

**MEETING MINUTES OF  
CATALYST ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**March 3, 2026**

**Held at Catalyst Academy Charter School and Virtually Via Zoom**

**Trustee Attendees:** Allison McCarthy, Kaylan Moore, Carey Harris, Erin Stiling, Majestic Lane, Angela Segers

**Other Attendees:** Brian Smith, Meryl Johnson, David Mongillo, Vivi Besteman

Majestic Lane called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**Public Comment.** None.

**Approval of Minutes.** The February 3, 2026 minutes were reviewed. There were no changes.

*Carey Harris moved to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Erin Stiling and carried unanimously.*

**Enrollment and Financial Update.** Brian Smith presented the enrollment and financial update. Mr. Smith noted that current enrollment is 335 students (as compared to the budgeted assumption of 355 students). Cash as of January 31, 2025 was at \$1.1M which represents 45 days cash on hand. The School seeks to achieve greater than 90 days cash on hand. Mr. Smith commented that overall, the financial position is stable.

Mr. Smith shared an update regarding the solicitation for financing issued by First Tryon Advisors on behalf of the School in connection with upcoming expansion efforts. Mr. Smith reported that as of the date of the meeting, the solicitation had reached 40 potential partners. Of those, 29 are reviewing the solicitation and 13 have declined to propose, namely due to lack of market coverage in Pittsburgh. Proposals are due March 12.

**Payment of Bills.** Brian Smith reviewed the expense report with the Board. Mr. Smith reported that the expenses were ordinary and routine, and highlighted a few significant payments including costs related to rent, food services, and professional development/leadership coaching.

*Majestic Lane made a motion to approve the expense report. Kaylan Moore seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.*

**Contract Review.** Brian Smith reviewed several property/site planning contracts with the Board, including agreements with each of Wayne Cobb (Cobb Counsel) and Ted Melnyk (ELDI) for legal and consulting services, respectively, related to a potential acquisition through the property conservatorship process. The Board inquired about total estimated costs for the property conservatorship project and Mr. Smith indicated that he would circulate those estimates following the meeting. In addition, Mr. Smith reviewed a master plan proposal with Ethos Collaborative for

site planning services in connection with development of the elementary school playground as well as future development of the new middle school. Mr. Smith noted that the School's legal counsel is in the process of reviewing the Ethos Collaborative agreement.

*Carey Harris made a motion to approve the property/site planning contracts with each of Wayne Cobb, Ted Melnyk and Ethos Collaborative, subject to final legal review of the Ethos Collaborative agreement. Majestic Lane seconded the motion and it carried unanimously*

**Human Resources Update.** Brian Smith provided the human resources update. There were two terminations to report, including a Sixth Grade Math/Science Teacher and a Part-Time Employee (Parent Outreach). Mr. Smith shared that there was one new hire, an Inclusive Learning Associate. Mr. Smith highlighted a staff opening for a Sixth Grade Math/Science Teacher. There were no role changes or transitions to report.

*Majestic Lane made a motion to approve the human resources report. Kaylan Moore seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.*

**Academic Updates.** Meryl Johnson shared academic and general updates. Ms. Johnson noted that attendance remains consistent with historical patterns but reported that there was an improvement in chronic absenteeism in February. The School remains committed to improving overall attendance for students.

Ms. Johnson shared that mid-year DIBELS (foundational reading skills) and NWEA/MAP (math and reading comprehension) assessments have concluded, and shared data with the Board regarding the results of those assessments. The data shows improvement both year-over-year and from beginning to mid-year scores, but Ms. Johnson commented that there is still room for students to grow in alignment with national figures.

Ms. Johnson noted that classroom-level data indicates that strong teaching practices have a significant impact on student outcomes, with certain classrooms showing notably higher results. The Board discussed exploring ways to celebrate teachers who are achieving strong student results. Ms. Johnson shared that currently, recognition efforts primarily include public acknowledgment, but that the School is continuing to explore strategies to improve staff motivation.

As for next steps following mid-year assessments, Ms. Johnson reported that there will be an upcoming staff meeting to share schoolwide trends and opportunities for growth, particularly through a focus on reading fluency and vocabulary building; developing a culture of achievement through shared responsibility; and growing a love of reading among students.

**General Updates.** Ms. Johnson discussed recent and upcoming events, noting that there were a number of celebrations and special events during February for Black History Month, including daily trivia; guest readers; Dress Like an Icon Day; and a Black History Month Quiz Bowl. In addition, Ms. Johnson noted the upcoming Hollywood Royalty event, which features dance parties for K-3 and Fourth through Sixth grade students.

**Conclusion.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.