

Board Minutes

The New Academy Charter School

Minutes of the general meeting of the Board of Directors of The New Academy Charter School held on September 14, 2022.

- I. The meeting was called to order by Mr. William Nunn. Also present were Ms. Susan Creighton, Mr. Kenneth Curcio and Ms. Katie Micco. Mr. David Caliguiri and Representative Joseph Preston were excused.
- II. In accordance with applicable law, Notice of Publication of the meeting was advertised in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on January 27, 2022 and the meeting was conducted at the 900 Agnew Road facility.
- III. Comments were requested from the public but there were none.
- IV. Minutes from the meeting of June 8, 2022 were reviewed and approved unanimously.
- V. Financial Report

The Financial report was presented by Mr. Curcio. He indicated that the audit for the year ending June 30, 2022 was underway. He also indicated that enrollment had been lower than budgeted for the year ended 2022 which resulted in lower revenue and that this trend was continuing into the first quarter of the new fiscal year. He then stated that it was anticipated that enrollment would improve and that the school would have 100 students enrolled by April 2023. Mr. Curcio then reported that the cash position remains strong and that there were no borrowings. The report was then accepted.

- VI. Report of Executive Director

Ms. Kristen Harpster reported that there are currently 60 students enrolled in The New Academy Charter School from the following school districts:

Pittsburgh Public	38
Clairton	1
Duquesne	3
McKeesport	2
Northgate	1
Penn Hills	1
Shaler	2
Steel Valley	1
Sto Rox	1
West Mifflin	1
Wilkinsburg	3

Woodland Hills	5
West Allegheny	1

She also reported that there were currently 28 students with programs for exceptionalities, as follows:

Exceptionality	# of Students
Emotional Disturbance	6 Students
Emotional Disturbance and Specific Learning Disability	4 Students
Emotional Disturbance and Other Health Impairment	0 Students
Emotional Disturbance/Specific Learning Disability/Other Health Impairment	1 Students
Specific Learning Disability	5 Students
Specific Learning Disability and Other Health Impairment	1 Student
Intellectual Disability	1 Students
Intellectual Disability and Emotional Disturbance	1 Student
Other Health Impairment	6 Students
504 Plan	2 Students
Under Review	3 Students

Ms. Harpster also indicated that the New Academy CS (NACS) will continue to monitor the recommendations from PDE, CDC and the Governor of Pennsylvania. Recommendations will be implemented to the greatest extent possible. Enhanced cleaning, social distancing (per CDC guidelines), masking requirements and increased education on personal hygiene practices will continue to be implemented to keep our building open and operating safely.

Ms. Harpster then reviewed the following grants:

GRANT	AMOUNT	PURPOSE
Title I	\$45,405	Curriculum Enrichment

Title II Part A	\$3, 098	Professional Development
Title IV	\$10,000	Student Enrichment
School Improvement	\$85,950	Student & Staff Support
ESSER II	\$188,031	School & Safety
ESSER III	\$380,061	School & Safety
Ready to Learn	\$ 9,277	Professional Development/Incentives
ESSER Fund (ARP ESSER) 7% Set Asides Consolidat	\$29,560.00	Learning Loss due to Pandemic

Ms. Harpster then reported that the current School Improvement Facilitator is Holly Pope and that the 3 year Comprehensive School Improvement Plan to PDE has been submitted and we are awaiting its approval.

She indicated that the 3 year plan is a continuation of the 2021-2022 School Improvement Plan that consists of three major goals; Adult SEL with an impact on students, Assessment and Curriculum. The new plan picks up where the school left off with new and more rigorous goals, updated and scaffolded action plans and an expenditure plan for the 2022-2023 School Improvement Funds.

Ms. Harpster then went on to report on AIMSWeb, the benchmarking system in which all students are assessed 3 times a year in the areas of reading and math. This system identifies strengths and weaknesses for all of our students, and what we need to do in order to shore up our Tier 1 in our English/Language Arts and Math courses. She indicated that AIMSWeb is being used to build the RTI (Response to Intervention)/MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) systems by identifying which tier each student belongs based on their results. We are monitoring progress throughout the year to make sure students meet their rate of growth goals at each benchmark period.

Tier 1 – Students are performing at grade level or above

Tier 2 – Students are performing 2-3 grade levels below

Tier 3 – Students are performing significantly below grade level.

Ms. Harpster then indicated that based on this information students have been placed into their courses for the 2022-2023 school year, and their fall benchmark will be taking place during the month of September during their Math and English/Language Arts courses.

Ms. Harpster then reported that the student recruitment task force has been established and meets regularly to discuss initiatives to increase enrollment. Those initiatives include:

- 8/21/22 – Hosted an information table at the “Back to School Wellness Event” hosted by Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR)
- Brochures were updated and distributed to Probation, Magistrates and Current/Prospective Families
- New student referral link was activated on our website

Future initiatives will include:

- 10/10/22 – Open House
- Billboards in targeted neighborhoods

Ms. Harpster then reported on the following new school happenings:

Mental Health Groups – Two mental health groups will be occurring during school. Students will receive a 9-week curriculum focusing on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and/or Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). The groups will be led by two Mental Health Therapists and will be open to appropriate students.

Student Incentives – After surveying the students, we have updated the school store with some new items and apparel. Students will still earn and use their Live School points to ‘purchase’ these items.

Student Ambassadors – This is a new elective course selection for Senior students who have shown leadership qualities and academic success. These students will meet daily and embark on positive school-wide initiatives.

Check & Connect – The school has implemented a new level of intervention in our progressive discipline policy. At this level students will receive 1-to-1 counseling to include skill building and restorative tasks. In addition to interventions for negative behavior, we have implemented a positive reward system for the top students, shown through data, to have the least amount of behavior referrals.

VII. Legal

Mr. Norris reported that there were no new claims.

VIII. New Business

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14, 2022.

VIV. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.