

**LIVE OAK CHARTER SCHOOL**  
100 Gness Concourse Petaluma, CA 94952 • (707) 762-9020

**Agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors Live Oak Charter School**  
**Handwork Room room**  
**January 16, 2020**  
**6:30pm**

**Present**

Sarah Grossi (SG) Chair  
Josh Kizner (JK) Director  
James Jensen (JJ) Treasurer  
Stacy Ito (SI) Secretary  
Erin Wrightsman (EW) Director  
Chris Fox (CF) Director  
Daniella Baker (DB) Director  
Justin Tomola (JT) Executive Director

**OPENING 6:30 pm**

**PUBLIC COMMENT (for items not on the agenda)**

- 1) One member of the public urged the Board to keep the essence of Waldorf at LOCS without getting caught up in Anthroposophical-Steiner dogma.

**OPEN SESSION**

A. Approve the agenda Move: JJ, 2nd DB, favor: SI, SG, CF

**B. Reports**

1. Committee reports
  - a. Executive Committee (Sarah Grossi)
    - i. Did not meet in Jan due to scheduling, Sarah met with JT to set agenda
  - b. Finance Committee (James Jensen)
    - i. Did not meet due to scheduling
2. Executive Director Report (Justin Tomola)
  - a. Loose Ends
    - i. Prop 39 completed: new lights and ballasts installed in classroom during winter break
    - ii. Vanguard (alarm monitoring service): coming out next week to connect middle school to the rest of our campus.
    - iii. SB740 funds for 2018/19 has not yet arrived. State previously said that check would be in the mail 2nd week of Dec, JT to follow-up.
  - b. Enrollment
    - i. Applications for 2020/21 are now available, lottery to occur in March.
    - ii. Current enrollment 291, 2 pending students starting next week.
  - c. \$5100 rent reimbursement received this week due to overpayment with FG.
  - d. Failed initial health inspection for food program, for very minor issue: water heater was off. FG helped quickly, and LOCS passed inspection with review.
  - e. Aftercare was without heat, but the problem has now been fixed by the FG.

- f. Need suggestions for how to make mop/sink area happen in the Annex
  - g. New report cards from new system will be coming out next week.
  - h. Hobbit Hill in the K playground area needs to be revamped. Dov (Garden coordinator) is working with a local landscaping company to help revitalize this area, hopefully mostly through donation.
3. Foundation Report
- a. None this month, foundation is on retreat.

C. Consent agenda, Move to approve SI, 2nd JJ, Aye: JJ, DB, SG, EW

All matters listed under Consent Agenda are considered to be routine, and all will be enacted by one motion and vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Board member requests items to be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate action.

- 1. Board minutes for December 12, 2019 regular board meeting
- 2. Board minutes for December 12, 2019 special board meeting
- 3. Monthly financials for December 2019

D. The board will consider the following for discussion

- 1. Looping at Live Oak (presentation by faculty)
  - a. Presentation by Julie Meierding, Heather Shepherd, Lois Wildgrube
    - i. Reflection on current looping model (TK-K, 1-4, 5-8)
      - 1. Concerns about current model meeting academic and social-emotional development of students, particularly 5th grade
        - a. Disconnection caused by isolation for 5th grade
        - b. 4th & 5th grade have a lot of overlap in curriculum, students would benefit more from consistency
        - c. Concerns with quality math instruction for 5th
    - ii. Looping considerations
      - 1. Desire to be innovative and responsive to current students' needs
      - 2. What looping model best serves the development of the children?
        - a. 9 yr change/12 yr change
          - i. Meeting them with Middle School curriculum at 12yrs
          - ii. Currently not meeting their needs at 9yr change--ready for so much more, as seen by loss of families in 4th & 5th grade for other programs
    - iii. Recommendation
      - 1. 1-3, 4-5, 6-8
        - a. 1-3 loop: children live through story, picture, fairy tales. Strong focus on Early Literacy program. Smaller loop could mean deep focus and stronger literacy and math programs. To achieve this, faculty needs a team approach, but long loops make it hard for the team to be strong. With team approach, there's an opportunity for teachers to hold the children *together*. Long loops are stretching staff to limit, staff would like to be able to dive deep in their grades and bring a richer experience.
        - b. 4-5 loop: students have unique needs at this age, as they've come through 9 yr change. Students are really ready for a new relationship with another adult (new teacher). 4-5 curriculum, now reading to learn and delving into history. Homework, organizational/student skills



coming on board, but students need consistency, having the same teacher will help to cement these skills before middle school. Students are ready for MORE! Concrete, out in the world, observing and documenting.

- c. 6-8 loop: refining identities and seeking independence and new experiences---this is NOT what 5th graders need/are going through. Curriculum delves into thinking vs the tangible observation and experience of 4 & 5. Middle school teachers tend to specialize in their curriculum vs a whole classroom teacher in 5th. Each teacher develops the very best curriculum within their area of expertise, so the middle school program is strong and cohesive.

iv. Next Steps

1. Town Hall meeting for teachers and parents to talk
2. Discussions with parents in class meetings
3. Direction from board for timely decision making

2. Public Comment

- 1) More GATE programs serve everybody, looking for expertise in high school, but at the elementary and middle school we need to focus on social-emotional development, human connection should be emphasized over curriculum
- 2) Loves the idea to be able to differentiate 4th & 5th from the younger grades, recognizes the difficulty of bridging the gap in needs of the children. Would like an idea of which teachers would be where, and who would do each loop would ease the anxieties of the community
- 3) Confusion about what is happening in Middle School, could use clarity for the next presentation/town hall. Would like to know teacher placement, if possible.
- 4) Shelley, as enrollment coordinator, concern about how we recruit and integrate new families into middle school and how to engage and retain families for the long trajectory. Notices that currently, LOCS doesn't really have a "shining star" for 4th & 5th grades, but recognizes that our school does always hold children and their development that no other school really does.
- 5) Would like to know teachers, but feels the system being proposed is the most important piece and needs community buy-in
- 6) Loved the presentation, excited to hear about ways the faculty can connect to their work better. Wants to understand more about how this system will enable faculty and staff to support each other better.
- 7) Feels like there has been a little too much change in the 6 years they've been here. Appreciates that there is this time an inclusion of parents in the conversation, but does feel very skeptical.

3. Board Discussion

- 1) EW how does this affect a child with disabilities? HS: speaking to children with trauma, that multiple loving adults is beneficial to children learning to trust again. JM: small teams of teachers can build relationships with students within each loop, but also beyond loops, so that relationships are being built across the school. LW: some students are really better served by a team than by a single teacher.
- 2) DB can you elaborate more on being stretched thin and having those limitations? LW: knowing what it takes to make the shift to meet students in next developmental stage, I needed to pass on the opportunity to have a grant written for the class this year. I had to honor my own limits, but I would have liked to do the grant.
- 3) DB: how does that new grouping support the children? JM: feels like being an expert in a grade level/age level provides an opportunity to create deep relationships quickly

- 4) JK: can you articulate what is the strongest argument against your proposal? JM: two year loop is too short--but studies have shown that across the board improvements have been made with only a 2 year loop. HS: relationship is built out of being present, and can be built very quickly with intention. We would have more of our energy available with this model and can go deeper, more quickly.
  - 5) JK: why not 4-6, 7-8? HS: we need the sweetness of 6th grade to get us through the challenges of 7-8. Gayla: you need 6th to be able to establish a connection and relationships before they claim independence in 7th.
  - 6) JK: are you asking us to consider this for the next academic year? HS: yes
  - 7) CF: Our teachers are the "secret sauce" of our school, the proposal is well thought out and I support you.
  - 8) SI: are there other waldorf charters doing this loop? Coastal Grove Charter School in Arcata, Humboldt. LOCS faculty is planning to visit soon.
  - 9) SI: when do you plan to hold the town meeting? HS: Soon. SI: when do you want decision? HS: Soon, so that we can prepare.
  - 10) Board supports faculty and administration in moving forward with community forums and classroom discussions, with a goal of potentially having looping on the agenda for discussion and voting for the March board meeting.
2. Facilities update (Justin Tomola)
    - a. Public Comment
      - i. Parent: Please make this available as soon as possible, with dates for repairs. Has a child in the 5th grade who will not be going to 6th grade due to mold illness; 2 other students have left for the same circumstances, 1 more will leave for MS, this is a loss of \$32k for the school. Please consider the impacts to our school.
    - b. Board discussion
      - i. Middle School garden: EW where can it be if not raised? JT maybe horse troughs.
      - ii. HVAC in Kindergarten: maybe installed 10 years ago, possibly by LOCS, but no record..though it's LOCS responsibility, FG are looking to repair it and therefore repair leaks in Kindergarten.
      - iii. Where is the work on the soffit? Why is it not represented here? JT: that report will come from Fogg soon.
      - iv. Are the rooms dry? Will there be mold testing? JT: the rooms were tested and found to be dry by Will Davis from RESIG this afternoon. No mold testing at this time.
      - v. Did Will see the soffit? Was he concerned? Did he want to test for mold after looking into the soffit? JT: Yes Will looked into the opened soffit. He was not concerned by what he saw and he did not recommend any mold testing at this time.
  3. 2019/20 Parent Survey (Sarah Grossi)
    - a. Public Comment: Open ended questions about financial situation, school site for the future for 2023, and greater concerns
    - b. Discussion of wording, including "common core"
    - c. Need for open ended questions regarding looping
- E. The board will consider the following for discussion and approval
1. 2018/19 Budget final auditor report (James Jensen)
    - a. Move to approve EW, DB 2nd, Aye: JJ, SI, SG
  2. Adopt 2020-21 school calendar (Justin Tomola)
    - a. PCS food kitchen is available to LOCS on days that PCS is closed



- b. LOCS is 5 days over required 175 days, so we can allow for 5 smoke days without need to extend or change the calendar, if needed.
  - c. Move to approve JJ, 2nd EW, Aye: all
- 3. Resolution authorizing execution of the amended joint powers agreement and adoption of bylaws of the Redwood Empire Schools Insurance Group (RESIG) (Justin Tomola)
  - a. Move to approve EW, 2nd JJ, Aye: all

#### **CLOSED SESSION**

F. Pursuant to Government Code 54956.8 Conference with Real Property Negotiator  
Property: 100 Gness Concourse, Petaluma; Negotiating Parties: Sonoma-Marín Fair; under  
negotiation: price and terms

G. Pursuant to Government Code 54957: Public Employee Contracts

#### **OPEN SESSION**

Report on actions taken in closed session

**ADJOURNMENT 11:00pm**