

**MEETING MINUTES  
OF  
CATALYST ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL  
November 7, 2023**

**Held in Person at Catalyst Academy Charter School and virtually Via Zoom**

Trustee Attendees: Rachel Amankulor, Carey Harris, Allison McCarthy, Erin Stiling

Other Attendees: Brian Smith, Meghan Lawrence, Sarah Combi, Alan Shuckrow

Allison McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

**Public Comment:** None

**Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the October 3, 2023, meeting were reviewed. There were no changes. *Allison McCarthy moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

**Financial Update.** Brian Smith provided a review of the financials as of September 30 to the Board. The cash position in September is lower than other times of the year because the home districts do not typically pay over the Summer or until October, including PPS. In fact, the cash position has been restored because PPS and other districts did make their payments in October. The fund balance at the end of the fiscal year was just over \$1.7M (unaudited).

**Payment of Bills.** Brian Smith reviewed the expenses and vendor payments for September 2023. There is nothing out of the ordinary. *Carey Harris moved to approve the payment of bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Allison McCarthy and carried unanimously.*

**Anti-Bullying Policy.** Mr. Smith reviewed the revised anti-bullying policy which, according to State law, should be reviewed and updated every three years. The policy has been reviewed by counsel. The updates are minor in nature. *Allison McCarthy moved to approve the revised Anti-Bullying policy. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

**Suspected Financial Misconduct and Dishonesty Policy.** Mr. Smith reviewed this policy. It is being requested due to Federal grant requirements. The policy has been reviewed by counsel. *Allison McCarthy moved to approve the policy. The motion was seconded by Erin Stiling and carried unanimously.*

**Human Resources Report.** Mr. Smith presented the Human Resources Report. A highlight was the recent hiring of Ms. Jessica Smith as an inclusive learning teacher. *Allison McCarthy moved to approve the Human Resources Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

**Inclusive Learning Update.** Mr. Smith introduced Sarah Combi, Assistant Director of Inclusive Learning, who provided an update. Ms. Combi is completing her administrative certification. She reported on the identity of the team members focusing on special education and inclusive learning

at Catalyst. There are currently 43 scholars with IEP's and three more are going through the identification process.

**PPS Review Findings.** Catalyst recently received from PPS its findings from 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. The Board reviewed the findings. Mr. Smith and the Board discussed them and agreed that Mr. Smith draft a response to PPS with the assistance of legal counsel. The findings were relatively general in nature; and were either correctable or based on incomplete information that Catalyst can provide PPS in order to satisfy the comments.

**Attendance Update.** Mr. Smith presented the current attendance numbers both for average daily attendance and chronically absent. Average daily attendance is up this year but the percentage of chronically absent is still higher than Catalyst would like (note--the goal for the school year is 33%). The board discussed a number of ways to communicate with families about the seriousness off attending school. Mr. Smith stated that the school has filed a number of truancy citations with the magistrate. This will continue to be an area of focus.

As a final note, Mr. Smith shared the joy of events in October including joy pop-up day, costume day and the sneaker ball.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 P.M.