

# Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

## Minutes – Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, August 30th, 2022

In Accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act: Public Notice of this Meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given by the Board Secretary in the Asbury Park Press – Paper of Record. Ocean Academy Charter School, 1650 Massachusetts Avenue, Lakewood, NJ. Attendance by virtual or in person.

Marshall White – President  
Anita Raynes Lepelstat – Vice President  
Thomas A. D’Ambola - Absent  
Aase Marie Hare  
Sharon Hollander  
Roxanne Martin  
Reverend Juan Angel Monge-Santiago - Absent  
Jim Muzikowski

Valarie Smith (Board Secretary), Lorna Hassel (Principal), Dawn Dobb-Fossnes (Middle School Principal), David Block (School Business Administrator), Thomas McMahon (Facilities Consultant), and David Hespe (Board Attorney).

Meeting to be Called to Order – 6:00 PM  
Salute to the Flag by Board President

### Action Agenda

#### Open Public Forum: Agenda Items Only

#### Special Presentation by Marc Sweet (Middle School Teacher)

Mr. Sweet made a presentation to the Board on the School’s new official flag!

Last Spring, the middle school social studies classes finished making their designs for an OACS flag. Each class voted on their favorite design, leaving us with 5 choices for the whole school to vote on. And the winner was the following:



## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

### Old Business

Update on Facility Issues of 1650 Massachusetts presented by Tom McMahon

- Building Water Leaks in Seams have been addressed
- Fire Alarm system being addressed

Update on potential High School Expansion Project Presented by Tom McMahon

- Formal Application for Expansion to a High School will be due in September

Update on Burglary & Gym Floor – by Valarie Smith

- Burglar was caught and was imprisoned but was released before sentencing and he didn't show up at his sentencing hearing that was schedule for August 5, 2022
- It appears that we will be able to get a better gym floor for a cut rate cost of about \$25K – this project was presented to us by one of the Volleyball coaches who works for a gymnasium company

Update on Blue Ribbon Program Status + Critical Thinking Curriculum – Dawn Cobb-Fossnes

- OACS has met all the requirements to achieve the Beacon Level in obtaining our Blue Ribbon status with the Blue Ribbon Program
- Dr. Fossnes also presented on a Critical Thinking Curriculum that she and Dr. Bunnie Claxton collaborated on. The Curriculum focuses on Critical-Thinking skills that promote independent thinking, wise decision-making, problem-solving, and other life skills that will help students work their way through real-life situations so that they are able to make wise decisions in life.

Update on student request for vending machines for the third floor – presented by Valarie Smith

- Unfortunately, we were not able to secure a contract with a vending machine company as requested by the Principal's Student Advisory Board and approved by the Board of Trustees (May 10, 2022 meeting) as the vending machine companies did not think that we had enough "traffic" to warrant such maintenance. Tom McMahon advised that we can probably get our own vending machines for students to stock and maintain. Everyone was in agreement that this could be a good lesson for the students in maintaining the vending machines and taking care of the finances associated with the machine.

[Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022](#) Presented by Valarie Smith

Motion to approve the May 10<sup>th</sup> Minutes made by Jim Muzikowski

Seconded by Roxanne Martin

Unanimously approved by the Board

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

### Action Agenda – New Business

#### Re-Election of Board Members

The following Board of Trustee Members are Up for Election (three year term expiring 2025):

Marshall White, Anita Lepelstat, Roxanne Martin

Motion to re-elect Marshall White, Anita Lepelstat, and Roxanne Martin to the Board of Trustees for a Three-Year Term motioned by Jim Muzikowski

Seconded by Anita Lepelstat

Unanimously Approved by the Board

#### Election of Board Officers (President & Vice President, Chair of Finance Committee)

Motion to Elect Anita Lepelstat as President of the Board of Trustees made by Jim Muzikowski

Seconded by Aase Hare

Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion to Elect Jim Muzikowski as Vice President of the Board of Trustees made by Marshall White

Seconded by Anita Lepelstat

Unanimously Approved by the Board

#### Members of the Finance Committee

Board members unanimously agreed to postpone the election of members to the Finance Committee to the next board meeting.

#### Board Opening – Resume by Valarie Smith

Review of resume of potential Board member – to be voted on at the October Meeting

#### Principal's Report Presented by Lorna Hassel

##### **May 2022**

Staff Attendance Report: 83 Total Full Days Off, 32 Half Days Off

Student Attendance Report 191 (non-covid related)

Total Enrollment – 365

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

### June 2022

Staff Attendance Report: 84 Total Full Days Off 22 Half Days  
Student Attendance Report: 163 (non-covid related)

Enrollment – 365

[New Hires for the 2022-23 School Year](#) Presented by Lorna Hassel

Consultant's Contract for Kathy Connell who will be the school's Special Education Director for the 2022-23 School Year.

Motion to approve the consultant's contract for Special Education Director made by Marshall White  
Seconded by Sharon Hollander  
Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion to approve Rory Tunney as Head of Maintenance retroactive to July 1, 2022 made by Jim Muzikowski  
Second by Anita Lepelstat  
Unanimously Approved by the Board

Position	Notes
Jennifer Carson – Para	BA with 8 years experience in NYC – retroactive to 8/24
Angie Hassel - Para	
Dulce Rojas Hernandez - Para	
Wendy Jones - Para	One on One Aid
Amanda Doerr – Speech Therapist	Full time - Speech Therapist – Replacing contracted services!
Melissa Baker - Teacher	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade – Replacing Grace Leatherman resigned to move to Florida
Wendy McKnight - Teacher	Masters in Special Education
William Sing - Teacher	Teacher

Motion to approve the above listing of teachers and paraprofessionals made by Jim Muzikowski  
Seconded by Marshall White  
Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion to Approve Justin Tinker on taking on the duties of Bookkeeper and Human Services Manager retroactive to July 1, 2022 made by Roxanne Martin  
Second by Aase Hare  
Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

Upon recommendation of the Executive Director, Motion to hire the consulting services of Colleen Eskow Schultz to help guide the school's application for Expansion with the NJ Department of Education made by Roxanne Martin

Second by Jim Muzikowski

Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

### Strategic Initiatives – Compliance for Charter School Expansion Grant – Presented by David Hespe

The Board of Trustees needs to approve a resolution commemorating the school's strategic plan.

#### **Resolution**

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees of Ocean Academy Charter School approved and directed David Hespe of Porzio, Bromberg, & Newman to conduct a thorough and extensive strategic planning report as a proactive change process that focuses on the future but is grounded in the present by engaging the entire school community;

**WHEREAS**, a strategic plan is a part of the mandatory compliance of the Charter School Expansion Grant as directed by the NJ Public Charter Schools Association;

**WHEREAS**, the strategic plan establishes strategic directions, identify internal & external environmental issues impacting the school, and deciding on the priorities of action based on the school's mission and vision;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Trustees approves, substantially in the form as presented to the Board at this meeting, the proposed 2022 Strategic Initiative Plan as recommended by the Lead Founder & Executive Director.

Resolution to Approve the Strategic Initiatives Report made by Anita Lepelstat

Second by Aase Hare

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

### Recommendation of the Executive Director – Actions for the 2022-23 School Year

The following six points are required each year by law or regulation.

**Ocean Academy Charter School  
Board of Trustees**

1. Reappoint Valarie M. Smith as Secretary to the Board (one year term)

Motion by Roxanne Martin, Second by Aase Hare, Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

2. Reappoint Board Attorney, David Hespe, of the firm Porzio, Bromberg, & Newman for the 2022-23 School Year.

Motion by Marshall White Second by Anita Lepelstat Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

3. Appoint Auditor, Jump, Perry, & Company, at an annual cost not to exceed \$15,000

Motion by Roxanne Martin, Second by Sharon Hollander, Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

4. Appointment of the Public Agency Compliance Officer (P.A.C.O.) David P. Block

Motion by Anita Lepelstat, Second by Aase Hare, Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

5. Motion to appoint David P. Block the Districts Qualified purchasing agent, authorization to award contracts up to bid threshold (currently \$44,000 bid threshold) and set quote threshold (\$6,600 quote threshold). Bid & Quote Thresholds are ruled by DCA.

Motion by Anita Lepelstat, Second by Jim Muzikowski, Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

6. Motion to approve the Board’s Critical Policy Manual.

Motion by Roxanne Martin, Second by Anita Lepelstat, Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

7. Motion to approve Ocean Academy’s curriculum.

Motion by Anita Lepelstat, Second by Roxanne Martin, Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

**Teacher Contract Renewal** presented by Lorna Hassel

*OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL*

*CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEE CONTRACT:*

***Our Mission***

***“ to provide elementary students with a high quality and student-centered education in a safe, nurturing, and challenging environment so that all students achieve their highest level of academic success.”***

*This Agreement is made by and between Ocean Academy Charter School, a New Jersey public charter school and non-profit corporation, (hereinafter referred to as the “Employer” and or OACS) and*

\_\_\_\_\_ hereinafter referred to as “Employee”) as of the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 202-.

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

*It is mutually covenanted and agreed by and between the parties hereto as follows:*

### **Offer of Employment:**

*The Employer hereby engages the employee to perform the services of ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER on a full-time basis and employee hereby accept such employment in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Employment Contract.*

*Your term of employment shall be July 1, 202- to June 30, 202- for 188 school contact days and 10 extra professional development days pursuant to the school calendar adopted annually by the Board of Trustees.*

*The Employer shall pay you an annualized salary of \_\_\_\_\_. Employee salaries will be paid in 20 equal installments on the 15th and the last day of each month beginning with the first payment on September 15th of that school year and the last payment on the last day of June of that school year. This schedule aligns with the TPAF contribution schedule as outlined by the state. Additional income such as stipends will be paid in accordance with school policy.*

*This Employment Contract is subject to your holding a valid instructional certificate in good standing, as stated below, issued by the New Jersey State Board of Education.*

### **CERTIFICATION(S)/DEGREE(S)/CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIRED:**

*The employee represents and warrants to Employer by signing this contract that he or she is properly licensed and certified to teach in the public schools of the State of New Jersey, and that he or she possesses the particular certifications, endorsements and licenses required by the laws of the State of New Jersey for the particular assignment of the employee at Ocean Academy Charter School. It is the affirmative duty of an employee to advise the school within 24 hours of receipt of any notice received from the state of New Jersey pertaining to a defect, suspension, revocation or termination of their certification or license. It is expressly understood that Ocean Academy Charter School is relying upon the employee's representations pursuant to this provision and that it is the exclusive responsibility of the employee to know and be familiar with the State laws referenced in this provision and governing their employment as public school teacher in the State of New Jersey.*

*You must present satisfactory completion of background and reference check; provision of complete and accurate employment and educational history; and provision of a completed physical examination, obtained at your own expense, including the test for tuberculosis, rendering you fit for full time employment. Failure to perform these required steps within 30 days after the execution of this Employment Contract, without good cause as determined by the Board of Trustees, may result in immediate rescission of this offer of employment.*

*In the event you are unable to provide your aforementioned instructional certificate and/ or your certificate is suspended, revoked or withdrawn, this Employment Contract and your employment hereunder shall be terminated immediately. You hereby agree to furnish the appropriate certificate to the Employer, the County Superintendent of Schools, or any other agency designated by the Employer within seven (7) days of the execution of this Employment Contract, and to provide your current certification when such is renewed.*

*Every employee of Ocean Academy Charter School shall submit to a criminal background check and provide fingerprints in a time frame directed and mandated by the Lead Person of Ocean Academy Charter School. It is expressly understood that by signing this Agreement an employee is representing and warranting to Ocean Academy Charter School that they have no adult convictions for crimes or offenses, or felonies or misdemeanors in the State of New Jersey or any other state of the United States. Further it is expressly understood that the obligation for a criminal history background check as contained in this provision is mandated by the laws of the State of New Jersey pertaining to the operation of the public schools. In addition to this mandate, pursuant to the policies of the Board of Ocean Academy Charter School and for the mutual promises and covenants contained in this Agreement, by signing this Agreement the employee undertakes a continuing duty to disclose to The Ocean Academy Charter School any arrest and/or conviction of any crime or offense or felony or misdemeanor (not traffic or local ordinance offenses); and therefore, it is expressly understood by the employee that if at any time after passing the initial criminal history check, the*

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

employee is charged or convicted of a crime or offense or felony or misdemeanor of any nature, the employee will immediately disclose the event to the Lead Person of Ocean Academy Charter School. Failure to disclose to the Lead Person shall constitute a basis for immediate termination.

### **JOB DESCRIPTION AND DUTIES**

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** EMPLOYEE HEREBY ACCEPTS SUCH EMPLOYMENT AND AGREES TO FAITHFULLY DO AND PERFORM ALL DUTIES INCLUDING:

1. Deliver effective, high-quality, rigorous instruction in the content areas that produce high levels of student achievement, both academic and linguistic; as given to you in the school curriculum and planned for in your lesson plans;
2. Deliver exceptional aligned and standards-based instruction in assigned content area(s) and grade level(s) that ensure academic growth for all students; as evidenced in your lesson planning from the school curriculum;
3. Develop daily and unit lesson plans that are thoughtful, thematic, goal-oriented, and aligned with curriculum, and carefully plan lessons for substitutes when unable to attend school;
4. Possess and maintain a mastery of the content knowledge area and skills to successfully teach assigned content area(s) and grade(s);
5. Participate actively in curriculum development;
6. Be responsible for all school materials that are given to you for school use (computers, curriculum binder, etc.) Lack of care may result in financial penalty;
7. Develop relevant materials and adapt existing curricula to meet the needs of students;
8. Possess a high level of technological understanding and a willingness to take advantage of professional development opportunities in the area of technology and assessment, as well as immersion education and related areas;
9. Maintain adequate records of students' achievement on school's online management system and behavioral performance and complete report card promptly as scheduled; and keep a record of those communications;
10. Maintain adequate records of students' achievement on school's online management system and behavioral performance and complete report card promptly as scheduled; and keep a record of those communications;
11. Be available for parent/teacher conferences, parent/student orientations, award nights, and Graduations;
12. Check homework and assist students in any areas that show a lack of understanding of homework assignments;
13. Plan and chaperone field trips;
14. Establish a good working relationship with other teaching professionals for integration of best practices into the classroom and the curriculum;
15. Implement the school-wide discipline policies in the classroom and throughout the school; and attend disciplinary hearings as needed;
16. Maintain a neat, clean classroom environment that enhances learning;
17. Attend, as needed, Child Study Team meeting & Intervention & Referral Team Meetings;
18. Attend regular faculty meetings, PLC meetings, Departmental meetings and trainings and professional development sessions;
19. Differentiate instruction for children of different linguistic, cultural and academic backgrounds, as well as for children with different learning styles including English Language Learners, students with special needs and identified struggling students with the same high expectations you have for all students. Further, you commit to diligently provide them with accommodations and/or modifications outlined in their learning plans, such as an IEP, ELL Plan, and tiered intervention plan. This will ensure the highest level of effective learning for each student you serve; and
20. To follow all rules set forth in school policy as well as other communicated directives, both verbal and written, and to carry out all other duties as assigned by the Head of School and Executive Director.

**DUTIES:** You shall perform all duties as outlined in the job description for your position, set forth above. You shall also perform such additional work as may be required by the Lead Person or his/her designee from time to time under the terms and conditions and according to the directions, instructions and control of the Lead Person or his/her designee. Certain duties may include, but are not limited to, attending state testing, cafeteria duties; and any additional school-wide community duties as may be needed.



## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

**CHANGE OF DUTIES:** You acknowledge the right of the Employer to reassign you to a different job assignment consistent with your certification and education, and consistent with the Employer's needs. Your duties may be changed from time to time without having any effect upon any other terms of this Employment Contract.

**EMPLOYER'S RULES & REGULATIONS:** You shall strictly adhere to all of the rules and regulations of the Employer which are presently in force, or which may be established hereafter with respect to your conduct as an employee. You shall also strictly follow the directions of the Employer with respect to the methods to be used in performance of your duties. You are responsible for continuing and maintaining the Employer's standards of professionalism, uniformity and quality, with regard to teaching methods.

### **HOURS OF WORK**

This is a 10-month position full time position and Employee is expected to be at work from 7:15—3:45 on Mondays through Fridays except one meeting per week will require attendance until 4:30. Hours may be subject to change according to the operational needs of the school at the discretion of the Administration and Board of Trustees. It is expected that this work will take place on the school site, although certain circumstances (e.g. COVID protocols, field trips, service projects, conferences and outreach activities) will take the employee off-site and may occur during evening or weekend hours.

### **BENEFITS**

**Holidays:** You are not required to work on holidays as set forth in the school year calendar, and there is no reduction to your salary for the holidays on the school calendar.

**Leave:** Employee is entitled to three (3) personal days annually, pre-approved by the Principal which expire at the end of each year on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and to use ten (10) personal sick days which may be accumulated if not used during the course of the current school year pursuant to law and board policy. All time off must be taken in accordance with school policy. Personal leave requests must be submitted one (1) week in advance, except in an emergency. A request for personal leave may be denied if the Employee's absence on the date specified would hinder school operations. You will also be granted up to two (2) days of absence without loss of salary due to death in your immediate family. Such bereavement days include, if appropriate, holidays and other days when school is closed, but do not include weekends. "Immediate family" shall be defined as spouse, partner in a civil union, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, parent, stepmother, stepfather, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, grandson, granddaughter, grandparent, mother or father of an employee's spouse or partner in a civil union, son-in-law, or daughter-in-law.

**Professional Development:** You may be granted up to two (2) days, upon approval by the Administration, for the purpose of professional development during the term of your employment under this Employment Contract. A written report must be provided to the Head of School for any professional development attended by the employee and paid for by the school, summarizing the new knowledge acquired by the employee and what was learned in the professional development can be utilized in the classroom by the employee for the benefit of Ocean Academy Charter School Students.

**Health Benefits** You and your family members will be eligible for health insurance coverage as provided to eligible staff under terms determined by the Employer. Each employee will have health benefit contributions deducted from his or her paychecks in accordance with NJ Chapter 78.P.L.2011. Employer may modify or cancel its benefit plan(s) at its sole discretion, at any time, with or without notice, consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. Benefit coverage will begin on September 1st for eligible employees hired for day 1 of the school year. Benefit coverage will start on the 1st of the month following the hire date for eligible employees hired after the first day of school. Any discrepancy between the benefits discussion here and the actual plan documents, the plan documents shall prevail.

**Pension** Employee will be enrolled in the New Jersey teacher pension and annuity fund (TPAF) as outlined by program guidelines. TPAF is administered solely by the state of New Jersey and all decisions about the program are made solely by the state of New Jersey, not Employer. The Ocean Academy Charter School will withhold from the employee's pay and facilitate payments to the New Jersey Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF) in the amounts required by law. An employee will sign an

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

acknowledgement that they have registered with the New Jersey Member Benefit Online System (MBOS) and reviewed the obligations for contributory and non-contributory life insurance prior to commencing duties pursuant to this Agreement.

### **EQUIPMENT**

You are required to return any and all materials, documents, equipment, real property, badges, credentials, keys, products, charge cards, telephones, pagers, computer and any other equipment supplied to you by the Employer. You are responsible for all materials, supplies, and equipment supplied to you and loss of any item will result in a pay deduction to compensate for cost of replacement.

### **TERMINATION AND SUSPENSION OF EMPLOYMENT – GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Employee's employment may be terminated by Employer at any time **for cause** without advance notice. Employee's employment may be terminated by Employer **without cause** upon 30 days written notice. Employee may terminate employment upon providing 60 days written notice. Employer, in its sole discretion, may choose to release Employee from the 60-day notice obligation or require less than 60 days notice, at which point the Employee's pay will also end as of the earlier date.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

You acknowledge that all records belonging to the Employer, including without limitation all student lists, curriculum, Policies and Procedures and business plans and practices (the "Employer Records") (1) are proprietary, (2) are the separate property of the Employer, and (3) may not be transferred by you to any other person or entity, either during the said term of employment or thereafter. You further agree to surrender all Employer Records in your possession to Employer upon termination of employment.

### **SEVERABILITY: GOVERNING LAW**

If any clause or provision herein shall be adjudged invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction or by operation of any applicable law, it shall not affect the validity of any clause or provision, which shall remain in full force and effect. The contract shall be governed by the laws of New Jersey.

### **COMPLETE AGREEMENT**

This contract supersedes all prior contracts and understandings between you and Employer, and shall not be modified, changed or altered by any promise or statement by whosoever made, until such modification shall have been approved by the Board of Trustees and set forth in writing, signed by the parties hereto. The contract is contingent upon the approval and continuation of a valid charter. You agree that you will comply with all federal and state statutes which may apply to the operation of the school and your employment, together with any and all federal and state regulations and policies of the Board of Trustees.

### **WAIVER OF BREACH**

The waiver by the Employer of a breach of any provision of this contract shall not operate or be construed as a waiver of any subsequent breach by the Employer.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT, INITIALING OF EACH PAGE AND SIGNATURES**

I accept the terms and conditions of employment as contained in this Agreement and in the policies of Ocean Academy Charter School. Further, I warrant and represent that I have initialed each page of this document to signify that I have read and understand each page and each provision of this Agreement, that any and all questions that I have about this Agreement have

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

been answered to my satisfaction, and that I am able to fulfill all of my obligations and responsibilities pursuant to this Agreement.

In Witness Whereof, the undersigned have executed this Employment Contract the date and year above written.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Board of Trustees

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Ocean Academy Charter School is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and shall not Discriminate based on gender, race, ethnic background, religion, disability or other protected category.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS CONTRACT MUST BE EXECUTED BY YOU AND RETURNED TO OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL BEFORE JUNE 1, 2022- OR THE OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT CONTAINED HEREIN SHALL BE CONSIDERED REJECTED BY YOU, AND OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL WILL POST YOUR POSITION AS OPEN AND SEARCH FOR A REPLACEMENT. IN SUCH EVENT YOU MAY RE-APPLY FOR YOUR POSITION, BUT IN NO EVENT WILL OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL BE OBLIGATED TO RE-OFFER YOU THE POSITION OR THE SAME TERMS PROVIDED HEREIN.**

Motion to Approve the Teachers' Contract (Certificated Staff) made by Roxanne Martin

Second by Aase Hare

Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

**Test Scores and Reform Measures** Presented by Valarie Smith, Dawn Cobb-Fossnes, & Lorna Hassel

Discussion on the NJSLA score results.

The scoring process (by the NJ Department of Education) is a complicated one presented in steps over a few months. Currently, we have the individual student scores and grade level scores but not an official overall school score.

Based on the scores that we do have, we have calculated our "District" scores in ELA and Math.

Overall (unofficial, not state score) for Math = 18.8%

Overall (unofficial, not state score) for ELA = 22.5%

These scores are significantly lower than what we did in the 2018-19 testing when we scored 35.1 in Math and 38.5 in ELA. Of course, that was a much smaller number of students taking the test and it was before Covid.

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

**Action Plan** Presented by Valarie Smith, Dawn Cobb-Fossnes, and Lorna Hassel

The Administration will be reorganizing for a complete and intensive School Turnaround Process under the direction of Nancy Guzman.

### Executive Director Goals 21-22 & 22-23

Discussion of Executive Director's performance on goals for 21-22

1. Purchasing of 1650 Massachusetts Avenue – Completed as of December 15, 2021
2. Continue to Oversee Expansion to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Ongoing
3. Exploring Opportunities for Eventual High School Expansion – Ongoing

Resolution to confirm that the Executive Director has advanced the performance goals assigned to her for the 2021-22 school year & to be compensated as in accordance with her contract made by Marshal White.

Second by Anita Lepelstat

Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

Discussion on Executive Director's Performance Goals for 22-23 for the 2022-23 School Year:

1. To improve upon test scores (State Assessments)
2. Continue to oversee expansion to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
3. To achieve an expansion grant for a High School & explore Facilities

Motion made by Anita Lepelstat that the Executive Director's Performance Goals for the 2022-23 School Year be as outlined above

Second by Roxanne Martin

Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

**FINANCIAL** presented by David Block

### **Discussion & Approval of MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE OCEAN  
ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES, to approve the following –

**Bill's List for FY22 & FY23**

**Board Secretary's Report – June 30, 2022**

**Approval of FY23 Title I, Title II, & Title III Grants**

**Approval of FY23 IDEA Grant**

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

Motion by Anita Lepelstat

Seconded by Roxanne Martin

Vote: unanimously approved by the Board

**Public Comment** – The Executive Director announced that Ocean Academy has gone through a thorough “Treat Assessment” conducted by the State Police and the Ocean County Prosecutor’s. A full report is expected within a few weeks.

**Board Comments** - none

**Announcements** – Next Board of Trustees Meeting will be Tuesday, October 11th

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Made by Marshall White

Second by Jim Muzikowski

Vote: unanimously approved by the Board 8:15 PM

**These Minutes were Approved by the Board at the October 11, 2022 Board Meeting.  
There was no meeting in September 2022**



## Ocean Academy Charter School

### STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS 2022

#### INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan is a shared commitment among all members of the school community toward ensuring that our students will be well prepared to succeed in the world they live in now as well as the one they will lead in the future.

The vision for student success established in this document is directed toward setting higher standards for our students and ourselves driven by the values of equity and excellence.

This document not only sets forth our strategic commitment and direction but also holds the charter school and school community accountable for achieving measurable goals that will drive our student success agenda.

Our success in accomplishing these goals will rest on a focus on continuous improvement.

---

*“A disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. To deliver the best results, strategic planning requires broad yet effective information gathering, development and exploration of strategic alternatives, and an emphasis on future implications of present decisions.”*

*~ J. M. Bryson on Strategic Planning*

---

## **BENEFITS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING**

### **What is Strategic Planning?**

Strategic Planning is a proactive change process that focuses on the future but is grounded in the present reality through our commonly understood vision, mission, and goals.

A strategic plan will engage the school community in a process of continual improvement by establishing strategic directions, identifying internal and external environmental issues impacting the schools, and deciding on the priorities for action. Without a strategic plan, the school's key stakeholders (parents, students, staff, and the community) will not know what school leadership is trying to accomplish and will be unable to support these efforts.

It challenges an organization to new levels of achievement by focusing the organization on its critical issues. Strategic Planning answers critical questions about an organization informed by all of the charter school stakeholders:

1. How will the world of education and the community change over the next five years?
2. What will we need to do to be successful in that new environment and how will we measure that success?
3. What are the challenges we will be facing and what opportunities will we have?
4. How will we systemically transform our charter school to meet those challenges and take advantage of those opportunities?

### **Goals of Strategic Planning**

The Board of Trustees and Administration for the Ocean Academy Charter School saw the development of a new strategic plan as a vehicle for bringing the school community together to accomplish the goals, objectives, and activities that will drive student achievement. The process developed by the board and administration will also relate organizational capacity to community expectations and will give the school charter school better control over external forces and the ability to anticipate and react to them. Finally, the board and administration saw strategic planning as a tool for decision making and resource allocation that will allow the school charter school to set specific data-driven priorities.

## THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Developing the strategic plan was a truly collaborative process that invited input from the entire school community- students, teachers, parents, administrators, school board members, and community members.

The strategic planning process developed by the board involved four distinct phases:

**Phase 1: Understanding.** Gathering Information to identify the current state of the charter school and community as well as the desired future state. This by necessity requires authentic stakeholder engagement involving charter school leadership, administration, faculty, staff, parents, students, and community leaders. This phase focused on data collection regarding student and operational performance to provide a factual basis for the analysis of the stakeholder input.

**Phase 2: Visioning.** The second phase of the strategic planning process focused on establishing the overall direction of the charter school (mission, vision etc.) as well as priority initiatives that will be set forth in the strategic plan.

**Phase 3: Writing.** The formal strategic plan was developed in this phase. The mission/vision and strategic initiatives were translated into discrete action items. Resources were identified and prioritized and benchmarks/timelines established.

**Phase 4: Implementation.** This phase will involve the implementation of the established strategies and the tracking of progress.

In order to successfully accomplish each of these phases, the board and administration did the following:

- Agreed on Strategic Planning goals and developed a Strategic Planning process.
- Outreached to parents, students, staff, and community members (letters, website, social media).
- Developed a Data Infused Profile of the charter school to inform the process and serve as a factual platform for discussion.
- Conducted a parent survey to increase community engagement.
- Conducted a focus group of school leadership.
- Utilized data collected through the Focus Lens process being undertaken by the school under the Charter School Program Grant administered through the New Jersey Charter School Association. This data included the results of the School Climate Survey administered to the Ocean Academy school community.
- Conducted a workshop with school leadership to develop strategic goals based on the data collection referenced above including action steps, benchmarks, timelines, and evaluative materials to



## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

determine success. Through this process, a draft Strategic Plan was developed and submitted to the board for further consideration and formal approval.

- Committed the charter school to annual reviews and updates to the plan.

### **DATA COLLECTION AND COMMUNITY INPUT**

The real designers of our strategic plan are the many parents, teachers, students, school leaders, school board trustees, and other school stakeholders who gave us their insights during the data-gathering phase. Together they have created a challenging shared vision for our students.

A tremendous amount of data was collected to guide the work of the school. The purpose of this extensive data gathering was to gain an understanding of the strengths and needs of the charter school from the perspective of its internal and external stakeholders. This document captures those perspectives and translates them into a set of informed top priorities for our new strategic plan.

#### **Charter School Profile**

A charter school profile was developed to provide multiple metrics and data concerning current charter school goals, community demographics, enrollment information, school building capacity, student performance, charter school operations, and charter school finances to guide the deliberations of the community and Strategic Planning Committee. School data and key metrics were collected and compiled into a Powerpoint presentations that provided a snapshot of the school to guide and ground the deliberations in data. This Powerpoint presentation is attached as Appendix A.

#### **Focus Group**

A Leadership Focus Group was also conducted. Approximately 12 board members and senior staff participated in a focus group activity to inform the strategic planning process. The meeting started with the facilitators presenting an overview of the strategic planning process using a Powerpoint presentation and answering questions regarding the value of strategic planning and the process timelines and activities. The meeting then turned to a discussion of the charter school's Mission, Vision, and Values as the first step in the development of the strategic plan. The facilitators first provided functional definitions of what a Mission, Vision, and Values are through a Powerpoint Presentation and discussed the importance of a well-defined statements. The facilitators then led a group discussion examining the current school Mission and Values (Beliefs).

##### Ocean Academy Mission

To provide elementary students with a high quality and student-centered education in a safe, nurturing, and challenging environment so that all students achieve their highest level of academic success.

##### Ocean Academy Vision

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

The vision of Ocean Academy Charter School is an educational environment that supports student engagement and empowers all students to identify and utilize their own abilities and gifts. We will build a school community where the needs of the whole child— social, emotional, intellectual, and physical— are being met. In this positive learning environment, your child will thrive.

The participants were in agreement that the current mission and vision statements still embodied the school's aspirations and goals. The facilitators then presented a Powerpoint slide deck that provided a data infused profile of the current state of the charter school. Using this information as a common reference point, the facilitators then engaged with the participants in a modified SWOT Analysis focused on four questions:

- School Accomplishments and Strengths- what does the school do well. Are students being adequately prepared for the expectations of college and careers? What are the school's major strengths that you would want to make sure are maintained?
- School Needs - If you could change one thing about the school what would it be? What are school and community weaknesses?
- Environment - Are there opportunities to improve now and in the future due to both internal and external forces?
- Challenges - What challenges exist now and in the future both in the community and externally?

The following input was provided by the participants regarding each question:

### **Strengths**

- Safe environment
- Aide in every classroom to support learning
- Board of Trustees are not politically motivated
- Good nutrition program
- Small class sizes
- 188-day school year
- Longer school day
- Professional development program
- Enrichment opportunities including field trips and summer camp
- Special education program
- Blue Ribbon improvement process

### **Challenges**

- Hiring qualified and capable staff including aides given inflationary pressures on salaries
- Parent language barriers for example those who don't speak English at home.
- Understanding that students think in Spanish

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

### Facilities

- Attaining the maximum enrollment numbers as the school expands into middle school and high school
- Student performance
- Opportunities for improvement
- College admissions office
- Teachers thinking outside of the box regarding learning

### Needs

- Facilities limitations (ie. storage)
- Need to hire speech language therapists and other interventionists
- Develop the school own Child Study Team services and not contract for them
- After school programs

The Facilitators then led a discussion regarding goals (strategic initiatives) that could be developed by the charter school that align with the mission and vision as well as the identified Strengths, Challenges, Needs, and Opportunities for Improvement identified earlier in the evening. These strategic goals will drive the charter school's work in the future and focus its efforts toward accomplishing the mission and vision for students. The goals identified by the focus group are as follows:

- Support English Language Learners and their parents, for example, through parent or family programs
- Apply for a charter amendment to allow expansion in grades nine through 12
- Plan for a new building to expand capacity and house the high school grades. The building should articulate with the current kindergarten through grade eight building. Any new building should also be designed based upon program needs including the kitchen.
- Career exposure program
- STEM opportunities for students that can connect with their Spanish heritage

The facilitators then thanked all of the board members and leadership team for their participation and the focus group ended.

### **Strategic Planning Survey Data**

The survey allowed participants to identify student outcomes for the school as well as open ended questions. Over 150 parents participated in the survey which was administered in the Spring of 2022. Excerpted below are some of the important findings in the survey:

Parents identified the five greatest challenges for students as:

1. Negative peer pressure and bullying;
2. Abuse of drugs and alcohol;

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

3. Unable to afford or access higher education post high school;
4. Lack of opportunities or encouragement to pursue interests/career paths outside of college prep path (e.g., trade skills); and
5. Ability or opportunities to experience or understand world environment and challenges that exist outside of school.

The parents indicated that the school should address the following issues as priorities in the strategic plan:

1. Recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and staff;
2. Technology and Future Readiness;
3. Security/providing a safe orderly environment;
4. Student services; and
5. Anti-Bullying program.

### School Climate Survey Data

A school climate survey was administered to the school community in the spring of 2022 as part the Focus Lens process being undertaken by the school through the Charter School Program Grant through the New Jersey Charter School Association. The findings were lumped into three buckets: Needs Immediate Attention; Needs Improvement and Strengths. Excerpted below are the survey results marked “Needs Immediate Attention” and “Needs Improvement” which should definitely be a part of the strategic planning discussion.

#### **Needs Immediate Attention**

- Decrease in negative student behavior, 96.8% below strong.
- Gifted and talented courses, 93.5% below strong.
- All students achieve to required State standards.
- School teaches students how to access information from multiple sources.
- The school has parent education programs.
- The school has before school programs.
- The school has high student achievement over a period of three years.
- The school has made progress in reducing or eliminating student achievement disparities.

#### **Needs Improvement**

- Access to higher level courses.
- Data drive student placement.
- Special needs least restrictive environment.
- Data driven differentiation of classroom instruction.
- Curriculums development.
- Data to differentiate instruction.
- Strategies to meet grade level standards.

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

- School emphasizes critical thinking skills.
- Hands-on learning.
- Real life problem-solving.
- Research and project-based learning.
- Data driven decision-making.
- Culture recognizes staff who improve student learning.
- School plans frequent opportunities to reflect and collaborate on instruction.
- The administration provides feedback to improve instruction.
- Teachers work with the principal to help school accomplish decision.
- Leaders lead by example.
- Leadership works collaboratively with school community.
- Teachers understand the role of leaders.
- School engages in ongoing self- assessment.
- School has a comprehensive improvement process.
- Parents support teachers in their work.
- School supports parents.
- School communicates regarding assessments.
- School communicates regarding assessment results.
- The school includes all student groups in assessments.
- The school uses multiple assessments that do not rely on tests.
- The school provides an excellent education for all students.
- The school has a comprehensive way of determining the needs of students.
- The school has implemented strategies to meet diverse needs of students.
- Staff members contribute positively to school culture.
- Faculty use data to improve.
- School focuses on continual improvement.

### Focus Lens Process

Data was also collected through the Focus Lens process being undertaken by the school under the Charter School Program Grant administered through the New Jersey Charter School Association. At the conclusion of that process a report was issued with the following recommendations:

Focus Lens- School Climate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement cross-curricular activities among classes.</li><li>• Set aside instructional time occasionally for culture building activities, such as rallies and assemblies.</li><li>• Create special days and encourage everyone to participate- ex. dress like you are- 100, spirit days, etc.</li><li>• Encourage teachers to celebrate and share victories in their classrooms.</li></ul>

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

- Post teacher, student, and school achievements on bulletin boards, on announcements, school newsletter, etc.
- Create a student council to encourage students to have a say in what their school culture looks like to encourage participation and foster belonging.
- Plan special events after school hours such as family fun night, math night, etc.
- Teachers hold one another accountable for the success of all students in the school, not just the students in their classroom
- Create a plan to ensure every student in the school is known well and has a strong relationship with at least one adult in the building
- Create a program in which all students in the upper grades mentor younger students
- Promote class meetings with students every day to check in on how students are doing, or an as-needed basis for classroom problem-solving
- Track students' grades and attendance every two weeks and send a communication home to parents to sign and return.
- Teach character and collaboration through academic content.
- Create student data notebooks. Student track their data and set learning goals.
- Create a value-added system for determining teacher effectiveness.

### **Focus Lens- Instructional Program**

- Develop a rigorous instructional program that provides equitable opportunities to learn, and enables every student to master challenging content, skills, and learning strategies.
- Create a personalized learning environment characterized by knowledge of each student's learning style, social and family conditions, strengths, aspirations, and needs.
- Create a clear focus and high expectations for staff and students that motivate the entire school community and inspire its members to strive constantly to ensure the success of every student.
- Establish a school-wide focus on high student achievement. Everyone in the school takes responsibility for the achievement of all students.
- Ensure that student learning assessment occurs continuously and give students a variety of opportunities to demonstrate that they meet content and performance standards, and can apply their learning.

### **Focus Lens: Governance and Finance**

#### Governance

- Create a detailed job description for all positions
- Develop a community outreach plan for trustee vacancies
- Post all board policies on the school website
- Annually present and review Board goals
- Annual training of the board on its policy role
- Create a strategic plan

#### Finance

- Long range fiscal planning presented to Board of trustees annually (should include explanation of state funding formula for charter schools)
- Long range plan to include a detailed explanation of cash flow and surplus projections

- Creation of a standard operation procedure manual that is to be shared with staff, leadership team, and Board of trustees
- Proper training of the new business office staff

**Focus Lens: Operations**

- Developing a marketing strategy and plan for the school
- Consider the hiring of a school social worker who speaks Spanish
- Detail the long term compensation plan for staff who receive exemplary evaluations related to student success
- Consider adding storage containers on site to solve storage issues
- Recruit effective teachers through multiple coordinated strategies
- Develop recruitment materials, build a digital image, attend job fairs, and post job ads on education-specific job boards
- Provide skills-based learning support for struggling learners
- Provide additional extracurricular activities for lower grades

## **MISSION and VISION**

The Mission and Vision of the charter school provide commonly understood guiding principles that establishing:

- the school's reason for being
- its aspirations
- its core beliefs
- its philosophies

They reflect the community's expectations regarding the future.

The school's current mission and vision was reviewed with the participants of the leadership focus group and the following was agreed to:

### **Mission**

To provide elementary students with a high quality and student-centered education in a safe, nurturing, and challenging environment so that all students achieve their highest level of academic success.

### **Vision**

The vision of Ocean Academy Charter School is an educational environment that supports student engagement and empowers all students to identify and utilize their own abilities and gifts.

## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

We will build a school community where the needs of the whole child— social, emotional, intellectual, and physical— are being met. In this positive learning environment, your child will thrive.

### **Educational Philosophy**

Every child should have the right to a high-quality educational environment that encourages each and every child to achieve their highest level of academic success. Students (and their Parents) should feel that the school they attend is safe, comfortable, and provides a quality education. Ocean Academy Charter School will also have a welcoming, nurturing, and enriching atmosphere where students will look forward to attending. Most importantly, all personnel will view students and their parents-guardians as true and full partners and members of the school community.

### **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

Five strategic goals will drive our work and focus our efforts toward accomplishing the charter school's mission/vision for student success. Each goal directly relates to the Mission and Vision of Ocean Academy Charter School.

#### **GOAL ONE**

##### **Establish a School Climate Supportive of Student Success.**

Ocean Academy Charter School will establish a climate that fosters student success by establishing a clear focus and creating high expectations for staff and students that will motivate the entire school community and inspire its members. School will continue to engage with the Blue Ribbon Program.

#### **GOAL TWO**

##### **Continue Commitment to Student Success by Focusing on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Physical and Mental Health.**

Ocean Academy Charter School will provide a comprehensive system of student supports in order to meet the needs of struggling students: academically, socially, physically and emotionally.

#### **GOAL THREE**

##### **Increase Governance Capacity of Board of Trustees**

Ocean Academy Charter School recognizes the important role of the Board of Trustees in student success and will support the work of the Board by building capacity among board members and engaging in long range planning activities.

#### **GOAL FOUR**

##### **Increase Student Interest, Engagement, and Success in Science, Technology, Engineering, And Mathematics (STEM).**



## Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Trustees

Ocean Academy Charter School will enhance student STEM learning experiences and kindle innovation in the classroom through new professional learning opportunities and STEM resources.

### **GOAL FIVE**

#### **Engage all Members of the School Community in the Learning Process by Increasing Family Participation and Resources**

Ocean Academy Charter School will increase outreach and involvement of parents in the educational process by focusing on accessibility issues such as hosting more opportunities for parental involvement, utilizing events that parents are already attending (finding parents where they are), and continue to improve providing after-school childcare.

#### Strategies, Timelines and Success Metrics

The following matrixes amplify each goal by providing discrete strategies that establish the means for accomplishing the goals. Similar to the goals, these strategies are also derived from the data collection. Next to the strategies is a reference to the data collected throughout the process to establish a clear connection to the input of our school community and to ensure that families, staff and the school community remain at the center of the improvement efforts.

The implementation process assumes an active, continuous improvement system with oversight by the board. For this reason, we have also provided a set of key indicators that can be used to measure our performance toward achieving our goals over the five years of the plan. In order to serve the students of our community and accomplish our shared vision, we must hold each other accountable through measurable goals that will drive student success. Our goal metrics are a combination of qualitative, quantitative, and observational data.

Finally, a timeline is provided for accomplishing the goal and strategies. All stakeholders will ultimately be responsible for achievement of the strategic goals through a team approach. However, the Executive Director will identify key members of the school community to lead and participate in implementation.

### **Communication**

All members of the school community should understand the mission and goals of the charter school being established in this strategic plan. Our strategic plan should be seen as a living document that will inspire the whole community to take action and make change. Broadly communicating the plan will lead to engagement and individuals owning their role in the process.

To make the mission and goals of the charter school visible to all members of the school community they should be:

1. Physically posted throughout the school;
2. Posted on the charter school Facebook page and on the main website page of the schools;

**Ocean Academy Charter School  
Board of Trustees**

3. Posted during parent teacher meetings;

4. Made available on class DOJO (which is relied on by many parents in our lower grades for school news and information) although this may require a high school version of that app.

For teachers, a poster with the mission and goals of the strategic plan will also be posted in the teacher lounge, at PLC meetings, and at faculty meetings.