

**MEETING MINUTES
OF
CATALYST ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

April 2, 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, Tom Walenchok

Other Attendees: Brian Smith, Kathy Clark, Meghan Lawrence

Rachel Amankulor called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the March 5, 2024, meeting were reviewed. There were no changes. *Carey Harris moved to approve the minutes from the March 5, 2024 meeting.. The motion was seconded by Allison McCarthy and carried unanimously.*

Monthly Financial Update. Brian Smith provided a review of the financials to the Board. Mr. Smith noted that as of February 29, 2024, Catalyst had \$1.44 M, including 101 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 \$482,659 surplus through the first seven (8) months of the fiscal year. The fund balance is predicted to be over \$2 M by the end of the 2024 fiscal year.

Payment of Bills. Brian Smith reviewed the expenses for February 2024. *Kaylan Moore moved to approve the payment of bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Carey Harris and carried unanimously.*

Human Resources Report. Brian Smith provided the following updated resignations/terminations: Erin Rogers (3rd grade teacher) and no new hires.

Policy Updates. Mr. Smith discussed with the Board updates that were required to current policies. The School has updated the Cash Management policy, the Allowability of Costs policy for Grant Funds, and the Procurement Policy using Federal Funds. The Board reviewed the various updates to the policies.

Majestic Lane moved to approve the Cash Management Policy, the Allowability of Costs Policy for Grant Funds, and the Procurement Policy using Federal Funds as presented. The motion was seconded by Kaylan Moore and carried unanimously.

Academic and General Update. Mr. Smith provided an update on the attendance data ,which showed a slight dip in March attendance. The average daily attendance in March was 87% and chronic absenteeism was at 40% (as compared to 65% this time last year). The goal for the 2023-2024 school year is to have only one out of three scholars (33%) chronically absent.

The Board entered into a discussion regarding how attendance at Catalyst is versus attendance at other similar schools, and what factors drive changes in attendance.

Mr. Smith also provided a general update regarding enrollment. He noted that the enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year is still trending low. The school has introduced a parent referral incentive in an effort to assist with increasing enrollment. Mr. Smith indicated that the kindergarten enrollment is currently at around 25 students. In addition, the school is working with parent canvassers and a social media video campaign.

Mr. Smith also provided a general operations update, noting that EdOps is ending data support in June. In addition, the Federal Programs audit is nearing completion, and the school is in the process of revising its emergency operations plan and staff training as related to Pennsylvania Act 55. Regarding recruiting, Mr. Smith indicated that recruiting is underway for both staff and a principal for the 24-25 school year.

Meghan Lawrence provided a general update of academic and instructional activities happening in the School. Ms. Lawrence told the Board that the School is trying to “make every minute count,” and administration saw that when students arrive at school from 7:45-8:15, the students spend a lot of time eating, and are missing out on learning time. An effort is underway to provide morning work, and the baseline of classes that had a morning work routine was 6 out of 15 classes and currently there are 15 out of 15 classes with a morning work routine. Presently. More students are getting straight to work. In addition, regarding “tight routines,” which mean the transitions between work, the baseline was 2.5 and is now 2.9.

Ms. Lawrence also discussed March STEP data and noted that the green and blue colors indicate students are on grade level or above, and in March that percentage is at 23% as compared with last year at 11%. In addition, a review of behavior data for March showed a decrease in level 2s and level 3s, with an increase in level 1s. These celebrations were shared with staff during a recent professional development day.

PSSA preparations also continue; there was a recent staff training and development about PSSAs and PSSA lessons continue in ELA, Math and Science. The schools continues to track data regarding PSSAs. Students practice with previously released PSSA questions, and the Board reviewed the results of Math and Cold Read data progress, as well as extended response, and teachers and some of their growth.

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 P.M.