



Cleveland Transformation Alliance
Minutes of the Board of Directors
September 20, 2021 | 5:30 PM
Cleveland Metropolitan School District
Conference Room and Via Webex

In Attendance

Baumgartner, Mark	Mullin, Ann	Ruiz, Victor
Downing, Diane	Price, Monyka	Tenney, Turkessa
Gordon, Eric	Napoli, Augie	Williams, Helen
King, Brooke	Patterson, Jeffrey	Zitzner, John
Marbury, Shana	Randel, Erin	

Absent

Bingham, Anne	Jackson, Mayor Frank	Reyes, Jose
Friedman, Lee	Jordan, Sharon Sobol	Zachariah, Sajit
Gibson, Richard	Klupinski, Stephanie	
Heard, Robert	Payton, Kevin	

Other Attendees

Anderson, Emily (Virtual)	Margolis, Jen (Virtual)	Sogor, Lauren (Virtual)
Bendar, Leslie (Virtual)	McClung, Lori (Virtual)	
Cyrocki, Laura (Virtual)	Ricchiuto, Jack (Virtual)	

Cleveland Transformation Alliance Staff

Marnecheck, Meghann
Halm, Mary

Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Dr. Monyka Price called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM. Dr. Price welcomed the Board and went over the agenda items for the meeting. Dr. Price noted Mayor Jackson's grandson's death and thanked the room for their condolences, and asked to keep the family in their thoughts.

Dr. Price opened the floor for discussion to approve the August 16, 2021 Board meeting minutes. Ms. Shana Marbury noted a minor typo and requested it be corrected in the final version of the minutes. Ms. Diane Downing moved to approve the minutes with the requested change, seconded by Mr. August Napoli. Hearing no further comments, Dr. Price asked for a



motion to approve the minutes. The Board unanimously approved the minutes for the August 16, 2021 Board meeting.

Dr. Helen Williams asked about the law requiring the Cleveland Transformation Alliance to meet in person. Ms. Marnecheck responded that public bodies have been required to return to in-person meetings since July 1, 2021. The Alliance Board operates as a public board, and as a result, must meet in person. No Board member who joins through a virtual platform can be marked as present for a quorum or vote.

Refreshed Cleveland Plan

Ms. Marnecheck gave a brief overview of the refreshed Cleveland Plan, thanking each of the Cleveland Transformation Alliance Board members for their support and time. Ms. Marnecheck also thanked the Advocacy & Communication Solutions staff that facilitated the refresh process. She stated that at the end of the brief presentation, the Board would consider a resolution of support for the refreshed Plan.

Ms. Lori McClung began by reminding the room of the process to arrive at the final refreshed Cleveland Plan. The process involved three phases, including research, engagement, and writing. The research included numerous hours of background work. The engagement process included community feedback from teachers, principals, other educators, and other educational organizations such as PRE4CLE and the Higher Education Compact. In the writing phase, there were eight versions of the Plan, which were reviewed and edited by the Cleveland Plan Progress Committee and Board members to arrive at the final document for consideration. The final deliverable will include five documents for broader distribution, including the complete document, an executive summary, the appendix, and combinations of those documents.

Ms. McClung then discussed the key updates in the refreshed Cleveland Plan. These include the inclusion of a North Star vision and a new fifth pillar focused on equity. Another key update was creating the visual of a house with quality schools as the foundation with the pillars supporting the roof of educational equity and the North Star vision.

It was noted that the Plan is not for the Transformation Alliance alone to manage, but for the entire community to play a role in bringing the Plan to life. The next key step will be to share the final document with our partners and ask for their consideration in approving a resolution of support for the Cleveland Plan.

Ms. Ann Mullin commented that the process was very well managed from the beginning. Advocacy & Communication Solutions were timely and responsive, which was appreciated. She



also noted everyone's participation and stated that the refreshed Cleveland Plan is a document we should take pride in.

Dr. Price echoed Ms. Mullin's comments and recognized Ms. McClung for her team's work, and thanked them on behalf of the Board for shepherding the work.

Ms. Shana Marbury commented that the refreshed Cleveland Plan captures the original plan's goal, which was to include community input. She stated that she is incredibly pleased with the final document.

Mr. Eric Gordon stated he would take a different perspective and noted that the community has chosen to stay the course on a strategy, which is emblematic of investments toward a long-term solution that is unique in our community. He noted that people reach out to him often to discuss the perseverance of Cleveland. People believe Cleveland is a community that gets things done.

Dr. Williams added that Cleveland is staying the course, but putting it in the context of what we have learned over the years. She commented that she was proud that the group had been able to work through the conflicts that emerged along the way. She also thanked Ms. Turkessa Tenney for pushing for the inclusion of a fifth pillar that focused on equity. Dr. Williams asked when the final documents will be published. Ms. Marnecheck stated that she intended to have the documents posted on the Alliance website within a week. Dr. Williams also suggested that the Plan be sent to the two mayoral candidates. Ms. Mullin added that they should be sent to the legislature and Governor as well. Ms. Marnecheck agreed.

Mr. Gordon commented that he is prepared to ask the CMSD school board to also approve a resolution of support. Mr. Napoli stated that he intended to do the same at United Way.

Mr. Jeffrey Patterson suggested a rollout strategy with different media outlets to put the Plan out again in front of the public. There had been a lot of excitement around the original Plan. Ms. Mullin also asked for help from Mr. Mark Baumgartner to distribute the Plan through the Cleveland Teachers' Union.

At 6:02 PM, Dr. Price asked for a motion to support the refreshed Cleveland Plan. Ms. Brooke King made the motion of support, and Dr. Williams offered the second. The resolution of support was unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report

Ms. Marnecheck announced the arrival of Ms. Mary Halm to the Alliance's team as a Public Service Fellow supported by the Cleveland Foundation.



She also stated that the Alliance is well into the strategic plan process. It is anticipated that a plan will be before the Board for consideration at the next meeting on October 25th.

Ms. Marnecheck is also holding interviews to hire Mr. Eli Stacy's replacement. She said she was very pleased with the applicant pool again and hopes to make a final decision in early October.

Lastly, Ms. Marnecheck noted the preliminary results from the School Safety Survey. A full analysis is forthcoming. The Alliance received 800 responses to the survey, which is a significant increase from the 2020 Family Listening Campaign survey, which received about 350 responses.

The survey received a lot of responses that related to COVID-19 safety concerns. We expected to see more safety concerns related to a school's location or transportation. Instead, bullying was higher in both the write-in and checkbox questions.

Questions were also asked about Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as part of a partnership with the Higher Education Compact. It was clear that parents/caregivers understand the importance of social and emotional learning but may not yet fully understand all the ways that SEL is incorporated into their child's education.

Some of the recommendations include increasing resources for families to learn about COVID-19 protocols at school to ensure as much preparedness as possible, as well as greater resources for families to learn about SEL offerings.

Ms. Tenney asked if the respondents' demographics were representative of the CMSD school district. Mr. Gordon responded that the White population is a bit overrepresented, and the Hispanic community is slightly underrepresented, but the proportions are similar. He also noted that about 22 percent of respondents did not offer a response, which could have affected the proportions. Dr. Williams asked if it was typical to allow respondents to select more than one ethnicity. Ms. Marnecheck responded that she believed it was becoming more common, so as not to ask people to conform to one category.

Ms. Erin Randel asked who wrote the survey. Ms. Marnecheck responded that the team of summer interns drafted the questions with insight resulting from our stakeholder conversations, our contracted consultant Audrey Altieri who served as an intern last summer, and herself. Ms. Randel also asked if the survey title served to draw people in to respond. Ms. Marnecheck responded that she felt that it likely was, and would be, addressed in the larger final report. She acknowledged that given the focus on safety during the mayoral election process, it is likely at the top of many resident's minds.

Other Business

Dr. Price asked if there were any other items for consideration. Ms. Mullin asked if we could return to an item mentioned at the previous meeting about the mayoral transition process. Dr. Price stated that she had been in conversation with Mr. Kevin Burtzlaff, CMSD school board counsel, about the transition. She stated that Mayor Jackson intends to appoint a new vice-chair to help transition the incoming mayor. Ms. Mullin suggested that it would be helpful to have talking points for all board members to have if anyone happens to talk with a mayoral candidate. She also stated that she anticipated Ms. Marnecheck was working to compile documents to share with the mayor-elect when the time came.

Ms. Mullin then asked that we plan for the possibility that as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we should plan for the inability to achieve a quorum. No board member should feel forced to attend if they feel it is jeopardizing personal health. Mr. Gordon suggested that Ms. Marnecheck work with Mr. Burtzlaff to determine if the Alliance may be able to pursue a process of allowing the Executive Director to keep the organization moving in the event that the Board cannot function as required by law. Mr. Patterson raised that parameter should be established because there could be pushback once that authority is given. He also suggested that we plan out the things that will require a vote at our upcoming meetings so that Board members' time and commitment are well spent.

Mr. Victor Ruiz asked if a larger venue may be available to help people be further spaced out. Ms. Downing indicated she would look into a space that Say Yes Cleveland has been using at Tri-C, which is larger. She is unsure of the availability of the streaming technology needed.

Mr. Patterson stated that he appreciated the Board was having the conversation, because it recognizes the level of commitment and concern members have for wanting to do the right thing.

Ms. Mullin asked for an update from Breakthrough Public Schools on the announcement of their incoming CEO. Mr. John Zitzner stated that the new CEO will be Mr. Ralph Johnson. He will start on October 18, 2021. Outgoing CEO Alan Rosskamm (and former Alliance Board Member) will have his last day on October 8th. Mr. Johnson joins Breakthrough Public Schools from McKinsey Company. He also has a child who attended Breakthrough Public Schools.

Adjournment

Dr. Price noted that the next meeting of the Board will take place on Monday, October 25, 2021, at 5:30 PM, and the location of the meeting will be announced as soon as possible. She then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Napoli made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Gordon seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:22 PM.