

**MEETING MINUTES
OF
CATALYST ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL
May 4, 2021**

Held Both in Person at Catalyst Academy Charter School and Virtually Via Zoom

Trustee Attendees: Rachel Amankulor, Carey Harris, Erin Stiling, George Childs, Tom Walenchok, Allison McCarthy

Absent: Carl Cooper

Other Attendees: Brian Smith, Darren Gray, Jean Novak (Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky)

Rachel Amankulor called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Public Comment--None

Approval of Minutes of April 6, 2021 regular meeting. *George Childs moved to approve the minutes for April 6, 2021. Tom Walenchok seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Financial Update. Brian Smith reviewed the financial picture and position. “Days of cash” is now 61, due to the PPP loan of \$128,537. Money from the PPP loan will impact this year’s cash position and next year’s net income, when the PPP loan is expected to be forgiven. The Maplewood loan (according to PNC) is expected to close before June 30. There were no significant changes from last month’s expenses and revenues. (A complete explanation of the financial situation was included in the Board slides, which were part of the Board packet.)

Payment of Bills. Brian reviewed the bill list that was included in the Board packet. He also reviewed some of the specific expenses for the month. For example, Ace Lock rekeyed doors for safety. Rekeying will allow classrooms to be locked from the inside. Indeed was used for recruiting. Witt Pest Control is usually monthly, but it responded (in addition to its regular visit) to wasp situation. *Tom Walenchok moved to approve payments of the bills. The motion was seconded by Erin Stiling, and it carried unanimously.*

Policy Adoptions Four new policies (listed below and included in the Board packet) were introduced by Brian, who noted that they had been reviewed by legal counsel. There was a discussion regarding responsibilities of the leadership team and staff in enforcing and monitoring situations addressed by the policies.

1. English Language Learners policy
2. Prohibition of Tobacco Policy
3. Student Assistance Program Policy
4. Suicide Prevention Policy

George Childs moved to approve the four policies. Alison McCarthy seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

IRS 990 Filing. Brian explained that the IRS Form 990 had been updated. Therefore, it was slightly different from version distributed in Board packet. (The updated version is available in Board folder.) He would like to file it before the May 15 deadline. Any questions or concerns should be brought to Brian's attention by May 10.

Budget Development Update. Brian discussed the budget, which must be adopted before end of the fiscal year. The finance committee met last week. The school was conservative with enrollment projections. It is estimating 164 total students, but it will have better idea next month. Special education needs were assumed continue at the same level. The budget includes a flat tuition rate, again being conservative. This estimate was based on PPS, the source of the majority of students. The \$330,000 PPP loan will be allocated over two years.

Expenses were discussed. There will likely be 10.5 new FTEs. Brian explained the expected allocation of the new FTE hires (i.e., types of employees to be hired). Food service is being redefined. Regarding raises, there will be a 6% average increase in compensation. Lower salaried employees will be getting higher increases. UPMC health insurance costs will be increasing approximately 11%. (The school's broker was seeing average 15% increases in premiums.)

The budget is being further refined. On May 17, another draft will be provided to the Board. The Finance Committee will be meeting on May 19. All Board members are encouraged to attend the Finance Committee meeting. Following that meeting, the budget will be further refined. On May 26, a final budget will be ready for presentation and adoption by the Board at the June 1 meeting.

Attendance Update. Brian presented an attendance update. He discussed tracking of chronic absenteeism, i.e., students who are absent for 10% or more of days. Absenteeism is higher on Fridays. Additionally, in-person students have a better attendance rate than distance learners. There is work to be done with school community, not only regarding attendance but, e.g., getting scholars to school on time. The new school year is opportunity to "reset" and address attendance challenges.

Enrollment Update. Brian stated that there are six additional offers out. The last open house was a success. The next open house will be May 22. Outreach is being conducted in places where parents are likely to congregate.

Human Resources Update. Brian provided the recruiting update for the Operations side. One challenge is finding a school nurse. Darren updated the Board on the Academics/Instruction side. Two teachers have been hired. There are several people "in the pipeline."

Other. Brian shared pictures and updates about recent activities and about year-end activities, including a field trip to the Zoo, Catalyst carnival, and graduation for kindergarten and first grade (which did not get a graduation last year).

Upon motion, the Board moved to begin executive session.

There being no further business, the regular meeting was adjourned at 6:51 P.M.