

**Polaris Charter Academy
Board Meeting Minutes**

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

Date:	Monday, February 7th, 2022
Time:	6:30pm (Via Zoom to achieve social distancing)
Topic(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key State of the School Updates • Board Committee Reports

ATTENDANCE CATEGORY	BOARD MEMBERS & FELLOWS	SCHOOL STAFF
Attending Via Zoom	Ian Roche Tina Yarovsky Mike Davison Michelle Navarre Ben Brenton Lauren Levine Chris Haworth Sam Bottum Lacey Mizell	Elizabeth Whiting John Lydon Lissette Sanchez
Attending by Phone		
Unable to Attend		

EXPECTED GUESTS & VISITORS
Jake Myron Chirag Sanchetti

Tina Yarovksy, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.

Opening Business/Open Session

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the December 6th meeting were reviewed. Mike Davison moved to approve the minutes; Ben Brenton seconded; all approved.
Correction - \$111,000 in the minutes (Deficit)

Open Session for Public Comment

No one for public comment.

State of the School *(Michelle Navarre & John Lydon)*

- Black History Month is this month, Polaris is working to apply critical skills and critical thinking to bring stories to life of heroes they learn about.
- 309 students participated in a walk of images of Black Panther Party, it's about a boy fitting in and understanding revolution.
- Charter Renewal, Polaris was renewed for 5-years due to document timeliness and diverse learner data. Polaris was the only 5-year renewal awarded, no award higher than 5-years will be awarded, Polaris is the "Gold Standard".

- Document submission timeliness were key in this decision, 2021, Polaris is at 96% on time with submissions.
- Diverse learner, IEP on-time completion is challenging because of the Speech Pathologist shortage. Someone was available during 2020 but they were hired full-time at another school. Polaris requires a 3-day per week schedule. Mass exodus of students has affected the IEP count, Aspen system needs to be revised to account for the students with an IEP no longer in district.
- Speech Pathologist is primarily needed to hit the targets for future Charter Renewal.
- COVID update: Chicago positivity rate dropped from 4.1% to 3.8%, numbers are dropping. Neighborhood numbers were up to 35% positivity rate, now at 2.5%, no quarantines within groups.
- Mid-Year Academic Data:
 1. Star Math is for grades 1-8, student growth is largest concern, most concerning area is 1-st grade, most missed instruction during the pandemic. Benchmarks are pre-pandemic levels; they have not shifted to adjust for COVID.
 2. Star Early Literacy, Kindergarten is excelling, no deficit due to COVID. 1st grade still struggles with needing more support post-pandemic.
 3. Star Reading 3rd-8th grades, third grade is excelling in this assessment. In person has been a more accurate study of ratings. F.R.E.C.K.L.E. is being used to help pinpoint specific skills for students.
- Additional Updates:
 1. Compensation Adjustments for Educational Assistants, they are now being updated to a new rate while substitute teaching.
 2. Staffing updates, teacher has taken short-term disability leave, 6-week leave, a new person was hired as a short-term substitute to cover for this absence. Hoping for a long-term placement.
 3. 2022/2023 school year preparation to include special education build out, salary is a big topic in this conversation. Intent to return is a major part of the planning, full recruitment, and enrollment for next year is key, Lauren is working with staff to help recruit and retain.

Upcoming Events:

January 25-26: Paul Taylor (Banora Point Primary School, Australia)

February 9th: IDHP Vax Clinic Polaris

March 15th: Ron Berger (EL Education: Senior Advisor)

March 24th: Black History Month Virtual Celebration of Learning

March 29th-April 3rd: Deeper Learning Conference & Leadership Retreat

Finance Committee

-Net Income unfavorable to plan by \$148,000

- Revenue is \$288k below plan due to Budget based on 430 students. Gap to plan on full year basis is \$226,000.

- Perkins' grant received in January instead of December as anticipated

-CPS funding based on student count is down by \$80,000, school lunch program down by \$117,000

- \$43,000 positive variance in personnel costs, \$130,000 positive variance in food service costs

- Inflation and wages will be a conversation that need to be had going into 2023.
- ESSER is not included in financials, claims to be processed later in the year.
- Potential for another stimulus bill passed through Congress, could result in \$530 per pupil but these figures are still pending.
- Cash balances are strong but lower than the amount on hand at the same time last year.

Development Committee

- May 19th 15th year anniversary for the Polaris Board annual event with June 2nd as a back-up date.
- \$100,000 target for fundraising for this event, first in person in 2-years. Sponsorship is needed at \$30,000.
- Audience of 150 would be ideal in post-pandemic life, gift goal of \$70,000 plus raffle items.
- Major gifts \$215,000 target we are at \$140,000 currently, including the Perkins gift, \$50,000 additional expected from the Madigan Family.
- End of Year campaign was \$10,000 a total of \$18,000 was received, almost doubling the target.
- Grants: should know in April about the equipment assistance grant for kitchen items, hot food preparation. Back To School grant awarded 450 school supply kits to students.
- End of year giving was made up of 18 donors, in 2020 there were 30 donors, donor support for EOY has declined.

Governance Committee

- At April meeting, Fellows will share the work product that's been prepared.
- FOIA/OMA reminders will go out, both trainings are due by March 11th.
- Review of the bylaws is still in process.
- First official Board member onboarding took place, the deck is still a work in progress but remains the first training material available to new members.
- All Board members will be responsible for reading "governing for Greatness", to be discussed in future meetings.

Meeting was called to adjourn by Tina Yarovsky at 8:22 approved by Sam Bottum and a second by Ian Roche.