

Cole, Dorey L (DOJ)

From: Williams, Kimberly (LegHall)
Sent: Wednesday, December 04, 2019 9:51 AM
To: OpenGovernment (MailBox Resources)
Cc: Skoranski, David (DOJ); Longfellow, Chuck (K12); Bunting, Susan (K12); Cunningham, Emily (K12); Sweeney, Whitney (K12); Noble, Audrey (K12); Ahner, Jenna (K12); Jankowski, Jennifer (LegHall)
Subject: Odyssey Charter School - Board Members Search

Please read all the information that I have included in this email. Odyssey Charter School Board is NOT taking the Secretary or the State Boards' recommendations serious. This is just a slap in the faces who worked so hard to find a solution to make sure the school moved forward. They have had issues for years with governance which is highlighted in yellow below.

Good Morning, I would like to file a FOIA complaint in regards to Odyssey Charter School and open meeting laws with respect to the board member search. When a board member is selected to serve on a board for public schools, we have elections, where everyone can see who is running, we can contact them and ask questions and sometimes there are even open forums. Currently, Odyssey Charter School is looking for new board members. The search has been done in an executive session setting where the public cannot see what is taking place. According to their website and agenda posting, they have held 14 meetings behind closed doors. These are people who will be making decisions about the public's money and yet the public has no access.

Last night the committee brought forward recommendations from their 14 meetings that have been closed to the public. The board meetings and the nominating committee meetings are held in the Lower School 2nd Floor the doors are open. Last night, the meeting to announce the recommended new board members was held in a different building at Odyssey. The meeting was held at the Intermediate School and that building is locked.

Last year, the Public Integrity Commission issued a 12-page letter regarding Odyssey Charter School. Below is a blog post with the 12-page letter from the PIC, in the letter they speak about the board and the conflicts.

<https://exceptionaldelaware.wordpress.com/2019/05/22/exclusive-public-integrity-commission-slams-odysseys-board-potential-mcguinness-ties-to-ahepa-creates-huge-conflicts-of-interest/>



Exclusive: Public Integrity Commission Slams Odyssey's Board; Potential McGuinness Ties To AHEPA Creates Huge Conflicts of Interest | Exceptional Delaware

On April 2nd, the Delaware Public Integrity Commission wrote a letter to the Odyssey Charter School Board of Directors which showcased a plethora of financial improprieties, conflicts of interest, and co-mingled interests involving their board and the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA). The Odyssey Board of Directors has nine members, five of which belong...

Last year the Delaware Department of Education's Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) - recommended probation, conditions for Odyssey Charter School. You can view their recommendations in the link below.

<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/site/Default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=4&PageID=1&ViewID=6446ee88-d30c-497e-9316-3f8874b3e108&FlexDataID=23894>

Committee recommends probation, conditions for Odyssey Charter

The Delaware Department of Education's Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) today recommended placing Odyssey Charter School on probation, requiring conditions be met for the school to ...

www.doe.k12.de.us

News article with Sec. Bunting's letter placing Odyssey on formal review.

<https://www.delawarepublic.org/post/allegations-prompt-state-review-odyssey-charter-school>



Allegations prompt state review of Odyssey Charter School | Delaware First Media

DOE is starting a formal review because it says the school failed to fully address a variety of complaints dating back at least one year. The main issue is the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) which helped launch the school in 2006 and appoints 5 of the school board's 9 members.

www.delawarepublic.org

Article about Odyssey being placed on probation with conditions. In the article, it speaks about this being an issue five years ago.

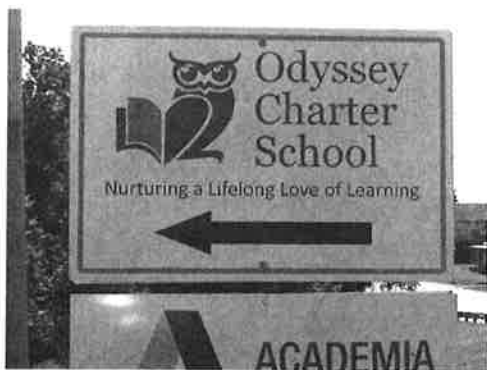
Odyssey's management faced similar, but less serious, allegations concerning its governance from the state's Charter School Office five years ago.

The warnings came from two non-voting CSAC members, State Board of Education representative Audrey Noble and Kendall Massett, executive director of the Delaware Charter Schools Network.

Early in the meeting, Noble delivered a message on behalf of the state board. "Our concern is not with the educational program whatsoever, but rather with "financial improprieties and government issues," she said, adding that thus far Odyssey's leadership had been "tone-deaf" to the concerns on these matters expressed both by the state board and the state Public Integrity Commission.

She then referred to the earlier allegations against Odyssey's leaders, including violations of open meeting laws and of school bylaws, as well as a lack of transparency. "Here we are again, five years later," she said.

<https://www.delawarepublic.org/post/dept-ed-committee-recommends-probation-significant-conditions-odyssey-charter-0>



Dept. of Ed committee recommends probation with significant conditions for Odyssey Charter

First came the stern warnings, then the humble promise and, finally, the recommended terms of probation for the conflict-plagued leadership of the 1,800

www.delawarepublic.org

Delaware Online article about the State Board of Education placing Odyssey Charter on probation with conditions.

<https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/2019/07/18/odyssey-charter-placed-probation-state-board-education/1765324001/>



Odyssey Charter placed on probation by State Board of Education

The school must adjust its board so that a Greek-American organization no longer holds a majority of seats.

www.delawareonline.com

Odyssey's agenda for the Nominating Committee which was all done in Executive Session.

http://odysseycharterschooldel.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Nominating_Committee_announcement.pdf

Agenda for Public Meeting of the Board of Directors Nominating Committee

Denise Parks – Head of School
Riccardo Stoekicht – Campus Operations Officer
Agenda for Public Meeting of the Board of Directors Nominating Committee

odysseycharterschooldel.com

Nominating Committee Report meeting - in a different building where the door was locked.

http://odysseycharterschooldel.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Dec319_Board_Metting_Agenda.pdf

I look forward to hearing from you.

Representative Kim Williams

19th District

302-577-8476 Wilmington Office

302-744-4351 Dover Office

Kimberly.Williams@Delaware.gov

[Click here for my State Rep. Facebook Page](#)

[Click here for my Twitter Page](#)

Legislative Assistant: Jennifer Jankowski

Jennifer.Jankowski@Delaware.gov

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My new email address is Kimberly.Williams@delaware.gov