



**Academic & Finance Committee Meeting  
Thursday, February 23, 2017 – 4:00 P.M.  
3200 Education, Office # 3200, Irvine CA 92697**

Bill Healey and Nicole Washington conducted a joint meeting of the Samueli Academy Finance and Academic Committees on Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 4:00 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present**

Bill Healey  
Sandi Jackson  
Jeff Bloom  
Richard Arum  
Nicole Washington  
Kevin Tiber

**Absent**

Gerardo Mouet  
Patsy Janda

**Staff / Contractor**

John Luker  
Anthony Saba  
Chris Simonsen  
Larry Tamayo

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1. Public Comment

Nicole Washington opened the floor for public comment and no public comment was made.

2. Review Key Highlights from the Last Joint Meeting

Nicole Washington informed new Committee members that the Academic and Finance Committees meet annually, to discuss teacher retention and salary adjustments.

Nicole referred to the meeting minutes from the joint Academic and Finance Committee meeting held on March 24, 2016 and reviewed the following key initiatives from that meeting:

- Increases to teacher salaries were forecasted at 3%.
  - In fiscal year 2015-16, Samueli Academy salaries were above average for California charter schools, but 6% below Santa Ana Unified School District.
- Employer contribution for STRS was estimated to increase to a maximum of 23%.
- Increasing student enrollment and potentially adding an Independent Study Program.
  - It was determined that increasing student enrollment was not in the best interest of Samueli Academy. The potential for an Independent Study Program will be further discussed in today's meeting.

3. Review & Discuss Samueli Academy 5 Year Budget

John Luker presented to committee members a copy of the Samueli Academy Draft Five Year Budget, which assumes an enrollment of 500 students, Average Daily Attendance (ADA), Free and Reduced Price Lunches and English as a Second Language (ESL) students. The budget forecasts Samueli Academy being profitable for five years with a 3% increase to all staff salaries. Additionally, John presented two additional draft budgets, which include salary increases from 3% to a full 4% or 5%. John stated that with the increases to salaries, Samueli Academy's net income would be negative in fiscal year 2019-20 and 2020-21, due to salary increases and STRS (Retirement, Disability and Survivor benefits for full and part-time California public school educators) increases.

A question was raised of what the assumption was for the Local Control Funding formula and why it has decreased. John Luker explained that there is a target to reach and as the target is reached the funding will reach a plateau. Additionally, Larry Tamayo called attention to the State of California budget and stated that Governor Brown has proposed a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) only increase, which will reduce Local Control Funding.

Sandi Jackson stated that the Finance Committee has discussed including reserves, which are not included in the Five Year Budget. Larry Tamayo stated that a 3% reserve is recommended and Samueli Academy is independent LEA and does not have a reserve cap.

Chris Simonsen presented to Committee members a compensation study, which has been prepared by consultant, William Lee. Chris stated that the report includes information from fifteen unified school districts within Orange County. John Luker reviewed the study which compares Samueli Academy teacher salaries, to the fifteen composite unified public schools districts. As a result, it was identified that Samueli Academy salaries are on average 6% below the County of Orange market average. Additionally, Mr. Saba stated that Samueli Academy has more working days than sounding high schools and does not offer family medical benefits.

Anthony Saba presented to Committee members a draft teacher salary schedule and explained that the schedule outlines what teachers will make in future years based on their education level. Anthony requested that an annual percentage average be provided for salary increases, such as displayed on the draft salary schedule. Chris Simonsen stated that he would prefer to create a compensation strategy based on the compensation study which is being done.

The committees discussed different options to benchmark Samueli Academy salaries with Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) and/or other charter schools and concurred that the Academic and Finance committees would meet annually to discuss teacher retention and review each teacher's salary, to determine on a year to year basis if adjustments need to be made.

A motion was made Jeffrey Bloom, seconded by Kevin Tiber and carried to recommend to the full Board a 4% raise to all Samueli Academy teachers and staff salaries.

4. Review & Discuss Possibility of a Junior High Expansion

Committee members discussed and agreed to pursue the possible expansion of a junior high charter school.

5. Confirm Decision to forego possibility of an Independent Study Program

Nicole Washington stated that the Orange County Department of Education made a presentation on the subject of an Independent Study Program at the November 29, 2016 Board of Trustee meeting. The Committee members concurred that it was not in the best interest of Samueli Academy to pursue an Independent Study Program at Samueli Academy.

A motion was made by William Healey, seconded by Sandi Jackson and carried to recommend to the full Board to not proceed with an Independent Study Program and to pursue a junior high school expansion.

6. Other Business

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 P.M.**