

The Board of Directors of the Lakewood City Academy of the Lakewood City School District, City of Lakewood, County of Cuyahoga, State of Ohio, met in Special session at Lakewood City Academy, 13465 Franklin Avenue, on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING CERTIFICATE

The Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Lakewood City Academy, Lakewood City School District, Ohio, does hereby certify that written notice of the time and place of this special meeting of the Board of Directors held on December 4, 2018, was served personally upon, or actually received by mail by each Board member at least two days in advance of that meeting, and notice of the time, place and purpose of that meeting was, at least twenty-four hours in advance of the time of that meeting, given to and received by all news media that had heretofore requested notification of special meetings of the Board pursuant to Section 121.22 of the Revised Code and the procedures established by the Board for that purpose.

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Treasurer, Lakewood City Academy of the  
Lakewood City School District, Ohio

The Board of Directors of the Lakewood City Academy of the Lakewood City School District, city of Lakewood, County of Cuyahoga, State of Ohio, met in special session in Room 105 at Lakewood City Academy, 13465 Franklin Blvd., Lakewood, Ohio on Tuesday, December 4, 2018, at 4:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mr. Calaway, Mr. Drops, Ms. George  
Mr. Salzer joined the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Members Absent: Mr. O'Bryan

Also present: Susan K. Anderson, Attorney, Walter Haverfield  
Melynda Schuckert, School Counselor

#46/18

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Mr. Calaway moved and Mr. Drops  
seconded the motion that the following resolution be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Lakewood City Academy that the Agenda for the December 4, 2018, Special Meeting be adopted as printed.

Upon Roll Call on the motion the vote was as follows:

- Mr. Calaway – Yea
- Mr. Drops – Yea
- Ms. George – Yea

Nays: None

The motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Drops moved and Mr. Calaway  
seconded the motion that the minutes of the October 9, 2018, Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lakewood City Academy be approved.

Yeas: Mr. Calaway, Mr. Drops, Ms. George

Nays: None

The motion passed.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**A. Sponsorship Rating**

Mr. Zeman introduced Ms. Susan Keating Anderson, Sponsor Attorney, from Walter Haverfield, who along with Mrs. Niedzwiecki, Assistant Superintendent, will provide a timeline and a summary of the process regarding the transition from a community conversion charter school to an alternative educational pathway as part of Lakewood City School District.

**Sponsor Rating**

Mr. Zeman recounted from the October Lakewood City Academy (LCA) Board of Directors meeting, in addition to anticipating a rating of Ineffective from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), other items of concern were discussed: fiscal stability of LCA based upon enrollment and the cost of staffing as well as coming out from underneath the restrictions and compliance issues that ODE requires of a community conversion school.

Mr. Zeman announced that, as the sponsor, the District, received an Effective rating as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Points</u>
Compliance	Exemplary	4 Points
Report Card	Met Standards	2 Points
Quality Rubric	Progressing	<u>2 Points</u>
	Towards Standards	<b>8 Total = Effective</b>

In order to receive the 2 points on the Quality Rubric the score needed to be above 55%. The original Ineffective rating was appealed with the assistance of Ms. Anderson, Ms. Bornino-Elwell and Mrs. Niedzwiecki. As a result, approximately 58% was achieved along with the necessary 2 Points and so a rating of Effective was earned.

If the District had been rated Ineffective it would have meant an entirely different pathway and ODE would have taken over immediately. An appeal could have been submitted at that point but the conversation would have been completely different. Ms. Anderson will talk more about that at a later point in the meeting. Mr. Zeman said with an Effective rating, the good news is future plans can be made on the District’s own terms and timeline.

**Transition and Transform**

Mr. Zeman explained, as was discussed in October, and as Dr. Barnes, Mrs. Niedzwiecki and Ms. Bornino-Elwell have discussed, transitioning from a community conversion school to an alternative educational pathway is truly felt to be better for students, gives staff more flexibility, and provides a longer-term opportunity for more students.

Ms. George inquired if all of the Board of Education Members share those same thoughts and feelings about transitioning.

Mr. Zeman stated, “Yes, the Board of Education as well as the Lakewood City School District Administration share the same vision for LCA.” He said at the Lakewood City School Board Meeting the previous night the process with LCA was again discussed.

At the October LCA meeting, discussion was held surrounding the thought that transitioning to an alternative education format and that process and making sure to encourage participation from the Board of Directors of LCA and the staff in that transition, is the best course, as the sponsor, to move forward.

Mr. Salzer joined the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Ms. George asked whether the Board of Directors alone votes or if the Board of Education also votes on this decision.

Mr. Zeman said Ms. Anderson would speak about that later in the meeting. He explained there are two parts to this: there is Lakewood City School District, as the sponsor, and Lakewood City Academy Board of Directors. The Board of Directors are in charge of the operational and the management of Lakewood City Academy. Lakewood City School District, as the sponsor, is the sponsoring organization. Lakewood City School District can choose to move forward and no longer be a sponsor and start an alternative educational school. LCA could seek a new sponsor, a facility, and a staff and all of those things if they wanted to continue the mission of LCA separate from Lakewood City School District. Without a doubt that is an option.

#### **Community School vs. Alternative School**

Ms. George wondered whether the District no longer wanted to be the sponsor of LCA.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki explained it is not exactly that. She said the District wants an alternative school but it is not fiscally responsible to have it as a community school right now because money is being lost from year to year on it. She said Mr. Zeman would be able to speak to the fiscal aspect more. The District still wants an alternative school and wants to be able to offer opportunities to our students.

She and Ms. Bornino-Elwell sat down recently and drew up what could be done if they were not under the community sponsorship; if there were just an alternative program within the schools. If a person would go to the web site and click on 'schools' it would still be one of our schools. Both agreed the name should be changed. So in the future, if you would search on the District web site this school would come up just like West Shore and the elementary schools come up.

It is an option for our students and the District is able to offer not just at-risk drop out recovery, but for students wanting a creative learning schedule or environment. The District is able to then open up offerings to flexible hours, creative scheduling, career internships and job placements for our students; things that our community school is unable to do right now. It is also going to open the doors to speak to our high, middle and elementary schools more collaboratively and meet with them regularly to discuss students. This could be an option where that door is not even open at this point.

#### **Time for Transformation**

Ms. George asked if, after 14 years of operation, it was a financial reason that the community school model is not working.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki explained it is time to transform. She clarified by saying it is not that it is not working. The District still wants an alternative school and wants to transfer from a community school model in the sense that we are now bound to follow all of those guidelines and policies from the State. These are all of our kids and an alternative model is needed for our kids. Fifteen years ago it was an incredible program. Many things have changed and you have to transform as the years progress, and there are so many more opportunities now. Also to open it up so that Ms. Bornino-Elwell can be more creative instead of sitting behind policies she is unable to work with.

Mr. Zeman added furthering that discussion too is the timing. Prior to 3 years ago there were no ratings, no additional compliance items, no quality rubric. It is not that LCA was hitting all of these component items and then 3 years ago, for whatever reason, it stopped. It was through the Ohio Legislature and ODE who have added more and more restrictions and compliance issues to the community schools making it more stringent, more difficult to be flexible, to be the best for students. When the first Quality Rubric process started there were discussions at that point about whether the model should be changed, whether a step back should be taken from the community conversion school and to just look at an alternative education process. We are doing great things for students and we are getting this oversight, compliance and regulation. The time Ms. Bornino-Elwell and those who work on the compliance spend - those resources could be spent on helping students - even more than Ms. Bornino-Elwell is already doing.

#### **Financial Aspect**

Mr. Zeman stated, in the 5 years he has been with the District the demographics of the community have changed and enrollment has continually decreased. LCA is at the bare minimum of successful staffing. If staffing is cut you are really jeopardizing the students and that would be a significant concern. In the Forecast presented in October, assumptions were made in regard to revenue which included enrollment of 120 students. LCA is at 92 students, and that is 30 students different (at \$7,000 a student) which amounts to \$200,000 less funding than we had anticipated. The Five Year Forecast is showing a positive carry over balance of \$88,000 with an assumption of \$800,000 in the state revenue. We are only going to get \$600,000. So that \$88,000 carry over is now an \$112,000 deficit.

The good news is because Lakewood City School District is the sponsor of Lakewood City Academy the District will not bill LCA to make them negative or make them borrow. So, if the trend continues and that student enrollment maintains and that funding comes in the same way, the school district, as the sponsor, will only bill for what LCA can pay. Another sponsor would not react that same way and would say instead, "cut staff, get more students or we are shutting you down".

In this transformational way everything that is being done today can be continued without the auspices of the state. That is truly what this comes down to. In this building, with the staff that want to be here and providing those students the opportunities that they want and even expanding on those opportunities.

Mr. Calaway asked how changing to an alternative education will fiscally help Lakewood.

Mr. Zeman said there will not be any funding leaving the District and no funding coming to LCA. There will just be Lakewood City School District employees. There will not be any budgeting or revenue shortfalls. It will all come underneath the General Fund. It will be considered a program of the high school just like West Shore. Down the road, there may be a potential to offer this expanded program to our West Shore Schools: Bay Village, Rocky River and Westlake. The way the Ohio Department of Education has it now, LCA cannot offer seats to our current West Shore School students on its own. LCA has to either offer it out to the entire state or to the same school district, which LCA does now.

#### **Early Intervention Opportunities**

Mrs. Niedzwiecki shared that Ms. Bornino-Elwell has looked into catching students earlier, and this could help many students, before they are getting into the middle and high school grade levels.

Ms. Bornino-Elwell said the K-5 grade levels need to be looked at because much of what is being seen is the retention level in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. They are not ready in reading and math and not as strong as they should be coming into the high school level and so the test scores are showing it. She said Ms. Schuckert could also speak to that issue. Ms. Bornino-Elwell said it is hard for the high school to take in all of the students who have comprehension issues and need the extra help. That is where the behavior problems become major problems because students cannot keep up. LCA then helps bring them up to grade level. Ms. Bornino-Elwell said it would help if they can be brought in at an earlier age and get their skills strengthened.

#### **Expanded Programming and Services**

In meeting with Mr. Walter, Mrs. Niedwiecki shared he is also very excited about opening up opportunities for students who want to participate in music, band and clubs. Students could start engaging in the high school more than in the past since LCA is a separate school. LCA has some West Shore students and there could potentially be more of those opportunities.

Ms. Bornino-Elwell will be able to work with Student Services more to talk about the needs of students - including mental health services. Before it was always working within the budget. But now when it is our school there are many services that we can offer all students.

When new computers are needed - before it was always working within the budget. Now, if the high school is getting new computers then all of the high school kids will get new computers. The same thing goes for professional development and collaborating with our other high school teachers.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki stated if anything, the transformation opens up more opportunities. People may ask what does this change for the kids or the parents? *Nothing*. There is no change - this is the building, this is our same staff.

#### **Credit Recovery and Flexible Scheduling**

Ms. George asked whether credit recovery will still be there for the students?

Mrs. Niedzwiecki answered that credit recovery will still be there. She said Ms. Bornino-Elwell shared with her that credit recovery is probably one of the biggest needs. That is what an alternative school is really about. There are also so many more things that can be added to it.

The work component is going to be nice for some kids. In flexible scheduling we have seen that an a.m. / p.m. session can be offered and an evening session. This will be especially good for the 18, 19, 20 year olds who need to work and are not seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

#### **Planning for the Future**

Mrs. Niedzwiecki commented she was sure that the Board of Directors has many ideas that they would like to see happen - and potential. A lot of K-12 programming is being done as a District with Dr. Barnes. It is nothing bad - it is always just about growing and how do we continue to grow this program that has been successful for many students.

Ms. Bornino-Elwell also said it would be nice to have the Board of Directors involved and be a part of the team. She has been talking with businesses in the community and NEO to try and get them involved and have internships for the students where they can do projects and work in the summer.

Ms. George related the Trades like to partner and want to connect. She said this would be a good opportunity.

**Staffing**

Ms. George asked what staffing will look like in the future and whether staff would be laid off.

Mr. Zeman said that staff who want to be here will be here. They are Lakewood City School District employees and are part of the LTA or the OAPSE unions. As jobs become available, staff could transfer out if they chose to. Most of the staff, he believes, love what they do here. There would be no reason for them to feel that they would not be in this position.

**Timing**

Ms. George indicated she needed to leave the meeting early. She expressed concern over whether a vote would occur at this meeting. She was assured there would be no vote at this time. She also inquired about an additional January meeting for further discussion.

Mr. Zeman stated that the January 8<sup>th</sup> Organizational and Regular Board of Directors meetings are already on the calendar. If there should be a need to meet again that would need to be further discussed. He said the Lakewood City School District needs to meet as well as once that timeframe happens it starts all of the other dominoes, in effect.

Indicating her desire to get further information from members of the Board of Education, the Superintendent and Mr. Walter, Ms. George expressed how big a decision she felt this is and needed to be sure it was thoroughly vetted.

Since the rating is Effective, Ms. George asked if a one-year delay was possible.

Mr. Zeman stated no and if that were to occur LCA either would need to reduce staffing to a level where he felt it was not good for students or look at alternative sources of funding or somehow get more students. He stated this was not for lack of effort on Ms. Bornino-Elwell's part. He said for the 5 years he has been with the District Ms. Bornino-Elwell has been trying to increase enrollment.

Mrs. Niedzwicki related that the timeline is pretty tight on the State end. There is a need to do many things between now and early February including branding and sending out information to people. She said the Board of Directors thoughts are needed on the table. People need to know that it does not change anything for our students or parents.

**Sustainability**

Mr. Salzer wanted to know if the current model is not sustainable, what would make a new model sustainable? How does the income stream differ as opposed to being a community school to a redesigned alternative school?

Mr. Zeman said there is no additional income. The funds that the District would receive from the State would not increase. He emphasized, 'Let's be clear about that: the Lakewood City School District does not benefit financially from this in regards to the fact that they receive additional revenue.'

Right now, the staff is Lakewood City School District employees who are paid for out of the Lakewood City School District General Fund. Then the money that is deducted from the State Foundation that comes to LCA as it does goes to Albert Einstein, Menlo Park for the per pupil amount, that money comes back to the District to pay, as a purchased service, for that staff. It is a wash there - just like it would be a wash as if it as an alternative school. That cost of those employees stays with the District.



Mr. Calaway asked how an alternative school would be run if the District is not getting more money?

Mrs. Niedzwiecki explained they are our students either way. So if we were saying let's put them back at the high school - they are still our students. We do not believe that is the best course of action.

### Reaching Out

Ms. Bornino-Elwell added Lakewood is still losing a significant amount of money for students who are already attending other charter schools. The other model charter schools are paying their staff a minimum wage. Mrs. Niedzwiecki offered that we are now able to reach out to the 200+ other students who are attending other charter schools in hopes to get them back.

Mr. Drops concluded all of this is coming to a head because the state has applied all of this overhead to managing our type of school. Are the other charter schools having to do the same compliance item that we are? Mr. Zeman said they are, yes. Mr. Drops said so, that overhead plus the fact that we cannot offer additional programs here, because of the confines of what we are, the better option is to close down the school and make it part of Lakewood City School District, which it really is, except in theory it is being run as a separate entity.

Mr. Zeman said the key is to look at this rather than a closing/opening, but as a *transformation* of what we are doing here. The kids will walk in the same door in August to see the same teachers. The experience for them will be the same, but it will also be with more opportunities.

Mr. Drops recounted Mr. O'Bryan previously saying that the identity is the issue and how we identify this new program because some parents did not like the idea of LCA. Mrs. Niedzwiecki expressed with the transforming there will be a lot of good ideas to brand and we will be able to do that because it will be Lakewood City School District.

### Alternative School

Ms. Anderson weighed in regarding why it would be different or better from a financial/operational standpoint to move to an alternative school. Since 2008, she has been helping Lakewood City School District with the community school. There has been an evolution of not only the school but also the laws as they are being applied and the community conversion school model as LCA is now. ODE has tightened the belt on community schools making sure they are operationally independent. Community schools now are paying for the sins of prior community schools and other private sector operators. ODE does not like the model that LCA is now where the District heavily supports the community school. Moving to an alternative school within the District, for one thing, allows the District to absorb costs more easily.

Ms. George left the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

Ms. Anderson continued and said moving to an alternative school would enable the District to allow for a much more streamlined process instead of showing policies and submitting quality improvement plans. All of that administrative work on those items would be erased and the administrators would be freed up and able to focus on the program. With that comes cost savings so that Lakewood City School District is absorbing those costs rather than having to delineate between the two.

**Timelines**

Ms. Anderson referred to the timeline and summary handout entitled "Closure/Transition Procedure". The process of a non-renewal and closure of LCA and transformation into an alternative school is set forth in statute, she said, with some very specific timelines. What triggers it all is the non-renewal decision made by the Lakewood City School District Board and possibly by the Lakewood City Academy Board. Once that non-renewal decision is made the first 8 pages of the handout are all things that have to be done within 7-14 days of the date of the non-renewal decision. As much prior preparation that can be done the better. By statute, Ohio law states the decision to non-renew has to be made by January 15<sup>th</sup>. We are talking about action by the Boards at the January meeting.

Ohio law sets forth a unilateral process where the LCSD Board could determine to not renew the sponsor contract and then give the LCA Board notice of that. If the LCA Board disagreed with that decision there is a hearing process and they could appeal.

The LCSD Board and the LCA Board are parties to a contract and could mutually agree that it is the better interest of our students and our school community to move away from the community school model and to move to an alternative school model. That would look like a resolution by the LCSD Board that it is not renewing the contract for LCA by mutual agreement with the LCA Board. And then also a resolution by the LCA Board to say we believe it is in the best interest to not renew the sponsor contract and to move forward with this transition.

Referring to the second handout, Ms. Anderson said the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in draft form and could be entered into between both Boards and would memorialize that both sides agree not to renew the contract. What it does is set forth a transition committee which would be a joint committee of Lakewood City School District representatives and Lakewood City Academy representatives that would be charged with implementing the closing procedure as well as charged with looking at the alternative school program and what that would look like going forward.

If that is the route that both Boards decide to take these are the first steps in January: Action by both Boards on non-renewing, then action by both Boards on the MOU, and then the transition committee should meet. The transition committee are the ones that have the responsibility to go through this, digest it, and implement the steps. What this sets forth for the transition committee is that once the non-renewal decision is made - within 10 days - ODE needs to be noticed letting them know what is occurring. There are specific timelines relating to communications with the LCA staff.

The public relations part of it is key and something that needs to be thought about and be prepared at the time of Board action with communication out for the community and the staff. She suggested a press release, a bulletin for staff members to help answer the questions. There are timelines under the statute with respect to informing each of the following: students and families, staff and the Ohio Department of Education of what is occurring. What is not necessarily in the statutes is the public relations piece.

This timeline is prepared from Ohio law and, does by statute, set forth the dates that are statutorily required. Those are shown in red. On ODE's website they publish guidance on closing schools. You can look that up yourself. Included also are the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) recommendations on school closures. This document is a combination of all of those things.

**Two-Fold Process**

Ms. Anderson suggested the process be thought of as twofold: one is the non-renewal of the contract and the closure of the school, and the second part is the creation of the alternative school. Ohio law places the creation of the alternative school on the Lakewood Superintendent. He is the one that has to take to the Lakewood City School Board of Education the plan of what the alternative school will look like. Referring to Page 2 of the 'Closure/Transition Procedure' handout, Ms. Anderson outlined each of the items that the alternative school plan is required to set forth. She said that these things are required by statute and what existing Lakewood City School Board policy requires.

Those things fall under the purview of the transition committee. Either at the same Board meeting where the non-renewal is voted upon, or thereafter, the alternative school plan would be approved at some point by the Lakewood City School Board. The quicker you can get that plan in place the better. It is for the branding and the community conversations.

**Transition Committee**

Referring to Pages 2 - 3 of the handout and based largely on the NACSA recommendations on school closures, Ms. Anderson said it is suggested the transition committee be comprised of: one member from the sponsor, one member from the school, the LCA treasurer, and it is recommended for an attorney to be involved - which could be on an as-needed basis. That is at a minimum of what you would want to have on the transition committee. She suggested that it may be beneficial to have other stakeholders included on the transition committee such as possibly LCA Board members, administrators, staff members, or parents.

NACSA standards recommend appointing a project manager to be the point person who will oversee the timelines and communication and coordinate the implementation of and see that deadlines are met between the transition committee and the respective parties. The point person should have access to legal counsel, financial personnel, and so on.

Ms. Anderson continued saying Pages 2-5 and more speak about LCA assets, identifying the education records and detailing how student education records will be treated. Also looking at financial reporting requirements, which will all fall within the purview of the transition committee. Members of the transition committee should be those willing to take on these tasks. A strategic planning committee meeting should take place regarding deadlines, responsibilities of the committee members and those items.

Page 5 goes into the specific responsibilities of LCA: within 7 days of the non-renewal decision the treasurer has to review LCA's financial records with creditors and debtors compiled and addressing any outstanding debts. It gets very detailed with checklists and the like.

For purposes of this meeting, the other details are not necessary, but it is important to understand that it is a pretty detailed process and once the non-renewal decision is made it will trigger all of this and it will be a very time-intensive process at that point.

Mr. Drops asked when would LCA go out of business? Ms. Anderson answered that LCA would wind up at the end of this school year.

Mr. Drops also wondered whether ODE recently added more compliance or if it was just now acting on legislation passed 3 years ago. She said they had a real problem with the Superintendent and Treasurer of Lakewood City School District serving in dual roles.

General discussion was held about the administrative make up at the Ohio Department of Education and what that might possibly look like in the future.

Ms. Anderson outlined that if a 3<sup>rd</sup> Ineffective rating had been received it would have meant being subject to revocation of a sponsor. Had LCSD been rated Ineffective this year, there would have been an opportunity to appeal. If that appeal had not been successful, then ODE revokes the sponsorship authority and the Office of School Sponsorship becomes the sponsor for up to 2 years until another sponsor is found or the school closes. Luckily, Ms. Anderson said we are not dealing with that situation.

### **Fiscal Stability**

Mr. Zeman spoke about the ongoing concern of LCA to be fiscally stable. At the May LCA meeting, discussion had been held that FY19 looked like it was going to end positive but that FY20 was going to be a negative year. As FY19 is progressing and the student enrollment is as it is, the funding mechanism is not sustainable. Going back to what Ms. Anderson talked about: compliance and quality and Ineffective or Effective, the model of what LCA is fiscally was not going to be sustainable.

He added that on top of that the restrictions put on by the Ohio Department of Education and what we are able to do with the kids as a community conversion school makes it not the same opportunities that we feel we can offer without that umbrella over us: job opportunities, career opportunities to make them more successful or get through the alternative education process in a manner that best fits them.

Taking the Ineffective/Effective out of it and looking at the fiscal side of it - unsustainable; what ODE puts on us - restrictive restraints of what we can do as a community school, which have come about over the last 3 years. It is all coming to a head at the same time.

### **Training and Career Opportunities**

Mr. Drops said when ECOT closed we only got a few of those students back. He asked whether there would be more opportunities for those students to come back. Mrs. Niedzwiecki said potentially there would be.

Ms. Schuckert shared there are things that the District can do to attract and support students who need training and career opportunities. She said there is room for growth in this area. There are opportunities, for instance, in the manufacturing field. Ms. Bornino-Elwell noted in the past, LCA could offer elective credit for working but that option was removed by the State. That presented a real problem for students who need to work.

Mr. Drops asked whether there are any other districts who are operating alternative schools, such as what has been outlined here.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki talked about a recent trip made by 12 administrators from Lakewood who visited Lakota, a large school district in the Cincinnati area. The staff who attended also included Mr. Walter, Mr. Dimascio and Ms. Bornino-Etwell. She outlined how Lakota's alternative school had been formed and is now set up. Mr. Dimascio worked previously at Akron's alternative school and he is looking at a January date for administration to go and see what they are doing. She said it is an opportunity to look at this differently.

Ms. Anderson explained that by statute alternative schools are for the student with academic or attendance issues or behavioral problems, etc. That is the distinction between, for instance, a West Shore and an alternative school.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki shared there are students who may have anxiety from being in a larger group learning environment and who could benefit from an alternative education setting.

#### **Next Steps**

Mr. Drops asked what the next steps are.

Mr. Zeman stated that today's discussion was for informative purposes. He reminded that when Ms. George left the meeting, she indicated the need for her to talk with the Board and staff to obtain more information.

He asked Ms. Anderson what the timeline is for LCA either choosing to accept or not accept that non-renewal. Ms. Anderson stated that LCA would have 10 days to appeal the non-renewal decision. There would be a hearing on that within 30 days. LCSD would then make a decision and if it then decided to continue with the non-renewal, then the closure would still occur at the end of the school year. If it was by mutual agreement process, then that gets cut off.

Reading through the dates on the handout, Mr. Drops noted after the January 15<sup>th</sup> deadline, the next key date in red is March 1<sup>st</sup> and following that, the next key date is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Board Actions**

Mr. Zeman said the intent of LCSD is to provide the resolution - on one reading due to the deadline of January 15<sup>th</sup> - at their regular meeting on January 7<sup>th</sup> to non-renew the sponsorship agreement.

Mr. Zeman recommended that the LCA Board members talk internally. Ms. George earlier indicated she would reach out to the LCSD Board members. LCA has a Board meeting already scheduled for January 8<sup>th</sup>. He said there is time between now and that January 8<sup>th</sup> meeting to find out more and to discuss. If there is a need to have a special meeting after the 8<sup>th</sup> we can.

Mr. Calaway asked whether it was correct to say that potentially there could be a resolution for a mutual agreement on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Zeman said yes and because the LCSD Board is meeting the previous day, the LCA Board would be aware of that vote.

Ms. Anderson suggested if it is a mutual agreement situation, that the Boards approve the MOU, as that is what creates the transition committee and explained that this needs to get that moving very quickly. That is the 2<sup>nd</sup> sheet that was passed out and it sets out what is required legally. It is a draft and can be revised to reflect the public relations aspect and why this is being done and why it is felt to be the best step. That also starts the branding.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki offered to assist Ms. Bornino-Elwell in creating an FAQ for talking points. Ms. Anderson said it is important that both Boards be on the same page of talking points.

Mr. Salzer asked how the staff feels about the change.

Ms. Bornino-Elwell said that everyone is positive and keeping the lines of communication open. Ms. Schuckert said there is a lot of excitement and staff is looking to how they can make it better for students. She thinks the branding will be important and she is looking forward.

Mr. Zeman said graduation diplomas for the alternative school will say 'Lakewood City School District' and the students could choose to walk in the LHS graduation ceremony but that there could also be a separate graduation ceremony to celebrate.

Ms. Bornino-Elwell reiterated there is nothing negative about this process for staff or students. Mrs. Niedzwiecki said she hopes that Ms. Bornino-Elwell will continue, as she is needed to coordinate. There will be no change in Ms. Bornino-Elwell's contract.

Ms. Anderson concluded her comments by saying as the talking points are being developed it is necessary to keep in mind that, as part of the timeline requirement, there is a joint letter that needs to be formulated and sent out to parents from LCA and LCSD. The law says it should be within 10 days of the non-renewal letter but no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>. The letter should include the talking points. This letter should be sent out the sooner the better and it will help control the message and any rumors.

Mrs. Niedzwiecki said it is important to keep the lines of communication open and if there are any questions to send them to her and Ms. Bornino-Elwell, who echoed the same sentiments. Mrs. Niedzwiecki concluded by saying that the District will provide the right education for all students.

**OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

Mr. Zeman asked if there was any Other Board Business. There was none.

There being no further business, Mr. Salzer asked for a motion to Adjourn.

#47/18

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Drops moved and Mr. Calaway  
seconded the motion that the December 4, 2018, Special Meeting of the Board of Directors  
of the Lakewood City Academy be adjourned.

Yeas: Mr. Calaway, Mr. Drops, Mr. Salzer

Nays: None

The motion passed.

The meeting was Adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Treasurer