



**Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2024**

Members Present:

Erin Albright
Kemba Hendrix
Schuyler Malachi
Terri Sallay
Laurie Anderson- Smith
Pamela Taylor
Jennifer Ubiera
Sterling Ward
Shamera Wilkins

Admin Present:

Tracy White, *Chief Executive Officer*
Monya Bundy, *Executive Operations Coordinator*
Kristin Yochum, *Executive Director of Operations*
Charlotte Spann, *Executive Director of Accountability and Organizational Improvement*
Pamela Merkersen, *Executive Director of Talent*
Rosee Ragin, *Executive Director of Student Support Services*

Opening

Ms. Hendrix called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the August 2024 meeting were reviewed. Ms. Ubiera motioned to approve the minutes, and Ms. Wilkins seconded. The motion approved unanimously.

CEO's Report

Overview of School Data and Accountability Metrics

Dr. White began with a detailed presentation of school data, starting with accountability metrics linked to the ASPIRE Framework, which replaced the PMF (Performance Management Framework). The key data points reviewed were:

- **PARCC Data** – The ASPIRE Framework focuses on metrics similar to the PARCC data, with comparisons made to SY22-23. Dr. White noted significant progress in high school outcomes, particularly in math and science, but highlighted a dip in middle school ELA scores.
- **School Year Goals (SY24-25)** – Quantitative goals were set, particularly around proficiency growth and attendance. The board was informed that student growth in MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) will be closely monitored, with goals of

reversing middle school ELA proficiency declines and improving high school AP exam success rates.

ELA Decline in Middle School

Ms. Spann provided further context on the unexpected decline in middle school ELA scores. She noted that staffing stability was not a major factor, as the team largely remained the same, except for the new fifth-grade teacher. She also pointed out that 50% of the fifth-grade cohort were English Learners (ELs), which contributed to the overall decline. A significant number of students did not meet their growth targets, despite making academic progress. Ms. Spann emphasized that the team is prioritizing more targeted support, with a focus on accelerating student growth, particularly in grades 5–8.

Accountability Metrics: Attendance and Re-enrollment

- **Middle School** – The attendance rate remained stable at 90.5%, but there was a slight increase in chronic absenteeism. The school is investing resources into addressing this issue, including hiring two new staff members specifically tasked with managing tardiness and absenteeism.
- **High School** – There was an improvement in the high school's attendance rate, with the chronic absenteeism rate showing a notable decrease. However, re-enrollment rates are still being finalized and are under validation by the ASPIRE framework.
- Ms. Spann highlighted the tardy hall initiative, explaining that it has already begun showing positive results by encouraging students to arrive on time. A new parental outreach process is in place for students with chronic tardiness, with meetings scheduled to develop individualized plans to improve attendance.

Accountability & Organizational Improvement

- **CHAMPS Leadership Framework** – This framework emphasizes courage, humanity, achievement, professionalism, and strategic planning in the school's leadership culture. The initiative is aimed at building a strong adult culture within the school, which, in turn, supports the students' success. She introduced the idea of an adult culture audit to monitor leadership effectiveness and its impact on student outcomes.
- **Learning Recovery** – The focus remains on ensuring that all students demonstrate growth, particularly in ELA and math. Spann discussed the importance of using adaptive platforms like i-Excel to supplement the curriculum and support students who are behind in core subjects.
- **Organizational Metric Review (OMR)** – A new system designed to improve data analysis and response. The OMR will ensure that data collected across the school is systematically analyzed to inform decision-making processes, improving organizational efficiency.
- **Middle School Performance** – Ms. Spann expanded on the earlier conversation about ELA proficiency declines, noting that teachers are being given additional coaching support.

Operations

- **Data Integration** – Efforts are underway to integrate school-day and extended-day programming to create a seamless data system that tracks student progress holistically. This will provide a comprehensive view of each student's academic and extracurricular involvement, attendance, and behavior.
- **Marketing and Enrollment** – The operations team has partnered with Link Strategic Partners to improve the school's external marketing and brand strategy. This will help drive recruitment and increase demand for seats. Ms. Yochum also discussed efforts to modernize the enrollment process through technology, allowing parents to submit documents online.

Student Support Services

- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)** – SEL continues to be integrated across the school. This year, SEL Thursdays have been introduced, where students participate in dedicated lessons on social-emotional skills led by deans and counselors. House and Crew sessions will also emphasize SEL, providing students with smaller, supportive settings to develop these critical life skills.
- **Special Education** – The department is pushing forward with a new initiative where all IEP students will begin leading portions of their own IEP meetings. This empowerment model allows students to take ownership of their educational goals and reflect on their progress.
- **Nonpublic Placements** – The number of students in nonpublic placements has decreased to seven, with close case management ensuring that these students receive the appropriate supports to succeed.

Talent and HR

- **Staff Wellness** – Ms. Merkerson highlighted new wellness initiatives, including vaccination clinics, mental health resources, and workshops to support the physical and mental well-being of staff. An expanded Employee Assistance Program (EAP) now provides staff with three therapy sessions, regardless of their enrollment in the school's health insurance plan.
- **Compensation and Benefits** – The department has successfully negotiated a 0% increase in benefits costs for the upcoming school year, despite the average 11% increase in the region. This helps ensure staff can access affordable healthcare while maintaining competitive salary packages.

Treasurer's Report

Dr. White concluded the meeting with a financial report for FY25, stating that the school is in a strong financial position:

- The school has 274 days of cash on hand, well above the charter board's requirement of 60 days.
- The Debt Service Coverage Ratio stands at 2.78, exceeding the required ratio of 1.15.
- The revenue forecast for FY25 is approximately \$27.3 million, with a variance of \$113K above projections due to federal grants and staffing adjustments.

Dr. White also noted that the board is considering new investment strategies to utilize surplus cash effectively. The Finance Committee will continue exploring these options in upcoming meetings.

Closing

The next board meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2024. There being no further business, Ms. Hendrix motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 pm.