

**Polaris Charter Academy
Board Meeting Minutes**

Date:	Monday, October 16th, 2023
Time:	6:30pm (In-Person)
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 In Person	Tina Yarovsky	Michelle Navarre (**Board Ex Officio) John Lydon Lissette Sanchez Fran Peck K Brailey
Attending by Zoom	Ian Roche Lacey Mizell Roel Vivit Derik Ohanian Chris Haworth Mike Davison Ben Brenton Sam Bottom Mike Davison	Elizabeth Whiting
Unable to Attend	Lauren Levine	

EXPECTED GUESTS & VISITORS

Tina Yarovsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:33PM.

Opening Business/Open Session

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the August meeting, motion to approve by Derik Ohanian and a second from Chris Haworth.

Board Officer Vote

Motion to approve the proposed positions by Ben Brenton and Ian Roche, all approved, no one opposed.

Open Session for Public Comment

No one for public comment

State of the School (John Lydon)

School updates – John Lydon and Fran Peck are co-leading teaching with the case manager Elayne Smith.

Tammy Vance is handling the security, office and educational support, lunch and resource staff.

Lissette Sanchez oversees lunch, gourmet gorilla and the building engineer and maintenance of the building. Budgeting, financial operations compliance, HR services, payroll. Maintenance of copiers and printers, field trip budgets.

Elizabeth has been working in an advancement role along with board members, grant writing and program oversight. Elizabeth has also been a part of the social media planning and marketing material management.

John Lydon has been in the classroom, primarily taking care of compliance, EL education, hiring and on boarding staff, calendaring, coaching, external staff communication.

Teacher profile – New onsite school therapist, Alina Ahmed was onboarded. This is a free resource for all students.

K-2 focused learning specialist was onboarded, Drew Burnside.

Ciarra Logan was brought on as a 2nd grade crew leader.

Fieldwork is ongoing, with Com Ed, Lyric Opera, Studio Whip among other activities.

Light leaders – First light leader of the year was awarded! Homecoming also took place, at the school, students took place in activities to celebrate.

Teacher Profile was enacted to identify Crew, Planning, Instruction and Assessment scores as a self-rated score. This will help identify professional development positives and negatives.

Enrollment - 20th day count equates to 350 Students at Polaris. Fluctuation has been apparent, but the pipeline for new recruitment is key so that the numbers remain stable.

Compliance – Timeliness at 97% for documents. Attendance audit is used against Alma and Aspen, attendance must match in both systems. CPS wants matching numbers, Polaris is working on getting the two systems to connect, many students that transfer in or out are not being accounted for based on what records each system keeps.

Assessments; WIDA EL Screener; KIDS; HSAT. A paper trail was saved documenting the request for assessment materials from CPS. There have been many issues with the testing system and CPS is not able to rectify the vendor and the testing system issues.

Social Media litigation – INCS has reached out to Polaris about a large, class action litigation. 60 Illinois school districts have joined the litigation. No cost to Polaris receives 25% of the fee recovery if there is a monetary award. Authorizing resolution and attorney fee agreement need to be signed in order to begin representation. The board needs to come to a resolution prior to the 30th.

Finance Committee:

Net unfavorable by \$83k, as of September. The revenue is \$163k below plan, the increase in donations in fundraising were used to create a balanced budget. Some of this is based on timing due to ESSER Funds and CPS payments. Cash balances are reflecting back to 2019 levels, this year is a lower balance in comparison to past balances.

Employee retention credits CARES Act, calculations for this program have totaled roughly \$257K, but amendments need to be made and then the government needs to process and refund the funds. As of September, there has been a hold put on this program, specifically because of fraudulent activities.

Governance Committee:

Task list/engagement for Board needs to be completed, all board members are expected to commit to two tasks from the list sent by Tina.

INCS training due date in 12/31/2023. Board candidacy, review of pipeline is underway, several conversations have taken place and several candidates have been identified as potential candidates. We have next steps in place, board members are having conversations with these pipeline candidates to vet out who might be viable.

Development Committee:

Budget gap is concerning for development committee and are working with another group to learn more about their successful fundraising tactics. Materials were shared with Polaris Development committee with respect to how they have become successful with major gift donations, benefits and have given overall the benefit of information and materials. End of year giving, holiday card contest, board members should email to participate!

Key Dates Action Items:

December meeting on the 11th, in person dinner with the board.

INCS training December 31st due.

Tina Yarovsky moved to bring the meeting to close at 8: 28 PM, Sam Bottum and Ian Roche motioned to close the meeting, all approved.