

**MEETING MINUTES
OF
CATALYST ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

March 5, 2024

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

Trustee Attendees: Rachel Amankulor, Carey Harris, Erin Stiling, Majestic Lane, Allison McCarthy, Kaylan Moore

Other Attendees: Brian Smith, Kathy Clark, Meghan Lawrence

Rachel Amankulor called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

Board Governance: A notary public from the solicitor's office was present to give the oath of office to the newest board member Kaylan Moore. Ms. Moore was sworn into office. The Board Members took a moment to welcome Ms. Moore to the Board.

In addition, Board President Rachel Amankulor announced that Bob Jones submitted his resignation from the Board. *Majestic Lane moved to accept Bob Jones' resignation from the Board, with regret. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the February 6, 2024, meeting were reviewed. There were no changes. *Majestic Lane moved to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2024 meeting.. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

Monthly Financial Update. Brian Smith provided a review of the financials to the Board. Mr. Smith noted that as of January 31, 2024, Catalyst had \$1.4 M, including 98 days of cash on hand, Mr. Smith reminded the Board that the goal is to have greater than 90 days of cash on hand. According to Mr. Smith, the school operated with a \$338,324 surplus through the first seven (7) months of the fiscal year. The audited fund balance at the end of the 2023 fiscal year was \$1,713,427.

There was a brief discussion regarding enrollment, which is trending slower than the prior year. Mr. Smith noted that enrollment trends are closely monitored and tracked. The Board discussed potential reasons for slower enrollment, including the continued popularity of home schooling and cyber schooling, which have not decreased post-pandemic.

Payment of Bills. Brian Smith reviewed the expenses for January 2024. *Allison McCarthy moved to approve the payment of bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Majestic Lane and carried unanimously.*

Human Resources Report. Brian Smith provided the following updated resignations/terminations: Joniesha Gaines (Inclusive Learning Associate) and new hires: Courtney McHale (Inclusive Learning Associate); Carmen Snyder (Inclusive Learning Associate); Emma Modrak (Grade Level Support Teacher); Brittany Brown Lewis (part-time hourly Enrollment Canvasser) and Kenisha Travis (part-time hourly Enrollment Canvasser). The last two positions are two parents who have been hired on a part-time basis to assist with canvassing for enrollment. In addition, there were two additions through contracted services: Zerlina Gardner Ushery (School Counselor) through Maxim Staffing and Jamie Christian (Nurse) through Maxim Staffing. *Majestic Lane moved to approve the Human Resources Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

Policy Updates. Mr. Smith discussed with the Board updates that were required to current policies. The School will be undergoing a Title I audit and some of the updates are in advance of the audit. In addition, as was discussed at a prior meeting, the School underwent a special education audit from PDE and was advised of a required update to the Child Find Policy. Mr. Smith reviewed the updates to the policies which included the following: Wellness: the policy remains mostly the same except for a change to the non-sold competitive foods section which has been softened to allow for certain foods to be permitted in class parties, etc. Homeless: This policy was missing a reference to the McKenney-Vento Act; in addition, some school contact information needed updated. Health & Safety Plan: because the School is receiving ESSR funding, it needs to update the plan every 6 months. The School continues to follow the CDC recommendation which did just recently change – no longer require a 5-day isolation period. Child Find: as noted previously, the changes were the result of the PDE special education audit. *Majestic Lane moved to approve the Updated Wellness Policy, Homeless Policy, Health & Safety Plan and Child Find Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

Academic and General Update. Mr. Smith provided an update on the attendance data ,which shows continued year over year improvement. The average daily attendance in February was 89% and chronic absenteeism was at 40% (as compared to 67% this time last year). The goal for the 2023-2024 school year is to have only one out of three scholars (33%) chronically absent.

Meghan Lawrence provided a general update of activities happening in the School. Grades 3 and 4 are participating in basketball afterschool and will have running and participate in the Pittsburgh Kids Marathon; there are mid-year field trips to the Carnegie Science Center and PNC Park; Catalyst held its annual staff soiree; there was a launch of an iXL weekly individual and class competition; as part of a bus behavioral initiative, kids can earn “Catalyst cash” to purchase items; and there is a PSSA preparation action plan in place. Looking ahead, Ms. Lawrence discussed the use of staff badges to access the building, and an upcoming Title I audit.

The Board was very appreciative of all the work taking place at the School.

Executive Session

At 6:43, the Board entered executive session to discuss a personnel matter. The Board exited executive session at 7:02 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 P.M.