

**IDEA Public Schools, Greater Cincinnati, Inc.**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**Thursday, August 25, 2022**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members Present:** Marquicia Jones Woods, Jorge Perez, Dr. Dwight Young, Cynthia Geer, Deon Mack (arrived at 2:20pm EST)

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Matt Kyle, Phil Schneider, Dr. Jeff Cottrill, Jessica Hess, Andrew Clarence, Carlo Hershberger, Jazmine Leon-Wing, and Jennifer White

**Legal Staff & Consultants Present:** Adam Schira of Dickinson Wright PLLC, Stephanie Attaya of Marcum LLP acting as Treasurer for IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc.

**Audience Present:** Theda Sampson of Fordham Foundation

**Meeting is called to order at 2:06 PM EST**

**Welcome, Call to Order and Establish Quorum**

Dr. Dwight Young confirmed quorum and called meeting to order.

**Summary of Motions and Approvals**

1. Approval of grant application request:

Motion by: Deon Mack

Seconded by: Cynthia Geer

All in favor: Vote passes unanimously

2. Approval to amend original Consent Agenda to remove the outstanding Board Meeting minutes:

- March 11, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes
- June 9, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes
- July 29, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes
- Dream Box contract
- Follett Services contract

Motion by: Cynthia Geer

Seconded by: Marquicia Jones-Woods

All in favor: Vote passes unanimously

3. Approval of amended Consent Agenda:

- Dream Box contract
- Follett Services contract

Motion by: Jorge Perez

Seconded by: Dwight Young

All in favor: Vote passes unanimously

### **Organizational Update: National**

Dr. Jeff Cottrill, Superintendent of IDEA Public Schools, Inc. presented the overall progress to goal, highlighting that the organization had received a B regarding the goal of becoming an A rated School District. Dr. Cottrill discussed several entity goals and the progress towards each of those goals. Dr. Cottrill also shared the goals for 2022-23 and how those have been updated to ensure that all departments and teams are working towards streamlined goals. Jessica Hess, Chief Compliance and Administrative Officer, supported the presentation and was available for questions alongside Dr. Cottrill. At the end of the National update, Board members discussed the presentation and addressed Dr. Cottrill and Jessica with their questions.

Board Member Geer asked about the frequency of tracking enrollment, which was one area presented. Dr. Cottrill explains that enrollment is tracked daily using an internal dashboard and that the dashboard does track towards different snapshot and benchmark goals that differ by state. Jessica noted that the enrollment for IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. was increasing as recent as the day before the meeting.

Jennifer White, Director of Board Relations & Governance, continued the National update by reminding the board members of the upcoming Board Retreat scheduled for September 16-18, 2022 in Austin, TX. The board members were provided the RSVPs from the IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. and asked if they needed additional support booking their travel as well as if they were receiving all communication from the National team members. Board members asked about virtual session options if they were unable to attend in person, which Jennifer stated that there would be virtual options with more specific information to come later.

### **Organizational Update: Regional**

Matt Kyle, Executive Director of IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc., began his presentation focusing on the regional level updates. Matt started with student enrollment highlighting for the board that the numbers were off track from the anticipated targets. Matt provided some causes for the low enrollment. Board members discussed potential causes for the low enrollment as well; Board Member Jones-Woods asked whether adding another grade like 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades would help to bring in additional students. She continued by saying that if a family has a scholar in Kindergarten, but our school does not have services for a sibling in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, that that may deter the family from enrolling altogether. Board Member Perez asked about what was happening at other schools and whether the low enrollment gap was a trend across the board, while Board Member Jones-Woods wonders about the same. Board Member Mack stated that in Cincinnati families often wait until after Labor Day to enroll their students in schools, and the members discuss if they should anticipate numbers to increase during the second week of September.

Matt continues to share the regional updates in his Executive Director report by citing transportation and some recent challenges. He explains the routes are lasting longer than expected causing parents to come to the school, but the students are still on the bus or students getting home as late as 7 pm EST. Matt cites the reason for some of the transportation challenges is that the routes were not known ahead of time, or with very little notice, given a delay in when families registered their students for school or officially enrolled in school. Board Member Mack and Board Member Perez point out that the lag in registration could be because of the Labor Day trend discussed earlier. Matt explains that not all route challenges are caused by the late registration. He states that some of the drivers are on loan from TX and they either are not familiar with the local routes and there is still a vacancy issue with local drivers. This leads into a presentation of other vacancies that exist, most notably in the area of teachers with Special Education certification as it is extremely difficult to obtain in the state of Ohio. Board Member Perez asks how the board can help with circulating information about the staff vacancies, whether that is through a hashtag to share on social media or other recruitment efforts. Board Members Jones-Woods, Board Member Mack, and Board Member Perez state that the staffing shortage is a trend locally and nationally and not an isolated event in this situation. Board Member Perez states that he has not seen a team work harder to launch than the regional team in Cincinnati.

### **Financial Update**

Leanne Hernandez, Chief Financial Officer, begins the presentation by introducing the entire Finance team that works to support IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. and the Board of Directors. She introduces some members of her internal, IPS Enterprises, Inc. team including Carlo Hershberger, Jazmine Leon-Wing and Andrew Clarence. She then provides a reminder of how the internal team works with the Treasurer, Stephanie Attaya. Stephanie reminds the board that she is the registered fiscal officer and that she works with the state entities on behalf of IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. Stephanie continues a financial update by reviewing banking account information and some upcoming resolutions that the board can expect to see in upcoming meetings. She discusses the first round of federal funding based on enrollment and presents pages 1-5 of the financial statements. Board Member Perez asks what happens given that there was a plan based on a set of financials and budget but that has changed due to enrollment, what does that mean moving forward. Stephanie explains that the budget will be recompleted in October to accurately reflect updated enrollment and federal funding; at that time the board will vote to approve any budget amendments. Jazmine Leon-Wing continues presentation with updates about cash forecast. Carlo continues by reminding the board of what to expect from financial team and financial presentations moving forward. Board Member Perez thanks the presenters and asks about timing of any substantial concerns or challenges. He states that if there is a major issue in late September, will the board need to wait until the upcoming October meeting at the end of that month to be informed. Legal counsel Adam Schira states that there are no restrictions on sharing finances as they happen and that doing so is not breaking any open meetings acts. Leanne states that the board could also request a special board meeting, if needed. Board Member Mack asks if that special meeting could be virtual. Adam Schira states that the board and legal could return to that question if needed given that there are certain requirements that may need to be met regarding a special meeting, but there is no reason why communication regarding financial updates could not be sent.

Leanne moves the presentation forward to focus discussion on the impact the low enrollment will have on staffing. She explains that she does not see a path forward without a reduction in force. Board Member Mack asks how long until a staff reduction would be needed. Leanne explains that a staff reduction is inevitable and that a final decision would be made by the end of the following week. Board Member Jones-Woods asks how a reduction in force would be rolled out. Board Member Mack

asks if staff is cut and then there are student needs that warrant that staff member, what happens? Matt explains that the reduction in force will not follow a first in, first out model, that the RIFs will be based on necessity and programming for students. Board Member Perez asks how the staff will be supported, how partners will be notified, an overall public relations plan. Board Member Mack asks again how long a reduction could be delayed. Leanne explains that the organization is past a critical point and that the reduction in force would need to be executed by September.

### **2022-23 Employee Handbook**

Jennifer White, Director of Board Relations & Governance, reviews the updated 2022-23 Employee Handbook on behalf of the Human Assets team of IPS Enterprises, Inc. She points out that IPS Enterprises, Inc. is the employer and highlights the changes made to previous versions of the employee handbook for staff members working in Ohio.

### **Advancement Update**

Phil Schneider provides a brief update regarding important, upcoming events including meetings with Fordham and AGS. Phil also presents on a few grant opportunities that he would like the board to consider for application.

### **Reach All Students Grant Application Approval**

Following the Advancement Update, Phil reviews in more detail the Reach All Students grant. He asks that the board vote to approve IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. applying and submitting the application by the given deadline. Board members vote to allow application for this grant unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda Amendment & Approval of Amended Consent Agenda**

Dr. Dwight Young, Board Chair, moves onto the consent agenda part of the meeting. Prior to asking board to take action, he notes that the outstanding minutes had not yet been approved by Legal Counsel and need to be removed from consent agenda. Board votes to amend the consent agenda, removing the outstanding minutes. Board then reviews the amended consent agenda which includes two contracts. Board votes unanimously to approve the amended consent agenda.

### **Public Comment**

Board Chair asks for public comment, as stated on the agenda. Theda Sampson, Fordham Foundation, addresses the board. She states that Board Members Young, Phil, and Matt are receiving ongoing communication and newsletters from Fordham and asks if anyone else should be added to the distribution list. All board members ask to be added to Fordham updates/communication.

### **Adjournment**

The board adjourned at 3:24pm EST

**Certification**

I certify that the foregoing are the true and correct minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. held on August 25, 2022.

DocuSigned by:  
*Marquicia Jones-Woods*  
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Marquicia Jones-Woods, IDEA Greater Cincinnati, Inc. Board Secretary