

**Polaris Charter Academy  
Board Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday, August 21st, 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 Mike Davison Sam Bottum	Michelle Navarre (**Board Ex Officio) John Lydon
Attending by Zoom	Ian Roche Lacey Mizell Roel Vivit Derik Ohanian Chris Haworth	Elizabeth Whiting
Unable to Attend	Lauren Levine Ben Brenton Mike Davison	

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

Tina Yarovsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:39 PM.

**Opening Business/Open Session**

***Approval of Minutes***

Minutes from the June meeting were moved by Sam and seconded by Derik. Secondly, the July minutes were moved to be approved by Sam and seconded by Derik.

***Open Session for Public Comment***

No one for public comment

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

Celebrations and updates;

2023-2024 school year started strong. Staff completes data review from the end of year, along with Star Data and staff have used this to create a work plan for this school year. Faculty learning targets was a major part of development during professional development week. Performance benchmarks were a key focus. Individual learning will be implemented throughout the year and will help teachers allow for deeper instruction framework. Data points vary throughout the year and will be used to assess what focus points need to shift or grow based on the growth cycles.

Six learning targets are part of this training, with a goal of making it feel cohesive, using a one-page document.

Giving Crew Day is September 4<sup>th</sup>, supporting arts athletics and music.

Enrollment, 362 students is the current count. However, there are 409 students in the internal system. The numbers will have to sort themselves out while the first week of school begins, some children are continuing to enroll or walk in. Many first graders are in school for the first time, which can greatly change what their expected skill levels are walking in for the first time. Another phenomenon is that home schooled children are now coming to school for the first-time post-pandemic. Their skill levels in reading and math vary greatly so extra assistance has been required in getting them up to speed with their age/grade level.

Star Date Comparisons;

Reading SGP Proficiency;

Polaris goals – Goal is 60% SGP, overall Polaris is at 30%

Polaris Math SGP – Overall Polaris is at 52%

Overall, this data shows how far the school has come from the pandemic and with new teachers with new classes.

Polaris vs. achievement gap – 30% is the state and across then state the score is 19%, the district hits a 32% proficiency comparison. The difference is overall about 12% away from those of the African American counterpart. The goal is to close the gap in the numbers of proficiency levels amongst CPS or the district.

Compliance Data;

100% on time document timeliness

Announcements;

The Annual Audit is underway this week. The audit team is working closely with Michelle and Lisette because the books are very clean and used frequently for training.

Zoning update; Michelle has talked with a new business who is planning to open a marijuana based company close to Polaris. There is an opportunity to have the company lease rentable space from Polaris in order to satisfy the “community development” portion of their requirement. The lease is potentially going to be 20 years and would fund roughly 50 cents a square foot of rentable space.

Hiring;

Second grade teacher is needed, along with a learning specialist and director of advancement.

Feasibility study;

Antonio Gonzalez is a facility developer and has experience developing charter schools across the country. This is not a site-specific analysis; this is more of an option based and vision-based plan. Matching model and philosophy to help grow Polaris and envision next steps and achieve its growth goal.

1. Facility strategy; this relates to the program as far as how many rooms are needed, this study will also help determine if the school is poised for new construction or purchase of an existing building. The upfront needs and down the road needs will be looked at.
2. Assembly of a team that is local and representative of the community in which the work is taking place.
3. Stakeholder and community engagement is also a consideration, who gets involved and when?
4. Site selection dynamic includes what is around the school what do you want near the school like parks vs. what do you want to avoid.

#### Facility Visioning Session from 7/17/2023

- Creative spaces for collaboration
- Bright and well-lit rooms
- Community uses for the spaces/health facilities
- Space for grads to come and enjoy their legacy as alumni
- 

Spaces are broken up by administration, campus resources, support spaces, etc. and what is created is a determination of an approximation of square footage and then translate that into a total project cost.

The facility development process is broken down into different real estate options, with respect to finances and finding real estate. The process can range between 1-2 years, to more than 4 years, this also depends on the amount of planning and if zoning changes are potentially needing to be made. Aldermanic approval is also another consideration based on neighborhood placement.

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

Need to monitor cash position and head counts to maintain funding. Unfavorable funding of \$608k and revenue is below plans by \$405k. The Cares Act is in process, cash will not come for roughly 12 months, estimated credit is \$100k.

A money market account was opened to get a better rate on cash balances.

#### ***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. We will be purchasing training sessions for each member.

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 – By law changes were approved with a motion from Chris Haworth and a second from Derik Ohanian. By Laws approved.

***Development Committee:***

At the end of FY23, we received a major gift contribution from the Madigan Family Foundation, which increased our fundraising total to \$329,824 (closer to but still a bit short of \$370,000 goal).

***Key Dates Action Items:***

September 4<sup>th</sup> is giving day!!!

Proposed board meeting dates:

- October 16
- December 11 (board dinner)
- February 12
- April 15
- June 24 (budget review/approval meeting)
- August 26

Tina Yarovsky moved to bring the meeting to close at 8:30 PM, Lacey Mizell and Ian Roche motioned to close the meeting, all approved.