

APPROVED



# Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School

## Minutes

### Board of Trustees Meeting

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#### **Date and Time**

Thursday March 25, 2021 at 6:00 PM

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Meeting will be held via remote participation See AMSA web site for information on accessing meeting

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#### **Trustees Present**

Benjamin Hammel (remote), Jessica Bowen (remote), Jill Schafer (remote), Kristin Carney (remote), Liz Saul (remote), Maura Webster (remote), Nicholas Poirier (remote), Raul Porras (remote), Roger Jarrett (remote), Sheila Kelly (remote), Sowmini Sampath (remote)

#### **Trustees Absent**

*None*

#### **Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened**

Benjamin Hammel

#### **Guests Present**

Ellen Linzey (remote), Liana McLaren (remote), Mike Nawrocki (remote), Padmaja Bandaru (remote), Sara Snow (remote)

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### **I. Opening Items**

#### **A. Call the Meeting to Order**

Roger Jarrett called a meeting of the board of trustees of Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School to order on Thursday Mar 25, 2021 at 6:04 PM.

Chair Roger Jarrett announced that the meeting was being recorded and is livestreaming on Facebook.

Sowmini Sampath was named timekeeper.

The Chair announced that the Board will go into executive session at the end of open session to discuss the purchase or lease of real property, since open discussion could have a detrimental effect on the process. The Board will not reconvene.

Ben Hammel will attend the meeting, but has been delayed.

**B. Record attendance and guests**

**C. Public Comment**

No public comment requested.

**II. Votes**

**A. Approve BOT meeting minutes Feb 25, 2021**

Raul Porras made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 02-25-21.

Sowmini Sampath seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Benjamin Hammel Absent  
Maura Webster Aye  
Kristin Carney Aye  
Jessica Bowen Aye  
Nicholas Poirier Aye  
Roger Jarrett Aye  
Sheila Kelly Aye  
Raul Porras Aye  
Jill Schafer Aye  
Sowmini Sampath Aye  
Liz Saul Aye

**B. Feb 27, 2021 Strategic Planning Meeting minutes approval**

Raul Porras made a motion to approve the minutes from Strategic Planning Meeting on 02-27-21.

Sowmini Sampath seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Jill Schafer Aye  
Maura Webster Aye  
Benjamin Hammel Absent  
Sowmini Sampath Aye  
Sheila Kelly Aye  
Nicholas Poirier Aye  
Roger Jarrett Aye  
Kristin Carney Aye  
Raul Porras Aye  
Jessica Bowen Aye  
Liz Saul Aye

**C. Approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar**

Raul Porras made a motion to approve the proposed 2021-2022 school calendar. Sheila Kelly seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Liz Saul	Aye
Jessica Bowen	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Absent

Benjamin Hammel arrived at 6:30 PM.

**III. Reports**

**A. Executive Director Report**

(See attached ED Report)

Highlights include:

Attrition report

Lottery and Waitlist data

ELL Program Review and DESE Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM) update

Return-to-school update

Razzle Dazzle

On March 9, the state announced that Massachusetts schools are required by law to return to 100% in-person learning, grades 6-8 by April 28th. All families had to be offered a choice to return or stay remote. The program was named "in-person with choice" and a survey was conducted. Based on the family survey, 63% of students will return to in-person learning. The highest percentage of students returning to school are in grades 6-9 and 12. The good news is that the extensive planning done by the administration last summer and over this winter break included plans for a hybrid or similar return to partial in-person model.

All safety protocols are in place. Masks will be required at all times, except during lunch. Each class room and cafeteria will have seating charts to provide information for contact tracing. Busing will be offered using updated DESE guidelines and the lunch program will be reactivated.

Anxiety is high among students and teachers but will improve with time. MCAS will happen but we are waiting for further guidance from the state. AP exam have been scheduled.

Razzle Dazzle included congratulations to 13 AMSA students who qualified for the annual American Invitational Mathematics Examination (AIME). This is the largest qualifying group in AMSA history, demonstrating a continued commitment to Excellence by our students, teachers, and parents even during this challenging year.

The Photosymphonizers made it to the ICHSA Northeast Quarterfinal 1.

## **B. Parent Representative Report**

Most of the concerns that have been shared with Maura Webster were addressed in the ED report.

Out of 20 emails she received from parents, 19 were in favor of going back to in-person learning. She also received questions and commentary about the communication shared by the board and the school. Trying to get communication out in a clear and timely fashion is a challenge due to current circumstances. The board is working to define and clarify its role. What do we do as a Board? What can the board do to assure parents that they are addressing their concerns? The board has made changes, but there is always room for improvement.

The general feeling is that Ellen Linzey and her team have been responsive and things are moving forward.

## **C. Faculty Representative Report**

Faculty Representative Jess Bowen said Ellen Linzey captured most of what the faculty is feeling and covered their concerns.. She concurs with the ED that there is a high level of anxiety and mixed emotions about returning to school. There is angst, questions, and feelings of being unsettled. Many are dealing with personal questions such as "What if I get sick or bring it home?" Teaching in the classroom is ideal, and this is not ideal. Our "tool box" is not available and we have 1000 questions. The Administration has communicated to faculty as best as they can. Teachers are fearful they will not be able to do their job as well. Teachers do not want to lose what they have gained through these past months of remote teaching. Many questions will not be answered until we are there and figuring it all out on the fly. The Administration is open to questions and will address concerns as they come. The levels of anxiety vary greatly and run the gamut.

Jess Bowen mentioned that her term as Faculty Representative will end in June. She has served two one-year terms. This is her second round as Faculty Representative. The faculty will elect a new representative this spring. Roger Jarrett thanked Jess for her many years of dedicated interest and service to her colleagues.

Liz Saul wanted to know the % of teachers who have been vaccinated. Ellen Linzey reported that most of the staff will be vaccinated, though it is not mandatory.

## **D. Flag Board discussion items**

No items to discuss further.

# **IV. Chair Business**

## **A. Chair Business**

- There was a recent loss in our community. Contact Liz Saul for information.
- April 29 The Board will attend Diversity and Inclusion training at 5:00pm prior to the Board meeting at 6:30pm.
- If you would like to volunteer for the Board Recruiting Task Force., contact Sheila Kelly.

- Parent Representative term will expire in June as well. The Board will work with onboarding the new member when the PTO selects their new representative.

## **B. Strategic Goal Framework Report Out**

Sowmini Sampath provided a summary of her Strategic Planning Report. Many of the Board goals will address concerns from the community, especially regarding communication. Former Board members and current Advisory Council members Pauline Jen Ryan and Mike Glass provided Sowmini with valuable input that is included in her report.

Sowmini suggested that the Board begin collecting a spreadsheet with targets condensed into themes. What is the Board's role? Determine goals that will be long term one and three year goals.

The Board is looking at diversity as a factor in board recruitment and considering adding an alumni position on the board. Meeting efficiency is also a priority. AMSA's mission should always be front and center when considering goals.

The "next steps" for Board goals will be owned by the Governance Committee. Raul Porras said the Governance Committee will formalize the next steps and continue to make this a priority. They will define the Board's role and what is outside their scope.

Fundraising and resources overlap with Finance and Development. Middle themes are fundraising goals that require long term financial modeling for building facilities, infrastructure, and supporting competitive pay. This will require a strong partnership between the administration and the Board.

Roger Jarrett said the Finance Committee will continue to have more conversations around the goals that involve financial modeling, resources, competitive pay, and fundraising.

The entire Board expressed their appreciation for the many hours of work Sowmini has dedicated to creating the strategic planning template.

## **V. Committee Reports**

### **A. Development Committee Report**

The Development Committee met in March. They will be joined by PTO at their next meeting. They reviewed research on donor perfect leverage, website design, communication with community and businesses. Ben Hammel reported that the annual campaign is moving forward.

Maura Webster continues to work with planning the Golf Tournament. She said mark your calendar for the Golf Tournament in August!

### **B. Education Committee**

Education Committee Chair Liz Saul reported that they were joined by AMSA alumni, prior student representatives Nathan Lee and Katie Cannistraro, and current student representatives Allison Silva and Trey Fucillo. They hosted a student round table that provided great insight and feedback regarding areas for improvement at AMSA. They asked, "What is working and what can we do to improve?" They had a lively discussion about getting back to school.

The Committee hopes to organize an alumni group. One of the many benefits would be to utilize the AMSA alumni to help students during the college application

process. Many of our alumni are In touch with AMSA, and they are passionate about the school. Mr. Vital is working on making this happen.

### **C. Governance Committee report**

(See slides from Governance)

Ownership of Board Goals: Raul Porras suggested they could form a separate entity to create Board Goals and still be part of Governance.

Meeting effectiveness is a big topic. Governance plans to look at how other schools and nonprofits run their meetings and bring ideas to discuss with the full Board and consider changes to the current meeting structure.

#### Consent Agenda

A consent agenda groups routine items that do not require discussion. These items can be distributed to the full board prior to a meeting so members can be prepared to vote. These items generally include the approval of minutes, committee reports, contract approvals, and final approval of items previously discussed. At the beginning of a meeting the Chair will ask if any Trustee wants an item moved to regular discussion.

#### Meeting Frequency

Does our meeting frequency optimize our productivity? Sheila Kelly will circle back with Committee Chairs after they discuss meeting frequency with their committees. As we try to fill board seats, meeting frequency may make a difference. What is the expected time commitment?

#### Expansion of the board

The Board needs to have time demands that are reasonable and clear to new board members.

#### Alternate month to month

Committees meet one month and the full board meets the next.

Boston Prep usually begins a meeting with something that ties into the mission.

Important: Every Board meeting will still include oral reports from the ED, Faculty Representative and Parent Representative.

Agenda topic for May: Sheila Kelly will provide an update on what the Committee Chair think about meeting frequency at the next meeting.

### **D. Finance Committee report**

(See Finance Report and Athletic Program Summary)

Reviewed February Financials and Athletic Program.

Revenue ahead of budget, offset by tuition, grants and annual giving.

Finance will have a "true-up" once they hear from the stat with actual tuition numbers.

There is a loss on the budget related to the athletic program, but the school is happy to support student participation in the sports program.

## **VI. BOT discussion of items flagged from Public Speak, ED, Faculty Rep, Parent Rep**

### **A. Discuss topics nominated from above**

No items for further discussion.

**VII. Meeting Wrap Up**

**A. Review action items from past BOT meetings**

Committees to put goals on BoardOnTrack Governance Template.

**B. Meeting Effectiveness Assessment**

The Board will try using the Consent Agenda in July. Sowmini Sampath did a great job as timekeeper!

**C. Collect Candidate Agenda Items and Action items for April 2021 BOT Meeting**

Agenda topics for upcoming meetings  
Family and Faculty Spring Surveys, kick off at next meeting, after April vacation.  
The Budget will be moved to May  
Sheila Kelly will report out on Committee Chair feedback on meeting frequency in April.  
Jill Schafer will present Self Assessment report-summary in May.

ACTON for Raul Porras: Survey Task Force will confirm timeline for when surveys will go out.

ACTION for Sara Snow: Parent and Faculty Reps election for April or May.

**VIII. Closing Items**

**A. Call for motion to go into executive session**

The Chair announced that the Board will go into executive session at the end of open session to discuss the purchase or lease of real property, since open discussion could have a detrimental effect on the process. The Board will not reconvene.

Guests invited to join the executive session include Ellen Linzey, Mike Nawrocki, Liana McLaren, and Bob Baldwin. The time is 7:55pm. The Board will take a five minute break and meet in executive session at 8:00pm.

Roger Jarrett made a motion to to go into executive session.

Maura Webster seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Raul Porras	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Jessica Bowen	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye

**B. Executive Session**

**C. Adjourn Meeting**

Raul Porras made a motion to adjourn.

Maura Webster seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Jessica Bowen Aye

Nicholas Poirier Aye

Roger Jarrett Aye

Raul Porras Aye

Benjamin Hammel Aye

Liz Saul Aye

Jill Schafer Aye

Sheila Kelly Aye

Sowmini Sampath Aye

Maura Webster Aye

Kristin Carney Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jill Schafer

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**Documents used during the meeting**

- 2021-2022 AMSA School Calendar DRAFT Updated BOT 3-25-21.pdf
- 3-25-21 BOT ED Report March 2021.pdf
- 3-25-21 Strategic Goal Framework AMSA BoT Report Out.pdf
- 3-25-21 Gov-Meeting Efficiency.pdf
- 3-25-21 2020-2021 Sports Actual to Budget.xlsx
- 3-25-21 February 2021 Financial Statements.xlsx