**December Board Retreat Minutes**

December 11, 2024 9:00am – 12:30am

1. **Welcome and Opening**

Marsha Oliver, Board Chair

Marsha Oliver called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She thanked everyone for committing their time to the Retreat and introduced the Facilitator, Deirdre Conner Principal and Founder, Ripple Effects Storytelling and Insights.

 Members Present – Marsha Oliver, Meredith Chartrand-Frisch, Cynthia Nixon, Connie Hodges, Carson Tranquille and Lawrence Dennis

Members Absent – Kevin Gay

2. **Opening Exercise: Connecting Mission to Values**

Board members introduced themselves by sharing something about Kids Hope Alliance that made them proud, a memorable journey they’ve been on, experience they bring to their roles and why they agreed to serve as Board members. This information was used to connect them to each other and KHA.

3. **Setting the Stage: Looking Back, Looking Ahead**

Ms. Conner facilitated an activity where Board members were asked to capture something they learned about KHA, a top accomplishment and something they’re most curious about. The Board responded by indicating that KHA is good at responding to the needs of the community, they also learned about the size and scope of the budget and that there is no limit on continuous improvement.

Top accomplishments included incorporating student testimonials into Board meetings, the inclusion of bi-monthly workshops and staff innovation. Board members also expressed curiosity about determining the most pressing needs of providers, how to incorporate the voice of youth in decision making and utilizing performance measures to fund programs.

4. **Board Roles and Responsibilities Review (Ordinance & Bylaws)**

Ms. Conner shared that best practices for boards include reviewing roles and responsibilities and assessing themselves. Board members were then asked to share what it looks like when the Board is working really well. Responses included asking hard questions, sharing best practices, leveraging their expertise and meeting provider’s needs.

Ms. Conner then asked Board members to outline hard issues which they encounter and responses included evaluating programs to determine if they should continue, establishing a cadence for publishing the Essential Services Plan, staying updated on emerging needs like mental health and establishing a Standard Operating Procedure for how the Board should operate.

5. **Board Self-Assessment and Priority Setting: Review and Discuss Survey Results**

Ms. Conner reviewed the Survey results which Board members recently completed beginning with Collective Performance. In this category, Board members indicated that areas of improvement include incorporating youth voice in decision making, using metrics to evaluate program effectiveness and the implementation of the Essential Services Plan. Strengths in this category include establishing and enforcing policies to meet the needs of children, financial oversight/resource allocation and overall board effectiveness in advancing KHA’s mission.

The survey also revealed 2025 priorities which are data feedback and measurement, professional learning on KHA internal processes, partnership development with providers, enhancing governance practices and Board-Staff partnership.

6. **Themes Review and Prioritization**

Survey results determined six key themes. After some discussion, the Board consolidated these themes into four (4) key categories for 2025 which include:

1. Data-driven decision making and program evaluation (Most Urgent, Level 5)
2. Better engagement and understanding of the needs of children, providers and the community (Most Urgent, Level 5)
3. Determining strategic direction based on governance process improvements (Urgent, Level 4)
4. CEO evaluation and oversight (Less Urgent, Level 3)

Ms. Conner then mentioned that this work typically begins in Committees such as Governance and Finance. To establish priorities for committees, Board members were asked to identify how “might we” action items. Responses included how might we perform a Gap Analysis, establish provider task forces, obtain best practices for CEO Evaluations and become more knowledgeable about Board ethics and Sunshine Laws.

7. **CEO Evaluation Process**

Previously, the Board expressed a desire to refresh the CEO Evaluation Process. After discussing this topic, it was determined that the CEO’s evaluation process should include feedback from Staff, Board members, and providers as well as an evaluation based on Essential Services Plan outcomes. It was also discussed that Dr. Grass should complete an analysis and present it to the Board.

8. **Next Steps and Commitments**

Ms. Conner agreed to produce a report based on the Retreat which will include how the Board can develop a calendar to address 2025 priorities and align the budget season with these priorities.

9. **Closing Reflections**

During the closing reflection, each person was asked to share what they appreciated most about the person to their right.