



March 25, 2020

Dr. Chuck Longfellow
Associate Secretary, Operations Support
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, Delaware 19901

Re: Odyssey Charter School Response to the Charter School Accountability Committee's Initial Report

Dear Dr. Longfellow,

On March 9, 2020, the Charter School Accountability Committee (the "CSAC") issued its initial report in connection with the formal review (the "Initial Report"), noticed as of February 10, 2020 to Odyssey Charter School ("OCS" or "Odyssey"). This is Odyssey's response to the Initial Report.

The Initial Report (i) summarized the discussion that took place at the Initial Meeting of the CSAC on March 2, 2020, and (ii) outlined follow-up questions and documentation requested of Odyssey. Specifically, the Initial Report set forth the below requests:

1. A complete list of Board members and roles;
2. A copy of the NANC process submitted and posted on the website;
3. A copy of the manner of communications for non-AHEPA Board vacancies;
4. A draft copy of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee's composition.

1. OCS Board Members and roles.

As of March 2, 2020 and presently, Odyssey's Board of Directors is comprised of the following:

Elias Rigas *President, Non-AHEPA*
Erin Allard *Vice President, Non-AHEPA*
George Hantzandreu, BS *Treasurer, AHEPA appointee*
Anamaria Anagnostou *Board Member, AHEPA appointee*
Eva Jannelli *Board Member, Non-AHEPA Greek Program Teacher*
Sandra Johnson *Board Member, AHEPA appointee*
Rodrigo Torres *Board Member, non-AHEPA*
Alisa Moen *Board Member, non-AHEPA*
Vacant *Board Member, AHEPA appointee*
Vacant *Board Member, AHEPA appointee*
Vacant *Board Member, non-AHEPA Teacher representative*



2. NANC Policy and Procedures

On or about February 17, 2020, Odyssey provided the CSAC with its current Non-AHEPA Nominating Committee Policy and Procedures, following its adoption by the Non-AHEPA Nominating Committee (the “Policy”). Prior to its adoption, a draft has been provided to and reviewed with the CSAC with no objections noted. The Policy has been subsequently posted publically on the DOE’s website, as well as published via Odyssey’s web page <https://tinyurl.com/v5yx8tk>. For ease of reference, below please find Odyssey’s Board Non-AHEPA Committee Policy and Procedures:

Non-AHEPA Committee Policy and Procedures

Pursuant to Article II, Section 3 of the Amended and Restated By-Laws of the Odyssey Charter School, as Amended December 18, 2019, the non-AHEPA Nominating Committee hereby establishes a policy governing the application and nomination process for Directors which shall promote broader publication of openings, and will seek to fill seats in a manner consistent with furthering the strategic mission of the Corporation in an open and transparent manner.

Best practices for board composition includes striving for diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, skills, and experience. To benefit Odyssey Charter School (“OCS”) the non-AHEPA Nominating Committee (the “Committee”) is committed to pursuing diversity and inclusion in the composition of its Board to further the strategic mission of OCS.

The Application Process

1. The Committee shall solicit interested candidates to apply for any open position to the Board of Directors in a transparent way, utilizing such methods of communication so as to reach the widest pool of potential candidates, including non-traditional candidates (e.g. candidates with no prior board experience). Any open position or vacancy shall be advertised by multiple and redundant means, including but not limited to (i) through direct email communication to Odyssey staff, teachers and parents utilizing the email address on OCS record; (ii) social media platforms such as Facebook OCS, Facebook OCS Parents page; (iii) Odyssey Charter School web page, and/or (iv) such other means of communication as may be deemed appropriate by the Nominating Committee.
2. Odyssey Charter School Board of Directors Candidate Applications solicitation shall remain open for no less than two (2) weeks and no more than four (4) weeks from the date first advertised. The deadline for submitting candidate applications shall be clearly stated in the Notice of Board Vacancy or Board Opening (the “Notice”). In addition, the Notice shall specifically identify whether the position is a vacancy, in which case the Notice must further identify the remaining term of said



vacancy, and, subject to Article II, Section 2¹, which category of non-AHEPA Directors must be filled (e.g. parent representative, teacher representative, etc.).

3. Because Board members are volunteers, personal and other issues may cause board members to want or need to separate from their board duties. To address unexpected vacancies, the Nominating Committee shall retain Candidate Applications for six (6) months from the date of submission unless otherwise withdrawn by the Applicant (“Volunteer Candidates”). The Nominating Committee, upon written notice from a Volunteer Candidate, may consider such Volunteer Candidate for any future Board openings or vacancies, as well as for participation on Board committees and sub-committees as may be required from time to time.

The Review Process and Procedures

1. Upon completion of the Candidate Application process, the Committee shall within two (2) weeks review the Candidates using standardized assessment criteria. The Committee shall conduct interviews using standardized questions.
2. The Committee shall notice all Committee meetings in compliance with the By-Laws and the FOIA Requirements. The Committee shall further ensure that the Board composition reflects proper competencies, experience and willingness to fulfill board members’ duties and responsibilities consistent with strategic mission of OCS.
3. The Committee shall report to the Board regarding the application process at the Board’s regular meeting and include such information as how many Candidate Applications have been submitted, how many interviews have been conducted, and the timeline for final recommendation to be made to the Board to fill the vacant or open seat.
4. The Committee shall within 30 days of completion of the Candidate Application solicitation, or upon such longer period of time as may be authorized by the non-AHEPA Board Members for good cause shown, conduct interviews and other necessary tasks to vet all candidates and make written recommendations to the non-AHEPA Board Members for their full consideration.

¹Article II, Section 2 of By-Laws provides as follows: “Six (6) Board Directors will be appointed by non-AHEPA Directors of the Board by majority vote. The non-AHEPA Directors may not include any member, or immediate family of a member of the following organizations: AHEPA, Daughters of Penelope, Maids of Athena, and Sons of Pericles (AHEPA Family). The non-AHEPA Directors must include: three (3) Directors which are parents of a child currently enrolled at the School and should strive to have representation across the grade levels: no more than two (2) Directors who are teachers in the School with one (1) representing the Greek Program and one (1) representing non-Greek program with at least one holding a Delaware certification for education: one (1) Director will represent the community at large.”



3. Communication of Non-AHEPAn Board Vacancies

Following the expansion of the Odyssey's Board from nine (9) to eleven (11) members at December 18, 2019 Board meeting, and the formation of the NANC, as discussed above, NANC held its first meeting on January 14 to discuss qualifications review and procedures for an open and transparent process. While the newly created vacancies were first publicly announced at December 18, 2019 Board meeting, the Chair of NANC, Elias Rigas further communicated solicitation of applications for the vacancies on January 12 and a reminder on January 26, as part of the weekly communication to the Odyssey's community. The notice was advertised via email to the broader Odyssey community and posted to both OCS Parents FB page and Odyssey's web page. In response, NANC received eight (8) applications for an OCS parent Board vacancy and three (3) applications for the Greek Program representative teacher vacancy.

4. Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Proposed Committee Composition

Odyssey Board formally announced the creation of the Diversity and Inclusion Policy and formation of Diversity and Inclusion committee during February 16, 2020 Board meeting. Below is the full statement of the policy as proposed and read into the record during that Board meeting. New Board members Sandra Johnson and Rodrigo Torres subsequently volunteered to spearhead the Committee's formation. The Board further solicited volunteers from broader Odyssey community to join committees by submitting requests and expressions of interest to joinOCScommittee@odyssey.k12.de.us. We had approximately ten (10) parents express interest in this specific committee. At present, we anticipate having Board members, parents, community members (likely a bridge to reach out to Academia Alonso for participation), OCS administration and teachers. Once the Board has approved the Committee's composition during an open and transparent discussion at a public Board meeting, the Board will formally vote on next steps.

On March 13, 2020, the Board, administration, deans and staff representatives conducted a preliminary meeting moderated by Angela Harvey-Brown, Founder, 4th Dimension Leaders, to explore focus group approach to improving communications and diversity and inclusion training. Katie Manley, Odyssey Charter School Education Association ("OCS Union") President made a mention of this communications training session during her public comment at the CSAC's telephonic public comment meeting on March 16, 2020.

Unfortunately, due to the current public health crisis and schools' closures we are focused on establishing remote learning models and addressing our students' immediate needs, and have to suspend all in-person meetings. Odyssey's Board is fully committed to continuing on this path once we return to the normal course of business and will promptly report once the Committee is fully composed.

A statement of proposed policy framework on Diversity and Inclusion, as read into the record at February 16, 2020 Board meeting:



Odyssey Charter School

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Odyssey Charter School was founded by members of the Wilmington, DE, chapter of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA). AHEPA was founded in 1922 to fight for civil rights and against discrimination, bigotry, and hatred felt at the hands of the Ku Klux Klan. Since then, AHEPA has promoted the ancient Hellenic ideals of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, family and individual excellence through community service and volunteerism.

The mission of Odyssey Charter School is to prepare students for a lifelong enthusiasm for learning, develop a keen awareness of world citizenship and culture and establish critical thinking and problem-solving proficiency through the added learning of the Modern Greek language and Mathematics focus.

To achieve our mission and meet the needs of a rapidly changing world, Odyssey Charter School strives to create a supportive and inclusive climate of collaboration, creativity, and innovation within our school and across our community. Such a climate flourishes best when the rich diversity of human knowledge, perspectives, and experiences is heard. We nonetheless acknowledge that our policies and practices have failed to ensure equality of participation within our community.

Our commitment and responsibility to each other and our community is provided below.

OCS Community Commitment

Because diversity is essential to the fulfillment of Odyssey’s mission, Odyssey is committed to building an inclusive and diverse community. Every student, faculty, and staff member —whatever their race, gender, age, ethnicity, cultural heritage or nationality; religious or political beliefs; sexual orientation or gender identity; or socioeconomic, veteran or ability status—has the right to inclusion, respect, agency and voice in the Odyssey community. Further, all members of the Odyssey community have a responsibility to uphold these values and actively foster full participation in academic and community life.

OCS Commitment to Student Diversity

Odyssey is an open-enrollment public charter school that does not charge tuition and does not administer entrance examinations. Enrollment is based on a fair and equitable system which provides for (1) an “open enrollment” period; (2) a lottery, and (3) a waitlist. We welcome students regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, cultural heritage or nationality; religious or political beliefs; sexual orientation or gender identity; or socioeconomic, or ability status.

OCS Commitment to Faculty and Staff Diversity

Odyssey is committed to striving for a faculty and staff environment that reflects the diversity of our community, and Odyssey takes active steps to promote diversity in its hiring process including:

- Taking proactive steps to enlarge the pool of non-traditional and minority candidates;



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- Seeking out and encouraging candidates who have demonstrated experience in research, teaching, and/or service to historically underrepresented and underserved communities; and
- Implementing policies, procedures and training to reinforce equitable decision-making in the hiring process.

Odyssey Charter School's Non-Discrimination Policy Draft is available here - <http://odysseycharterschooldel.com/non-discrimination-notice/>

Best Regards,

Elias Rigas
Board President