

Britt Despenza  
Principal

## Orlando Gifted Academy

1121 North Fern Creek Avenue  
Orlando, FL 32803  
(407)897-6410

<https://orlandogiftedacademy.ocps.net>



October 29, 2020  
SAC Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order**
  - Meeting opened by Principal – Mrs. Despenza
2. **Welcome and Introductions**
  - Principal – Mrs. Despenza
3. **Minutes from Previous Meeting**
  - Approved by voice vote
4. **Old Business**
  - **Walkie-Talkie/Radios**
    - Arrived and are being used. They work well and staff is happy with them.
  - **Blinds**
    - Were approved and budgeted for, but as they are a safety issue the County is responsible for them. So they are on hold until next year and OCPS will pick up the cost for them.
  - **Gates**
    - The school has a very secure fencing and gate system. The gates are so secure that they won't even let you out. For safety reasons, the gates must have an auto-release to allow exit, not entry. OGA asked the County for approval for 8 'push-out' gates. This has just recently been approved by OCPS security.
5. **New Business**
  - **Election of Officers for 2020-2021 school year**
    - SAC Chair
      - Chair description read to group by Mrs. Despenza
      - Floor was opened for nominations
      - Jennifer Vose volunteered
      - No other nominees came forward
      - By unanimous decree, Jennifer Vose is the new 2020 – 2021 SAC Chair
  - **Budget**
    - There will be a spring retreat to go over budget.
    - The 2 main parts of this process is to decide how many students next year, and decide what we want to see in the next year.
    - OGA can physically hold 400 kids, but we prefer a more manageable number.
    - For planning purposes the OCPS Magnet Dept needs those numbers of potential students for their slot allotment.
    - While we projected 350 for 2020-2021. The submitted budget showed a total of 315 students. That way OGA doesn't have to pay money back to county if we fall short on students.

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- Mrs. Despenza watched the number of students over the summer break knowing that students = staff. If too many students leave, OGA would have to release teachers.
- Final count was at the beginning of the school year was 286, which became a concern.
- Technically OGA now owed money back to the county based on the student shortfall.
- So OGA received a bill for a teacher and a half.
- Knowing that budgets are always tricky, OGA kept money in reserve, in case of a shortfall.
- OGA was already prepared to pay for 2 teachers paid out of that reserve.
- It also happened that Ms. Bartham, from the front office retired. She was not replaced.
- So OGA was able to 'pay' the county's bill without losing any teachers.
- Unfortunately, in February we are going to get another bill from the county.
- This time there is less money in savings.
- In another development, due to COVID there is a new requirement of an LPN position at every school. The CARES ACT will pay for this new salary position. And the other good news is that we already have a health person, and the required sick room space.
- How this was accomplished was to move the YMCA ASP to another room, giving us the required 2 rooms for sick children.
- The new LPN position is posted and interviewing has started.
- For planning purposes, we need to remember that we are adding 8<sup>th</sup> grade next year.
- Middle school teachers can teach 6 sections, so we are covering 6 & 7<sup>th</sup> grades with existing staff.
- For 8<sup>th</sup> grade we need more teachers, and we can't have a single subject person, which will make hiring more challenging.
- We also opened 2<sup>nd</sup> grade this year, as a budgetary staffing note.
- We want 4 teachers for each grade, except 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. And we need a teacher for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- We ultimately want 2 classes (18 kids & 18 kids) for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- We need to figure out how to help get kids tested in 1<sup>st</sup> grade to get them in here. Kids need gifted tested and EP written before they can transfer. Note that, no one is working over the summer anymore, so it has to happen during the school year.
- Superintendent is aware of the situation, but we need to be the ones to be proactive in recruitment.
- It was suggested to post an FAQ on 'How to get your kid tested for Gifted'.
- Possible places to post the information
  - PTA website
  - SAC Facebook page
  - OGA website
- Question was asked on how many kids did we lose from last year.
  - How many did we lose?

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- Don't know. Will bring numbers to the next meeting.
- Biggest trend was 5<sup>th</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Lost them for lack of electives (performing arts) and sports.
- Lost 12 5<sup>th</sup> graders, a couple for sports.
- Middle school electives – the students were polled for options
  - Surveys came back that kids love PE.
  - Need to add a PE teacher
    - But someone who can also teach 3 other classes.
- Ms. Scheid gave a list of electives (***Music Technology, World Music Drumming, French, Creative Photography, Art 1 & 2, Journalism, Speech & Debate, Video Production, ICT, PLTW 1, PLTW 2***)
- New OGA staff
  - Grade 2
    - Ms. Cybulski
  - Grade 4
    - Ms. Hurley
    - Ms. Gutierrez
  - Middle School
    - Mr. Miller
      - Temporary position
    - Ms. Cross
      - Math and algebra
    - Dr. Rozmarynowycz
      - 7<sup>th</sup> grade science/PLTW
    - Mr. Menna
      - 7<sup>th</sup> grade science/PLTW
  - Specials
    - Ms. Cuomo
  - Tutor
    - Ms. Panther
      - Why a full time Tutor position. It is close to impossible to get substitute teachers due to COVID. Knowing this was a problem, we proactively hired a tutor for coverage. Between Covid, and training, this person will be fully utilized. She covers lunch duty, and has previous teacher experience.
- Meeting format beginning 11/1
  - SAC must be in person starting November 1. It is a state directive for Face to Face.
  - Principal Updates were changed to weekly based on the all the COVID updates.
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### 6. SAC Meeting Dates

- November 12
- December 8
- January 28
- February 25
- March 25
- April & May TBD

### 7. Important Dates

- October 29 – SAC Meeting 5:00-5:30p.m.
- October 30 – SAC Roster Window closes
- October 30 – Teacher Professional Day/Student Holiday
- November 7 – Elementary & Middle School Magnet Fair @Edgewater HS
- November 12 – SAC Meeting 5:00-5:30p.m.
- November 12 – Middle School Mental Health Course (Wednesday schedule)
- November 11-17 – Fall Book Fair (in person & virtual)
- November 18 – Teach-In (virtual)
- November 18 – Orchestra Field Trip (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> grades) (virtual)
- November 19 – Progress Reports Go Home/Available on Skyward
- November 19 – Spirit Day: Crazy Sock Day
- November 23-27 – Thanksgiving Holiday
- November 30 – iReady Diagnostic starts
- November 30 – Classroom Spelling Bee

### 8. Questions

- LaunchEd problems were discussed. Some parents do not prefer blended classrooms. They also shared communication problems.
  - Ms Despenza addressed the concerns. The faculty and staff are doing the best they can given the new circumstances. Teachers are trying to include everyone.
  - She relayed that the blended classroom model will continue. Teachers opted for blended. And OGA does not have the staff to separate out a separate digital class and F2F class.
- F2F is working very well so far with social distancing.
- It was suggested for either SAC or PTA to create a survey for parents about what is working and not working for LaunchEd.
- A copy of the budget was requested for the committee.

### 9. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned by Ms. Despenza at 6:10pm