



Accola Programs & Opportunities Committee
Monday, April 13, 2026; 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

Attendees: Anita Duckor, CSJ-C; Karen Gervais; Steve Kenney; Colleen O'Malley, CSJ; Adele O'Sullivan, CSJ; Anne Weyandt; Sandy Vargas

Staff: Andrée Aronson; Haven Green; Matt Halley

Excused Absence: Comfort Dondo

The Accola Programs and Opportunities Committee convened online at 2:33 p.m.

DEI Statement: Anne read the DEI statement.

Spiritual Centering: Anne led the committee in spiritual centering.

Minutes: The February minutes were presented for approval. Hearing no changes or corrections, Colleen moved and Karen seconded to approve the minutes. All present members voted in favor.

Update – Soul Conference

Haven provided the committee with an update on the Soul Conference, scheduled for June 27-28 at the Wilder Center in St. Paul. The conference theme is "Stronger Together: Community and Resilience in a Changing Climate," and will have an ecological focus as a unifying topic across different traditions. Haven reviewed plans to attract a diverse audience, and who will be speaking at this event. It was confirmed that Kaitlin Curtice will be the keynote speaker. Haven reviewed current challenges, particularly with having an event in the summer and with obtaining sponsorships. The committee discussed potential format changes due to a recent staff departure. Budget and revenue sources were reviewed. Haven encouraged committee members to leverage its networks, fill seats, and help provide operational support the day of the conference. The committee discussed how to have a strategic inter-relational conversation between conference topics.

Follow-Up: Board Retreat

The committee discussed feedback regarding the Board Retreat in February. Some of this feedback involves building a more inclusive Board/staff, particularly through partnerships. The committee discussed the need to identify gaps in community needs that larger organizations are not addressing. The committee reviewed Accola's capacity to address potential gaps, as well as the importance of building upon existing programs. It was suggested that potential Board and committee members be recruited based partly on lived experience to better validate and understand community needs. Matt will email the committee research compiled from the Wilder Foundation that highlights community needs throughout the Twin Cities.

The committee discussed organizational challenges and future direction following the retreat. Matt highlighted a lack of clarity around Accola's mission and vision. This topic will be addressed at the April Board meeting.

Adjournment: The committee adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lacy Sietsema, Accola