

**Polaris Charter Academy**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

Dial-in: 712-775-7031  
 PIN: 519622

<b>Date:</b>	Monday, February 10, 2020
<b>Time:</b>	6:30pm (at Polaris)
<b>Topic(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key State of the School Updates</li> <li>• 2020 Goals &amp; Objectives</li> <li>• Board Committee Reports</li> </ul>

ATTENDANCE CATEGORY	BOARD MEMBERS & FELLOWS	SCHOOL STAFF
Attending in Person	Tina Yarovsky Ian Roche	Michelle Navarre (**Board Ex Officio) Elizabeth Whiting
Attending by Phone	Mike Davison Melanie Domer	
Unable to Attend	Ben Brenton Sam Bottum Rebecca Shapiro	

EXPECTED GUESTS & VISITORS
None

Tina Yarovsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:43 PM.

***Open Session for Public Comment***

No one for public comment

***December Meeting Minutes***

Melanie will make one edit to the minutes re: board proposal to adjourn the meeting.

With this edit, Michelle Navarre moved to approve the December minutes; Ian Roche seconded. All approved

***Leo Latz (fundraising consultants) Engagement Update*** (Presenter: Elyse Cowles from Leo Latz)

- 1 month into the engagement, Leo Latz team has been focused on information gathering and on building the case for giving.
  - Working with Polaris staff, they have identified \$500K in expenses that the major gift case will be based on.
  - In addition, they've worked with Michelle to identify a wish list for the major gift program beyond the current budget. These additional opportunities are estimated to cost +\$500K.
- Board members will individually review case deck with Leo Latz team in 1:1 meetings beginning next week.
  - *Action: Leo Latz team will send draft case in advance (likely around February 15) for individual board members to review. Board members will be expected to have reviewed draft presentation prior to 1:1 meeting. They will also send background information re: top donors to charter education in Chicago.*
  - *Action: Elyse to follow up with S. Bottum to schedule a 1:1 meeting (note: all other BOD 1:1s are scheduled).*
- BOD group coaching / training session has been set for April 30, 6-9pm.

## State of the School (Michelle Navarre)

### **SQRP Rating**

- Polaris purchased licensing for the MAP reading fluency assessment (for K-4<sup>th</sup> grade) and the MAP skills assessment (for 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade). Will begin to deploy this week.
- Grade levels have begun daily, learning 'interventions' to improve reading proficiency.
- School is endeavoring to get parents more involved. Parent Teacher Team night has been scheduled for February 18 focused on setting goals and developing strategies to improve student literacy.
- Team has done data assessment to identify 'cusp' kids, i.e. those who are just a few points away from hitting attainment. Michelle's goal is to pay special attention to these kids so that they can meet attainment goals.
- *Action: Michelle Navarre to share most recent MAP testing data (Winter to Winter) with the BOD. The January data indicated an upswing with Math, but that we're plateauing in reading.*

### **Student Recruitment**

Enrollment has grown, but continues to be significantly below goal (383 vs. 450 goal).

- As families come to the school, other families leave the school. Recently, more families appear to be moving to Rockford.
- Community outreach happening with local preschools, churches,
- Targeted mailings going out in 7 zip codes around the school, with a focus on zip codes around Frazier Prep (a charter school that is likely to close at the end of this school year).
- Parents being offered incentives for recruiting new families.
- Polaris will be at the INCS Student Recruitment Fair on Saturday, February 22.

### **KPI Dashboard**

- *Action: Mochelle Navarre will email the BOD the latest KPI summary*

## 2020 Goals and Board Objectives

Based on our December conversation, we now have four Polaris Board Key Objectives:

1. **Growing the Board** - Build a pipeline of interested board candidates. Introduce them to board members, school personnel, and students. Invite them to the spring fundraiser. Determine if full board membership is a good fit. Our goal is to have 10-13 active board members by January 2021.
2. **Actively Participating in Fundraising Initiatives** - Work with the Leo Latz team when requested. Engage individual networks to support Polaris, including attending the winter fundraiser and the spring fundraiser.
3. **Formalizing Board Practices** - Circulate board packets at least four days prior to board meetings. Complete all necessary board training and paperwork.

4. **Fostering Professional Development of the Head of School** – Partner with Michelle Navarre to develop clear, actionable professional development goals. Ensure accountability. Provide constructive feedback for growth. Facilitate an annual performance review at the end of the school year.

### ***Michelle's Development Plan and Goals***

- Plan is being finalized and will then be shared with the broader BOD.
  - *Action: Tina will circulate latest version of action plan; will add as an agenda item to next BOD meeting.*

### **Board Committee Discussions**

#### ***Development***

- Fundraising actuals year to date: \$164K
- Major gift of \$90K received December 2019 from Perkins Hunter Malo Foundation
- Remaining major gift is still TBD (and normally is granted by end of December). Polaris leadership has reached out multiple times, with no response.
- Winter Friendraiser February 20, 5:30-7:30pm
  - *Action: flag any prospective candidates to other board members*
- Spring Benefit May 14 at Loft Lucia

#### ***Finance***

- *Action: Mike to send the written Finance committee update to the BOD via email*
- Mike has reviewed financials through December. Any differences to plan appear to be driven by timing, so not an issue.
- One question to flag: CPS has underpaid Polaris by ~\$25K, not clear as to why. Michelle has followed up repeatedly, with no clarification.
- We're still tracking to meet budget from the net income side
- *Action: Finance committee to work on scenarios for next year, given various enrollment scenarios.*

#### ***Governance - Board Pipeline***

- Goals: minimum 10 of 15 board seats filled by calendar year-end 2020
- Agreement that Legal, Finance, Fundraising expertise would be great additions to the board
- Agreement on the proposed process for identification and vetting of BOD candidates.
- *Action: Melanie and Rebecca to set up 1:1 meetings with each board member to identify and prioritize potential BOD and committee candidates. Melanie to follow up with Michelle to determine any senior staff that should be included in these 1:1 discussions.*
- *Action: Governance Committee to determine whether we will utilize a board application for prospective BOD members, as has been done in the past.*

- *Action: Melanie to develop a list of information / documents that would be helpful to new board members and share with the BOD.*

***Governance - Other***

No word from INCS on mandated board training

*Action: Michelle will follow up with Sam on 2 topics, where she needs information: FOIA and Open Meetings Act Training, Conflict of Interest Forms (need BOD start dates)*

At 8:40pm, Michelle Navarre moved to adjourn the meeting, Melanie Domer seconded. All approved.

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