced Eli Stacy, who will be the new Program Coordinator, beginning May 11th. Eli will be an invaluable asset to the organization, and he is ready and willing to hit the ground running. Eli Stacy thanked Ms. Marnecheck and provided an introduction. He went to the University of Virginia; he was a Cleveland Foundation Fellow and has worked for CMHA and the City of Cleveland. He is looking forward to joining the Transformation Alliance.

Executive Director's Report

At 5:50 PM, Meghann Marnecheck provided the Executive Director's report. Since the stay at home order was issued, the Alliance has been using Social Media to provide information to families and has launched a COVID-19 resource page on the website. The Alliance has been working to continue to make connections with organizations as partners in the Ambassador program. Many of these potential partners are on the front lines of the pandemic; however, many are interested in becoming a partner once things are more defined. The Transformation Alliance is building out virtual training to support the program. As the Alliance begins training ambassadors this month, we know the need for Navigator staff will increase. The plan is to bring on at least two Navigators on or around June 1st to help families over the summer months. They will be part-time seasonal staff.

The *2020 School Quality Guide* launch event was postponed (initially scheduled for March 19th). Ms. Marnecheck stated that hopefully, there would be another opportunity to recognize Guide sponsors and supporters soon. Guide Distribution will resume later in the summer and the Fall through Icon Expedited, and a mailing will be going out this week to community leaders providing each with a copy of the Guide. There is potential to repurpose the *2020 School Quality Guide* content, with updated information as available and reissue for 2021, as new school data will not be available. This will be discussed further in the Communications and Engagement Committee. The Transformation Alliance also received a Google Ad grant, and paid media advertising is underway through that grant.

The Transformation Alliance is also planning to bring on two research interns to support a project, specific to school choice and decision making in Cleveland. These two interns, with support from a professor, will develop research protocol and begin gathering data from families, students, school administrators, school marketing staff, and charter sponsors. Questions will focus on what additional information families want when they are making decisions about the right school fit for their family. This data will help inform additions to our website and future School Quality Guides.

The Transformation Alliance is still planning to host a Common Ground event, and we are awaiting additional guidance on the Cleveland Foundation's plans.

At our last meeting, hiring an administrative intern was discussed. Given that much of the work of this position was helping to get the physical office organized, we are holding off on filling this position until we know more about when we will return to the offices.

The April 20th Executive Committee meeting was canceled and will be rescheduled at an appropriate time and with guidance from Mayor Jackson.

Lee Friedman asked if there is anything that the Board can do to support the Alliance. Ms. Marnecheck asked for the Board to continue to make connections for Ambassador partners where it makes sense. Ms. Marnecheck will connect with Maggie McGrath at College Now and the Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland to discuss the possibility of an ambassador partnership. Brooke King asked about exploring the potential for a virtual *Guide* launch event and wondered if there are differences in the Transformation Alliance website traffic. Ms. Marnecheck reported that in March 2020, web traffic is down compared to March 2019; however, social media engagement is up. She is also working to receive more comprehensive data quarterly to review web traffic, and trackers are being set up on the site to identify the zip codes of site visitors better. Ms. Marnecheck also thanked Ms. King for the virtual launch event idea, and she will explore it.

Erin Randel asked if *Guides* were mailed to preschool parents. Ms. Marnecheck said they were sent to community leaders, but that she is working to reschedule a meeting with PRE4CLE to ensure *Guides* are getting in the hands of preschool parents. Turkessa Tenney asked if the Transformation Alliance was working toward digital access to the Guide, and Meghann said the Transformation Alliance would provide information on their website. Eric Gordan asked if the Transformation Alliance can help determine if people are making different kinds of decisions for School Choice than they have in the past in light of the pandemic. Meghann Marnecheck said she will check the data for the website, and will also explore this particular question in the research project mentioned earlier.

Ms. Tenney also mentioned the digital divide, and the need to increase access to this information through the Navigator program to help families on a neighborhood basis, especially on the east side, who are not able to access digital information. Ms. Marnecheck agreed and stated that this would be a focus of the grant request to the St. Luke's Foundation. If awarded, it won't be a pilot, but will be a slightly different model for the ambassador program and will allow for a comparison to see which version is working more effectively. Erin Randel reiterated the importance for Board Member partners to push information out through their networks on social media.

Ann Mullin asked if there is a parent survey. In the last eight weeks of school, Cleveland has thrown together the best they can in response to the pandemic. Ann would like to know what parents in Cleveland are thinking right now. Are they having difficulty accessing different teacher education platforms, do they find online requirements overwhelming, or are they having to do too much to maintain the requirements. As we move into Fall 2020, where there might be an entirely online format for schools, what can we learn from parents now that can inform what we do in the Fall? Brooke King discussed how the Intergenerational Schools have been surveying their students every Friday, and they have adjusted their online programming weekly. She shared that individualization, resolving issues with access, and being flexible are the most important findings to date. The Transformation Alliance

committed to synthesize this data across the different entities and get higher-level information out to partners if that would be helpful.

Eric Gordon said that the District is encountering the same issues that the Intergenerational Schools are, and the big takeaway is that the model needs individualized. The District is undertaking a survey of parents and educators after the formal closure of most of their schools (around Memorial Day). They will ask what is working for parents, what did not. They are thinking about how CMSD can measure success and learn from other large cities similar to Cleveland. The District committed to sharing this information as soon as it becomes available.

Eric Gordon reiterated that Meghann Marnecheck had done an outstanding job of leading this organization through this unprecedented emergency. Dr. Monyka Price and others agreed.

Adjournment

Dr. Price adjourned the meeting at 6:24 PM. The next meeting of the Board of directors will be June 8th, 2020, at 5:30 PM, with the location pending information and insight from the State of Ohio and Mayor's Office.