

Odyssey School of Denver Board of Directors
Wednesday, September 17, 2025
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Our Mission: Odyssey School of Denver is a diverse, public, K-8 Expeditionary Learning school. We teach students how to learn through a focus on academic achievement, critical thinking and social responsibility, preparing them for high school and beyond.	
Our Vision: Odyssey School of Denver students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take risks and innovate;• Lead with integrity and compassion;• Be civically and socially engaged;• Push themselves to exceed expectations;and • Embrace learning as a life-long adventure.	Board Responsibilities: We ensure Odyssey's compliance to its contract with the Denver Public Schools, set and monitor the implementation of school policies, manage the school's annual budget and financial planning, and hire and evaluate the performance of our school's Executive Director.

1. Call to order - 4:02 pm
2. Roll call & acknowledgments of conflicts of interest
 - a. Present = Amanda Brown, Paul Cindric, Travis Haley, Kelley Krupicka, Ryan Lally, Patrick Lane, Laurel Lenz, Pete Martinez, Erin Peikin-Sekar, Clarissa Pohlman, Melia Repko-Erwin, Caitlin Vaughan Sekar, Jeff Williams.
 - b. Absent = Alex Hannum, Emily Wheat.
 - c. No conflicts
3. Move to approve agenda
 - a. Kelly moves and Melia seconds. Passes.
4. Vote to Approve August minutes.
 - a. Caitlin moves, Clarissa seconds. Passes.
5. Public comment
 - a. None
6. Pete presented the ED update.
 - a. Highlights and looking ahead.
 - i. Crew trips for 7th, 8th, 4th, 3rd are complete. Trip for 6th grade is in progress. 5th grade will be out next week.
 - ii. Focus on school-wide norms, expeditions starting.
 - iii. Data inquiry teams launching. Initial data from iReady, etc.
 - iv. Last year's MS SWOT analysis. Olivia is preparing infographics to share with the school community.
 - v. Open houses for the 2026 enrollment season are coming up.
 - vi. MS elective change and student led conferences are approaching.
 - b. Current enrollment
 - i. Currently the enrollment is 328, versus a target of 333.
 - ii. Sticking at 328 is OK for budget.
 - iii. Responses to questions from board:
 1. The impact of the larger class size in 1st grade is manageable, but noticeable.
 2. Have gone through the entire K waitlist, with current enrollment of 39 K students.
 3. May enroll more K students next year.
 - iv. MIS#1 - School-wide norms and expectations (culture)

1. Work to create staff norms.
2. Worked with staff to create school-wide norms.
- v. MIS#2 - Integrate habits of a learner into instruction.
- vi. MIS#3 - Strengthen PLCs for data-driven instruction.
 1. Formed data inquiry teams - math, literacy.
 2. Teams meet 1x per month for data review, small group instruction, coaching.
- vii. Odyssey SPF (School performance framework)
 1. Large jump in performance from last year. Current overall performance is 76.2% (vs 58.9 last year).
 - a. Achievement is 79%; growth is 74.3%.
 2. MS growth exceeds for both ELA and math.
 3. Achievement is strong for elementary and MS.
 4. Continue to see equity gaps for students who qualify for FRL and minority students. This will be a focus for work going forward.
 5. Questions/comments:
 - a. Scoring compared to nearby schools at elementary and MS level?
 - b. State websites that define how scoring was done are not currently working.
 - c. Kudos to teachers for really strong work.
 6. Staff council update
 - a. Clarissa and Paul presented.
 - b. Short agenda; focused on introducing SPF
 - c. Dragon tickets for MS students based on demonstrating strong habits, desire to introduce this also for elementary students.
 - d. Logistics of future meetings, norms for attendance after trips.
7. Discussion of board commitment and committees.
 - a. Oath to be signed by all members.
 - b. Commitment documents to review and sign.
 - c. Committee assignments:
 - i. Finance - Ryan is Chair. Alex, Amanda, Pat.
 - ii. Development - Emily is chair. Erin, Kelley, Jeff, Travis.
 1. Needs to work quickly for Colorado Gives Day (link to fun run?)
 2. Need recommendations for auction committee chair.
 - a. The current chair will assist in transition.
 - b. There are some possible candidates already, but open to others.
 - iii. School Accountability Committee - Melia is chair. Laurel, Caitlin.
8. Ryan presented a Finance update.
 - a. Projected change in fund balance for 2025-6 is currently \$105,000 (down from \$189,000 due to lower enrollment: ~327 versus 333)
 - b. Financial projections largely unchanged.
 - c. The committee is beginning work on determining how the levers available might be pulled to ensure a balanced budget for coming years.
 - d. Final student number for enrollment will be based on count day (Oct. 1-3).
9. Caitlin updated on the Executive committee meeting.
 - a. Many of the topics already introduced were discussed.
 - b. A bit of a deeper dive on middle school enrollment.
 - c. Brief discussion on whether to explore with a broker possibly buying a school building.
 - i. The board discussed briefly the current arrangement with DPS for building insurance, maintenance, etc.
 - ii. Are there examples of single site charters that have purchased from DPS, or that own and maintain their building who can be approached?
10. Pete updated on middle school enrollment.
 - a. This year will be the second year where a class of 40 current 5th graders will decide on whether to stay at Odyssey or move to another middle school next fall.
 - b. The listening session for current 5th grade families on Sept 9 had 10-12 attendees.

- c. An initial poll was sent to 5th grade families, with 21 respondents. ~48% stated they plan to stay and the remainder was undecided. None stated they were planning to leave.
- d. Poll was sent to 6th grade families. Responses for the current year have been positive.
- e. Next steps:
 - i. Planning to engage the ~20 families that did not respond to the poll.
 - ii. Will reach out at student-led conferences.
 - iii. Opportunities for this year's 5th grade cohort to hear from current 6th and 8th grade families about their experience with staying at the MS.
- f. Board Asks:
 - i. How to increase recruitment/retention of current families for MS?
 - ii. How to highlight alumni experiences? E.g. How did Odyssey prepare them for HS?
 - 1. Academic, Emotional, Executive functioning skills.
 - iii. Ideas for highlighting current student experiences.
 - iv. Continuing to incorporate feedback from Olivia's MS SWOT analysis report.
 - v. Questions/ideas from the board:
 - 1. Social media = Instagram as a way to highlight alumni. Video, etc.
 - 2. Closeness of 4th and 6th grade classrooms last year was intimidating. Need to emphasize that this is no longer the case.
 - 3. Have current MS students on a panel at an open house.
 - 4. Have MS students give tours at the evening open house.
 - 5. Counselor at GWHS and East → "you can tell the students at HS who came from Odyssey. They advocate well and have good habits."
 - 6. Data = grades in HS, intangible qualities.
 - 7. Reassuring parents that students are prepared and programs are in place for easing the transition from Odyssey into a large HS.
 - 8. MS kids from Odyssey are participating in clubs, etc. at McCaulliff.
 - 9. Analysis of Olivia's report. Incorporating suggestions.
 - 10. Other ways for the board to prepare for MS.
 - a. Should act now (ahead of time), and while we have the funds to explore different scenarios/options.
 - b. E.g. new web page for middle school
 - c. Facilities - limitations and expansion options.
 - d. What is the ideal number of MS students and how do we plan for a situation where there are more than e.g. 26?
 - 11. Rates of retention may increase. Culture is very strong and the elementary student pool is increasing modestly.
 - a. Typical retention is 65%
 - b. Highest rate anticipated/observed would be ~80%.
 - c. How would we deal with an enrollment of e.g. 35 6th graders?
 - i. Modularity, etc.
 - ii. DPS will allow.
 - 12. Continue planning and evaluating options: TAs, expanded facilities, grants to expand, etc.
 - 13. "Ask me why I'm staying" buttons?
 - g. Wrap up and topics for future meetings.
 - i. Adventure? Fund-raising. Costs and impact of inflation = campsite reservations, food. Strategic planning for experiences, funding, staffing/burnout.
 - ii. Revisit MS enrollment discussions from last year.
 - h. Caitlin moves to adjourn, Amanda seconds. Passes.
 - i. The meeting adjourned at 5:43 pm.



10/15/2025

Caitlin Vaughan Sekar, Board Chair