

Strategy-Culture-People-Leadership-Structure-Process
for sustained high performance & engaged employees

**Executive Report of Result From
The Stakeholder Survey
For
Odyssey Charter School**

Background Food for Thought

Given the deep and rich Greek culture upon which Odyssey Charter School is built we perhaps can call upon the wisdom of Greek philosophers to inform our thinking and decision making in this initiative. Shown below are a few statements from those Greek roots and a thought on how that wisdom can guide us as we work together:

Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises

- Demosthenes

Your love of the Greek language, culture and heritage created the first small opportunity that is OCS. What is required now to build the larger foundation for a great enterprise?

Wait for the wisest of all counselors, time

- Pericles

We have taken the time to hear from many stakeholders who have shared their perspectives formed over time. We have all learned from the passage of time. What have we learned that requires us to look to the future times?

Let him that would move the world first move himself

- Socrates

Feedback is a gift that we must use wisely and with open minds. Let's work together to move ourselves and by doing so, move OCS in its journey to greatness.

Summary of Statistical Responses to Questions

Note 1: For ease of reading and analysis all percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number

66% Total response rate (103 responses from a list of 155)

| Level of familiarity with: | Complete Understanding | Somewhat familiar | Unfamiliar |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Role of AHEPA | 41% | 47% | 12% |
| Role of the Board | 58% | 38% | 4% |
| Role of Executive Committee | 50% | 34% | 16% |
| Role of Board Officers | 50% | 39% | 11% |
| Role of Headmaster | 67% | 31% | 2% |
| Board selection process | 46% | 25% | 29% |
| # of Board members allowed in by-laws | 52% | 24% | 24% |
| Headmaster Job Description | 53% | 35% | 12% |

Action Recommendations Based on These Statistics:

- Since an informed stakeholder constituency is important and 59% of respondents do not have a full understanding of the role of AHEPA an educational/informational overview available to all stakeholders is recommended
- In any organization Board effectiveness and relationships with other stakeholder groups is enhanced to the degree that all are conversant with the role of the Board, how members are selected, the role of the Executive Committee and length of term as well as term limits; at the current time, 42-54% of stakeholders are not sufficiently familiar with these components of the Board; an educational/informational initiative is recommended

Which one of the following statements do you believe should describe the role of Board oversight of the Headmaster AS IT RELATES TO DAY TO DAY OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOL (Choose ONE)

11% Review approve or veto all Headmaster decisions before they are made

49% Provide clear authority levels within agreed upon job duties, then monitor for consistency with Mission and Values, legality, ethics and adherence to authority levels

40% Headmaster has full administrative authority (for example: hire/fire, budget management, decision making, faculty relations, parent relations) and is judged and evaluated by the Board based on metrics and outcomes achieved in areas such as financial management, academic quality, enrollment, staff performance, student and parental satisfaction

Action Recommendations Based on These Statistics:

- This question relates to the issue of creating an appropriate balance of Board oversight and Headmaster authority and accountability, commonly referred to as Boundary Management in leadership and performance management
- 89% of respondents feel that:
 - either the current boundaries should be more clearly communicated and understood by stakeholders
 - or the boundaries should be re-evaluated to ensure an effective balance of boundaries

Who should oversee Headmaster job performance?

53% Entire Board

40% Executive Committee

7% Board President

Who should be responsible for conducting the Headmaster's Annual Performance Review?

35% Entire Board

43% Executive Committee

22% Board President

Do you think all Board members should have the same term length?

40% No

60% Yes

Should the length of Board member terms be limited?

19% No

81% Yes

What is the desired length of Board terms?

- 3% One year
- 41% Two years
- 56% Three years

Should the number of Board terms be limited?

- 19% No
- 81% Yes

If there was a limit to the number of Board terms, what should that limit be?

- 4% One term
- 54% Two terms
- 42% Three terms

If a change in the length of Board terms, the number of Board terms, number of Board members or all three is made, should those changes be implemented:

- 14% When school reaches full size and facilities are complete
- 35% Over the next 2-3 years
- 24% By end of the next school year
- 27% Immediately

Looking at the future of Odyssey Charter School, in your opinion how important is the continuing involvement of AHEPA and the influence of Greek culture on the sustained success of the school?

- 47% Vital factor
- 23% Very essential
- 23% Important but not essential
- 3% Not that important
- 4% Does not make a difference

Observation based on the responses to this question:

- It is clear that there is an overwhelming appreciation and value placed upon the rich heritage and mission of OCS. Combined with the provision in Article VI, Section 1 Council Elections that any future candidates for election it would appear that you are ensured of a sustained commitment to that heritage and mission: *“Each candidate shall submit a written statement of interest and sign a candidate commitment to upholding the school’s mission.”*

Recurring Themes in the Responses to the Open-ended Question in the Survey

In your opinion what is the number of directors OCS should have on its board? What is your thinking in recommending that number?

- 64 responses were offered
- The thoughts regarding size ranged from 1 through 13
- In the responses there were several very informative themes in respondent thinking:
 1. Regardless of the total number of directors is there a way to create a better balance of stakeholder representation on the board
 2. The simplest solution is to enforce and act on the current requirements within the By-Laws
 3. The number of directors is less important than the current Board demonstrating collaborative behavior with all stakeholders

Looking out over the next 2-3 years what do you think is the MOST SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OR CHANGE the organization will need to make?

- 59 comments were offered
- The responses communicated some substantive perceptions, experiences and opinions that are important from the perspective of creating and sustaining a strong organizational culture of trust and engagement:
 - The need to transition Board composition and focus from that of a founding body to a sustaining best practices group working on vision, strategy, fund raising and growth of the school while allowing and trusting the administration and staff to manage the day to day operations effectively and responsibly
 - Creating an environment of collaboration, communication, transparency and trust among and between stakeholders, particularly Board, Administration, parents and faculty
 - A more inclusive relationship between the administration and staff
 - Need a cohesive and communicated plan for the management of growth
 - Stronger planning and preparation for the expansion of facilities, upgrades and, in particular sports programs essential to retaining middle and high school students.

If you were "recruiting" a donor for the organization please describe what you would say to that prospective donor to secure their support.

- 62 comments were offered
- The overwhelming theme was academic excellence in an environment of nurturing, learning, growth and respect for cultural diversity
- Other themes related to the uniqueness of OCS as an educational institution creating value through the blend of Greek language, math and science that prepares students for today's world and that of the future
- Strong sense of community

If you were providing feedback to the Board of Directors what is the most important feedback you would give them?

- 59 comments were offered
- Since perceptions and experiences are reality for each of us, the themes reflected in the responses give insight into how stakeholders perceive the work and interactions within the Board and in its interactions with other groups:
 - Work on transparency with parents including clarity and alignment regarding what you are trying to do as a Board
 - Resolve the differences between the Board and administration and do so in a way that demonstrates a spirit of trust, collaboration and transparency
 - As a Board, commit to learning about educational trends and models as well as board best practices
 - Trust the Administration to run the day to day operations in order for you to focus more on vision, strategy and fund raising
 - Continue to show strong commitment to the Greek heritage and mission of OCS

If you were providing feedback to the School Administrative team what is the most important feedback you would give them?

- 63 comments were offered
- The themes in response to this question provide insight into both the high level of commitment to the quality of education provided and a need for improvement in parts of the organizational culture:
 - Continue the great work in the quality of education and emphasis on the core values and mission of the school
 - Create a truly supportive, trusting and developmental culture for faculty and staff
 - Enhance parental involvement, in-put and communications

- Create a balance of testing for the purposes of academic statistics and the family environment with a strong supportive educational feel
- Find ways to balance the benefits recruiting experienced faculty with responsible management of costs

If you have any concerns about this organization, what is the ONE that is the most significant from your perspective?

- 58 comments were offered
- The responses in this section repeated some of the themes in the questions related to key changes and feedback to both the Board and Administration. In addition, new themes evolved:
 - Need to improve the planning, organization and management of new initiatives and projects
 - Fiscal responsibility and transparency
 - Sustained commit to the mission
 - Climate of fear
 - Adherence to Board By-laws as written and begin to elect new Board members
 - Re-think the need for an Executive Committee; it has become a barrier to trust and transparency

Other Comments or Recommendations

- 40 comments were offered
- This section provided participants with an opportunity to offer comments that were not captured by earlier questions. Several themes evolved, some consistent with other responses and some new:
 - AHEPA Board members have been invaluable in creating a strong mission based foundation; moving forward their greatest contribution will be make room for new members while continuing to be active advocates and spokespersons for fund raising and educating the community on the values of Greek education; the board needs new people and new thinking
 - New by-laws need to ensure proper checks and balances in decision making
 - Teacher retention
 - Improved communications with parents
 - Will the Greek emphasis continue to be a sufficient factor in attracting and retaining new students?

This report is respectfully submitted by the Facilitation Team to the Odyssey Charter School Board of Directors with our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to involve stakeholders and, most importantly, serve the students.

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