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| **Polaris Charter Academy**  **Board Strategic Planning Retreat** |  | **Date:** | **Sunday, September 21st, 2014** |
| **Meeting Minutes** |  | **Time**: | **9:00am (at 2242 W. Harrison, 2nd Floor)** |
| Dial In: 712-432-0490  ID: 316557# |  | **Topic(s):** | **Strategic Plan of Polaris Charter Academy** |

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| **Board Attendees** | | | |  | **School Attendees** | | | |
| In Person | Via Phone | Not Present | **Board Members** |  | In Person | Via Phone | Not Present | **School Leaders & Guests** |
|  | ☐ | ☐ | Arun Bhatia |  |  | ☐ | ☐ | Michelle Navarre (ex-officio) |
| ☐ | ☐ |  | Micaeh Johnson |  |  | ☐ | ☐ | Carol Clavadetscher |
|  | ☐ | ☐ | Uday Khedkar |  |  | ☐ | ☐ | Roel Vivit |
|  | ☐ | ☐ | Kameron Matthews |  | ☐ | ☐ |  | Linda McEvoy |
|  | ☐ | ☐ | Joel Pomerenk |  |  | ☐ | ☐ | Carolyn Talaske |
| ☐ | ☐ |  | Travis Swoope |  | ☐ | ☐ |  | Lauren Wein (Fellow) |
|  | ☐ | ☐ | Sarah Walker |  | **Guests** | | | |
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**Board Topics**

*What Differentiates Polaris Today?*

The original mission of the school was written before students were in the building. Since then, the school has become characterized by aspects that are not currently reflected in the mission’s wording: Expeditionary Learning curriculum, the ideas of community and crew, the market served by the school.

Polaris is the only Expeditionary Learning school in Chicago at this time. It has a very strong school culture focused on the Points of Polaris that bring together exploration, critical thinking, active citizenship, compassion, and integrity. The school serves a very under-resourced neighborhood on Chicago’s west side.

* There is a strong environment of innovation and collaboration
* There is a unique teaching environment for teachers (strong involvement and impact on student lives and the model/mentor school opportunity
* There is a unique model for teaching students (hands-on) with strong elements of love and acceptance that address variations in students learning needs and human development

The mission should reflect not only the direction PCA is going towards but also include how we achieve it.

*The Future State of Polaris Charter Academy*

PCA will work to create a cohesive picture to describe to educators, parents, donors, legislators, and other guests.

Specific items to illustrate are:

* Students receiving a holistic education that builds their character as well as academic achievement
* The Executive Board is visible and effective in their roles to promote and govern Polaris
* Direction for growth as either a single site elementary school, multiple site elementary school, or high school
* Strong alumni participation after graduation through volunteerism, mentoring, and general visits

To fully understand this image, Polaris will further identify the vision of operations vs. academics: what the business side of the school looks like, what the ideal organization looks like, sustainability, and succession planning.

*Next Steps*

* A detailed, in-person meeting on board recruitment
  + Members to brainstorm 3 or more names for prospective new members
* Drafting the 5 year vision for Polaris
  + Specific to each category (Academics, Culture, Business, etc.) and overall
  + Prioritization of categories and messaging surrounding each topic prepared

**IMPORTANT DATES**

Oct. 3-Oct 4 All Day Site Seminar at Polaris

Thursday, Oct 23 6:00PM Pints of Polaris Happy Hour

Tuesday, Oct. 28 6:30PM Board Meeting

Friday, Nov. 7th All Day School Conferences

Nov. 10-Nov 28 All Day School Fall Intersession