

APPROVED



Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday February 17, 2022 at 6:00 PM

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

Trustees Present

Bela Gorman (remote), Benjamin Hammel (remote), Dawn Capello (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), Zakery Oglesby (remote)

Trustees Absent

None

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened

Raul Porras

Guests Present

Anders Lewis (remote), Ellen Linzey (remote), Liana McLaren (remote), Mike Finkle (remote), Mike Nawrocki (remote), Padmaja Bandaru (remote), Peter Proulx (remote), Sara Snow (remote)

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 Feb 17, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

B. Record attendance and guests

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

Time keeper: Zak Oglesby

The Chair announced that the board will go into executive session after open session for negotiation with non represented personnel, Executive Director. The board will not reconvene.

The Chair introduced guest presenter, Peter Proulx.

C. Public Comment

No public comment.

D. Flag Board discussion items from Public Speak

None.

II. Votes

A. Approve Minutes

Liz Saul made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 01-27-22.

Dawn Capello seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Dawn Capello	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Zakery Oglesby	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Raul Porras	Absent
Sowmini Sampath	Aye

Raul Porras arrived at 6:06 PM.

B. Proposed Consent Agenda Items

C. Vote to modify policy on Executive Session minutes A-102

The modification of Policy A-102 (regarding Meeting Minutes) will be discussed further at Governance and brought to the Board in March for approval.

D.

Vote to approve Construction manager and pre-construction budget WT Rich Construction Management Company

The pre-construction budget was removed from the consent agenda since it was available for review only a short time.

Nick Poirrier provided details on the selection of WT Rich as AMSA's Construction Management Company. They have extensive experience with charter school construction. They seem to be the best fit for our school, having a ton of experience with working in occupied areas.

The understand the complexity of our project.

Ellen's team is looking for approval for up to 150K over the next nine months.

Ellen made a point to acknowledge how valuable Nick has been to this process.

Nicholas Poirrier made a motion to approve the pre-construction budget for up to 150K with authority for Ellen Linzey to sign contracts.

Sheila Kelly seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Dawn Capello	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye
Nicholas Poirrier	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Zakery Oglesby	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye

E. Capital Campaign Release of Funds Agreement with STEM Soaring Eagles Foundation, Inc

The Capital Campaign release of funds agreement from STEM Soaring Eagles to AMSA was presented by Liana McLaren.

The language reads as follows:

STEM Soaring Eagles Foundation, Inc. agrees to automatically sweep Capital Campaign contributions to the Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School on a quarterly basis. This will be done by AMSA's Director of Finance and Operations. If funds are needed by AMSA between scheduled sweeps, the AMSA Executive Director shall make a written notification to the STEM Soaring Eagles Foundation, Inc. to request the funds and STEM Soaring Eagles Foundation, Inc. will transfer the funds as requested.

Kristin Carney made a motion to approve the Capital Campaign Release of Funds Agreement with STEM Soaring Eagles Foundation, Inc.

Maura Webster seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Raul Porras	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye

Roll Call

Jill Schafer	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye
Zakery Oglesby	Aye
Dawn Capello	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye

III. Reports

A. Executive Director Report

See attached ED presentation.

The lottery will be held on March 1.

There was a total of 1033 applications..a record!

There are 140 seats in grade 6 available.

Marlborough Superintendent Mike Bergeron invited AMSA to speak to 5th grade students in all elementary schools.

Masking policy for Spring of 2022.

The mask mandate from state ends on February 28. It was very challenging in January, with 200 student cases of COVID. To be on the safe side, AMSA will continue with masks until March 11, two weeks after vacation. Staff will test on the day before coming back after vacation. Marlborough Board of Health has said they are comfortable with our decision.

AMSA is participating in the Opt-in-At-Home COVID-19 Testing Program, with 125 staff members and 400 plus students enrolled. There is testing still available in the Health Office.

It is now under local control for Superintendents and Executive Directors to determine status. AMSA mask choice plan will be in place soon.

Building Update

Ellen shared detailed plans of the third floor of 165 building.

Two chem labs, one bio lab, (with a bio lab in 606), physics labs, break out space, room for display cases, and collaborative work area of 400 square feet. She hopes to be sharing this information with companies to encourage donations.

Their selection for the Project Construction Team is completed, choosing WT Rich. The team is now ready. Bob Baldwin was our first consultant, Anser Advisory, Finegold Alexander Architects, and WT Rich.

Ellen announced that our facebook account was hacked and is down for now so there is not as much content to share. AMSA received a 10K science grant from Beckman Coulter for our research program. Thank you Mark Vital for your outreach efforts!

AMSA has relaunched the Core Values in Action, a program where we recognize students and staff for demonstrating our core values.

Upcoming Events

- February vacation...we are all ready for a break!
- March 1 virtual lottery.
- Disney trip discussion March 3, forum for parents and students.
- Charter Renewal Mid Cycle Site Visit March 29 (5 or 6 Board members to attend a focus group..45 minutes to an hour. Sara will be in touch.)
- Strategic planning meeting TBD
- Arts and Science Night May 25
- AMSA class of 2022 graduation June 10 ForeKicks.

Link for Black history hero recognition and announcements on AMSA website:
<https://www.amsacs.org/academics/departments/history/black-history-month>

B. Executive Director report Q&A

There were no questions, but Raul wanted to take time to acknowledge Ellen for doing so much for the school and express his appreciation. Maura Webster echoed this appreciation.

Maura added how exciting it will be to have the new science labs, which are long overdue. time. She also thanked Ellen for making the time and space for having conversations with parents and students on the building projects.

Peter Proulx, AMSA's DEI Coordinator (see attached presentation slides)

Peter thanked Anders and Padmaja for their help in the DEI survey process. AMSA's commitment to DEI is in good shape.

The student input demonstrates that the school is in a good space.

881 students participated in the DEI survey during their CS classes, allowing the survey to capture input from most students. Since some students had only been at AMSA for 5 months and 7th graders were on campus only at end of COVID year, some data may not be a true picture.

Observable trends look good and we plan to improve upon them.

They are working on a DEI vision statement and will continue best practices.

Questions: Raul thanked Peter for his very insightful presentation....Raul asked if Peter could break down the data by grade? Peter said that he did not have the tech to do that, but they plan to find a way to break it down by individual grade level. He agrees that maturity level may affect responses. Raul is pleased with Peter's next steps, focusing on skill sets and tools that everyone can use. Peter said the issues are within the student population, not the adults, but they are looking for the adults to help with the work.

Anders acknowledged Peter as an amazing educator and his tireless commitment to creating a welcoming climate at AMSA.

Kristin Carney asked if AMSA did a breakdown of lottery applications by the core towns Yes, Linda Edwards broke it down by core towns and by grade. Ellen added that we usually have this data by now, but the lottery is later than usual. The lottery had to wait until the netcap spending information was available from the state.

Sheila attended the Maynard forum herself when she was interested in AMSA. She thought it would be nice to include other towns when planning visits to

elementary schools as was done recently in Marlborough. Ellen responded that AMSA was invited by the Marlborough Superintendent to visit the fifth grade classrooms in all four elementary schools and hold a meeting for their parents with translators in Spanish and Portuguese. However, Ellen's team held four different informational meetings that were open to other towns. Experience has shown that attendance is much higher with virtual meetings.

C. Faculty Representative Report

Zak Oglesby reported there is broad support for the mask mandate, with a week to week approach and eventually mask choice.

There was some contention among faculty regarding the news of discontinuing the Disney trip for seniors. Some felt there was not enough communication with the chaperones, who would have liked to have had more discussion on the decision. However, there is broad support for cancellation since we are concerned with access and community. A class trip by definition should be inclusive. AMSA is a free public school. Overall, the faculty thought it was a good decision. He received many supportive messages.

D. Parent Representative Report

Bela Gorman reported that communication from parents can be placed in three buckets:

1. Complaints regarding rules: stringent uniform code, drawstring bags in the lower school, social distancing, mask mandates, concerns of mental wellbeing, and NHS attendance and community service.
2. Losing sight on academics at AMSA
3. General unhappiness with Disney cancelation. Some parents don't understand why it was canceled and why they were not included in coming up with alternative solutions.

Bela added that Ellen has already said she will meet with parents to discuss.

E. Flag Board discussion items

Raul Porras wanted to make sure that the board captures some of the topics that Bela mentioned for their strategic planning: excellence at AMSA, communication, and inclusion.

IV. Chair Business

A. Chair Business

Roger said that the strategic planning task force will meet after February break. They will discuss the agenda and determine a date for the strategic planning meeting.

The Board must focus on Board and Committee recruiting. Members need to start thinking now about how to proceed with recruiting going forward. Roger asked Sheila to discuss how to manage recruiting with the Governance Committee.

V. Committee Reports

A. Development Committee Report

Ben Hammel reported that the Development Committee met in February. They had an update on the capital campaign, which is about to be launched on the AMSA website.

B. Education Committee

Liz Saul reported that the Education Committee reviewed AMSA's 2021 District Report Card. This information is available to the public by individual district, but the committee would like to be able to compare AMSA with the core towns without pulling data from each district separately. Sara Snow will provide comparison data.

The Senior Exit survey results will be ready for the June BOT meeting.

C. Governance Committee report

Sheila Kelly reported that at the next Board meeting in March, Governance will have the modified language in Policy A-102 that pertains to the process of taking executive session minutes, their periodic review, and release from confidential status.

D. Finance Committee report

Kristin Carney provided an update on the Grants and the monthly financials. See both attached documents.

Overall, a favorable report. Over a million in grants, which does not include the 10k science donation from Beckman Coulter! The grant money will boost income levels for programs.

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

A. Discuss topics and determine next step(s) for each topic nominated

items flagged... discuss topics for strategic planning meeting. Make sure we capture Bela's comments from parents. Hard to be actionable. Maybe we can discuss specifics to make them actionable. complaints about excellence...what does this mean? We have a discussion on how to understand the issue and what we will do about it. Statements are said but she feels we need to understand what it means. Junior Class forum will give us more details. May appear we aren't handling it but we may be able to understand as part of our strategic plan. Dig deep.

Dawn...when we get feedback, can we how many complaints during a school year....struggle to know if an issue is a thing and a real concern. or just a vent. Need to understand the magnitude...single problem or trending. String bags...is there a common understanding why they are used and needed? Have all complained about it but do understand why we have them. How many are

reflected..Hard to know the numbers...Not the masses. It could grow. Address or acknowledge. Parent role challenge...how to know how many are really concerned. Hard role to quantize it.

Jill asked if Parent survey this spring....Raul said yes. Kickoff meeting already. After April break. Intention both staff and parent surveys shorter and get better response rate. Ask more general .. They want to see trends. big important issues. It is not the number. We need to be careful how we determine what is important.

Welcome to join task force.

Maura..there is public comment so parents do have communication channels. Bela, or any board member. And forums. Lots of opportunities. Many avenues for raising issues. Ellen is accessible. Teachers, Dept head, Deans, etc. Make use of them. Not everything is an Ellen issue or a board issue....look for the closest means to solution. Communication protocols. Lots of layers.

VII. Meeting Wrap Up

A. Review action items from past BOT meetings

Action items:Governance will discuss recruiting

Action items Liz Saul and Sara Snow will connect regarding District Report Card data

B. Collect Candidate Agenda Items and Action items for March 2022 BOT Meeting

With regards to the BOT Topic Calendar, Jill Schafer asked if Governance is expected to review the Bylaws and Policies every year?

Roger said that it is best practice to keep the review of the bylaws and policies as a yearly prompt and reminder to ensure they are current. Governance plans to discuss an annual review of the bylaws and policies at their March meeting.

C. Meeting Effectiveness Assessment

Raul Porras suggested that the committees do better with submitting their meeting summary for the consent agenda.

Time keeper reported that the Board was 50 minutes ahead of schedule.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Executive Session

The chair asked for a motion to go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations with non union personnel.

Maura Webster made a motion to to go into executive session for negotiations with non represented personnel.

Liz Saul seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Benjamin Hammel Aye

Bela Gorman Aye

Jill Schafer Aye

Sowmini Sampath Aye

Roll Call

Raul Porras	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Liz Saul	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Zakery Oglesby	Aye
Dawn Capello	Aye
Kristin Carney	Aye

Ellen Linzey was invited to attend. Zak Oglesby was asked not to attend as the discussion will present a conflict of interest.

The Board will take a 10 minute break and meet in executive session at 8:05pm. The Board will not reconvene in open session.

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Snow

Documents used during the meeting

- 2-17-22 BOT Education Committee Summary Consent Agenda.pdf
- 2-17-22 Stem Soaring Eagles Foundation Release of Funds for Capital Campaign Policy .docx
- 2-17-22 BOT ED Report February 2022 .pdf
- 2-17-22 DEI Board Report Proulx.pdf
- 2-17-22 Finance Grants Summary for BOT.xlsx
- 2-17-22 Financial Statements January 2022 .xlsx