

**Polaris Charter Academy  
Board Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6:30pm (In-Person)</b>
<b>Topic(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key State of the School Updates</li> <li>• Board Committee Reports</li> </ul>

<b>ATTENDANCE CATEGORY</b>	<b>BOARD MEMBERS &amp; FELLOWS</b>	<b>SCHOOL STAFF</b>
Attending In Person	Tina Yarovsky Lacey Mizell Mike Davison Derik Ohanian Roel Vivit	Michelle Navarre (**Board Ex Officio) John Lydon Elizabeth Whiting Lissette Sanchez
Attending by Zoom	Ian Roche Mike Davison Sam Bottum	
Unable to Attend	Lauren Levine Chris Haworth Ben Brenton	

<b>EXPECTED GUESTS &amp; VISITORS</b>

Tina Yarovsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:42 PM.

**Opening Business/Open Session**

***Approval of Minutes***

Minutes from the April meeting were voted on, Derik Ohanian motioned to approve the minutes, Roel Vivit seconds, minutes approved.

***Open Session for Public Comment***

No one for public comment

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

Polaris Math Site Seminar – More than 50 education leaders from across the country come for two days to learn. Feedback on this event was extremely positive. New School Creation Fellows are a group that are about to open their own schools. It was their opinion that Polaris went above and beyond at this event, Polaris came highly recommended.

18 Unique Fieldwork Experiences were held at the Chicago Water reclamation center. 8<sup>th</sup> grade overnight was another event held, before the 8<sup>th</sup> graders graduate, they get to do an overnight trip. Many kids refer to this event in their final word. Graduation was on June 8<sup>th</sup> for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, they enjoyed Polaris traditions of walking Sawyer Avenue.

High school placements were the majority charter schools this year, many technical oriented, but by far this was the largest charter school placement for 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates.

Polaris Pride Day, a pride committee put together a school wide program, centered around allyship.

EL Education Implementation Review – Centered around 26 Power Practices, a score of 98 is considered exemplary, Polaris scored a 112 this year as opposed to last year where the score was a 98. The score is based on a rubric and is scored on evidentiary facts that show performance of each of the five topics.

EoY Star Reading Assessment Data:

Student Growth Percentile – Norm-referenced score of a student’s growth compared to academic peers nationwide; Goal is 50% increase; Polaris students grow faster than the national average.

The benchmark for EL education is 60%, Polaris is at 59%, overall Polaris has increased SGP by 5% and proficiency by 1%.

Compliance Data:

Document Timeliness – Polaris remains at a 99% on time!

Announcements:

Hiring – A few teachers are leaving Polaris, so there are currently openings in both Math and Social Studies. The number of applications of quality are limited, therefore, there may be gaps going into next year.

Feasibility study update:

Michelle Navarre met with Antonio Gonzalez on site to view the school and navigate the actual space of the school, the pros and cons, this study will begin in earnest on July 15<sup>th</sup>. This will be a three-month time frame; more information will follow as the study progresses.

### ***Finance Committee:***

Budget for 2024:

Month end cash balance including estimate to end of year. Fundraising is lighter than the original budget as well as projected student count. This has drawn the cash balance back, leaving a balance lower than the previous three years. Months of cash on hand are now at four months of expenses, previous years have been higher than what is available at this time.

More students and fundraising are the obvious, practical answers, the board will need to explore potential sources to increase these numbers.

Notable changes: SPED funding decreased by \$114k due to lower number of students with IEP’s, many of whom graduated in the class of 2023.

Two new paraprofessionals were added last year, they help students who need a 1:1 aid in order to attend a standard classroom. Funding is questionable for these positions, totaling roughly \$60k back into the budget, assuming this was not funded by CPS.

Cuts were made to stipends, reduced PD and EL spending, this means that there are fewer opportunities to receive additional training.

Direct Student Costs resulted in the following cuts: Removed all but two EA' s, Part time primary literacy coach and two members of the personalized learning team. Additionally, \$50,000 instructional materials and \$13,000 for overnight reduction and \$15000 reduction in Professional Fees.

Voting in the budget for 2024 will take place via phone call or Zoom the week of June 19<sup>th</sup> after the budget is finalized. The finance committee will meet prior to the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and a vote will take place before the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

***Governance Committee:***

2023 Charter Board Training: All current board members must complete 2 hours of ongoing education training in 2023. New board members must complete 4 hours of training within one year of joining the board.

By Law review has indicated that some small changes should be made, most operational in nature. Board term limits will be changed to allow terms to be a minimum of 3 years with no limits on how many consecutive terms may be served.

By Law Vote – Vote will take place during the Finance Committee vote on the week of June 19<sup>th</sup>.

***Development Committee:***

The fundraising goal was almost met, with a goal of \$370k, the actual fundraising total was \$279,824, short \$90,176 of actual.

The new event was spoken of highly, this was a major positive. The challenge is still getting new guests, attendance is still an issue.

There is an opportunity to create another event, the board will continue to discuss this topic as the year progresses.

***Key Dates Action Items:***

Action Item: Each Polaris board member is expected to bring at least one potential donor to the table by July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Feasibility study will also have an update in July after it begins and the first comments are issued.

Tina Yarovsky moved to bring the meeting to close at 8:32, Derik Ohanian and Roel Vivit motions to close the meeting, all approve.