

**Polaris Charter Academy
Board Meeting Minutes**

Date:	Monday, December 11th, 2023
Time:	5:30pm 620 N Sawyer Ave
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	Michelle Navarre John Lydon Lissette Sanchez Fran Peck Elizabeth Whiting Lacey Mizell Derik Ohanian Mike Davison Ayanna Berry Yaa Boakye	
Attending by Zoom	Ian Roche Paul Li	
Unable to Attend	Lauren Levine Roel Vivit Ben Brenton Sam Bottom Chris Haworth	

EXPECTED GUESTS & VISITORS

Tina Yarovsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:26 PM.

Opening Business/Open Session

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the August meeting approved, motion carried by Derik Ohanian and a second from Mike Davison. No objections.

Motion to approve special meeting minutes from November with corrections by Derik Ohanian and Mike Davison.

Board Candidate Vote

Ayanna Berry – Motion approved by Derik Ohanian and Mike Davison, no one opposed.

Stahili Muhammad – Motion approved by Derik Ohanian and Mike Davison, motion approved, no one opposed.

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)

Joseph, Aston and Miles were awarded Daniel Murphy scholarships. This makes 21 since Polaris opened.

Student led conferences were at an all time high for engagement with parents. Parents surveys reflected that parents overall felt engaged in their children's educations.

Site visit from EL education executive team was held at Polaris, this was their 2nd visit to an EL school. It was mentioned that Polaris was the only school that the board would be brought to of any EL school. A panel was held, beginning with Crew, followed by a student led tour. Student panels were put in place so that the Board could get a better understanding of how Polaris impacts students daily.

EL national conference was the largest of any other this year, student keynote speakers have been implemented and this has continued to impress and inform panels at these conferences, impacting schools throughout the country.

Students Advisory Council member Christopher Tate was allowed to present, he travelled from Chicago with his sister who flew from Texas to Chicago to chaperone him during the conference.

Final project from last year as submitted, the Water Quality Report. Water equity was studied throughout the city, North, South, West and Downtown to determine what water quality was in different areas. The open-source data of 2016-2021 in lead levels found that higher lead levels were on the West side. The examples were given to the water reclamation facility to help Chicago control and monitor the water quality.

School leaders from Argentina came to Polaris, professors from universities on a college level studied Polaris and their practices.

Enrollment statistics – 351 students as of December 2023.

Compliance remains at 99% on time for document timeliness.

Board Fellows Intro & Project Overview:

The communications project hub which is tied to conversations central to connecting additional donors and board members. Attracting donors and families is challenging without a long process of introducing Polaris and its value.

Program goals: create social media, print and communication resources that are compiled by board members and alumni. Make Polaris accessible to everyone with very careful and branded guidelines that are easily accessible to the community and easily recognizable.

Creating internships through Polaris is also a goal, where a pipeline for teachers and staff, board members and other key members of the school community could engage.

Finance Committee:

Net unfavorable to plan by \$314k. Revenue is \$354 below plan. \$95k of that is due to ESSR funds, mostly due to timing. \$119 negative variance in donations based on budget. \$146k of this is due to enrollment numbers.

Expenses are \$40k favorable to budget. Cash balances are showing lower student counts with \$3M on hand vs. \$3.4M as of last October. CARES act is approved and amended 941s is ongoing, with a lead time of approximately 12 months.

A money market account was established and is earning roughly 4% of the money in that account.

Governance Committee:

Please have all INCS training completed by 12/31/2023.

Development Committee:

Goal fundraising is \$365,000 with only \$22,565 in total donations, disparity of \$342,435.

The end of year appeal goal is \$20,000 and of that \$6,740 has been raised.

Major gift donors are being sought, from MG as longtime donors.

The Spring benefit, which is our largest fundraiser of the year, is slated for May 9th, 16th or 23rd.

Key Dates Action Items:

INCS training due December 31st.

Next board meeting is in February.

Tina Yarovsky moved to bring the meeting to close at 7:42 PM, motion carried by Derik Ohanian and second by Mike Davison, no opposed.