

APPROVED



# Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School

## Minutes

### Board of Trustees Meeting

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#### **Date and Time**

Thursday October 27, 2022 at 6:00 PM

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**Meeting will be held at the Upper School cafeteria. See AMSA website for information on remote access. There will be a phone set up for remote participation for Board Members. There will not be Zoom access.**

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#### **Trustees Present**

Bela Gorman, Dawn Capello, Laura Burgess, Maura Webster (remote), Raul Porras, Roger Jarrett, Sheila Kelly, Sowmini Sampath, Zakery Prescott

#### **Trustees Absent**

Benjamin Hammel, Jill Schafer, Nicholas Poirier

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

Maura Webster

#### **Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned**

Sheila Kelly

#### **Guests Present**

Ellen Linzey, Liana McLaren, Mike Finkle, Mike Nawrocki, Sara Snow

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### **I. Opening Items**

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

Raul Porras called a meeting of the board of trustees of Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School to order on Thursday Oct 27, 2022 at 6:05 PM.

Raul Porras welcomed attendees to the first in person meeting in a while. The meeting is being recorded but the meeting will not be livestreaming due to technical challenges.

**B. Record attendance and guests**

**C. Public Comment**

None

**II. Votes**

**A. Approve minutes from September 22, 2022**

Roger Jarrett made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 09-22-22.

Dawn Capello seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Maura Webster	Aye
Dawn Capello	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Absent
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Laura Burgess	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Zakery Prescott	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Absent
Raul Porras	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Jill Schafer	Absent

**B. Review and Accept SY2021-2022 Audit report**

Director of Business and Operations Liana McLaren presented the audit findings. See attached reports.

1. Independent auditors report details a clean audit with no adjustments and no findings. The auditors provided some recommended best practices, which the school will adopt as the new accounting standard this year.

2. Financial Statements summary information

The school ended the year with a strong cash position.

Capital assets due to the purchase of buildings.

Net position...assets vs. liabilities.

The school was conservative in their tuition projection and has a cumulative surplus and they do not have to pay back any tuition to the state.

It was a very strong fiscal year.

The auditors did request that the school break out lease components a bit further.

The auditors provided tech and general control recommendations for how to protect our financial information.

AMSA received a property tax refund from Marlborough.

Sowmini asked if the board could we get a report on the lease component..

Laura Burgess asked "Why was the tuition higher than budgeted?" Liana said they budget conservatively, they take what they believe it will be and reduce by 1%.

Tuition bounces quarter to quarter, and the state does not let schools know until the end of June, so they always budget low. Each town pays differently.

Liana presented the Comparison Report with other charter schools like AMSA.

Our occupancy costs: per \$24 in 2021 we are at \$15 in 2022.

Purchasing the building was a good thing.

Ratios Report: green is good, yellow moderate, red is bad

We are in great shape all green!

The number of months for the cash on hand for the operating budget is 5.42.

It was a solid financial year.

Raul Porras made a motion to approve the audit report.

Bela Gorman seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Bela Gorman	Aye
Laura Burgess	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Absent
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Zakery Prescott	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Absent
Dawn Capello	Aye
Jill Schafer	Absent

**III. Consent Agenda**

**A. Consent Agenda Items for Review (Non-Vote Items)**

All set, no discussion required.

**IV. Reports**

**A. Capital Campaign update**

The Capital Campaign report will be part of the Executive Director's Report.

**B. Executive Director Report**

ED attached ED report.

**MCAS**

Ellen provided data on the Spring 2022 MCAS Results. The data focuses on the 10th grade scores. The school did very well.

**ELA**

86% of students scored in the meeting or exceeding category compared to the state with 57% meeting or exceeding.

**Math**

91% of students scored in the meeting or exceeding category compared to the state with 49% meeting or exceeding.

Although AMSA did very well considering the difficult COVID experience, the administration is committed to improvement.

#### Enrollment and Attrition report

AMSA has been able to stabilize the enrollment number at 966.

Laura asked if there are demographic percentages we have to meet. Ellen said that because it is a lottery, we cannot manage quotas and Marlborough sometimes runs into the net cap spending issue, which means residents are not eligible to enroll at AMSA.

There are 825 on the waitlist. We always take siblings first. We never know what the net cap will be until just before the lottery. The sibling policy (including twins) is a state policy.

#### Building Update

At the November 17 Special board meeting, the hope is to approve the design and cost estimates. The most important thing will be the new appraisal report, which will determine if there is enough equity in our buildings to substantiate the loan.

The Capital Campaign Kick off at the Botanic Garden was a great success.

Mike Finkle and Christy Jagielski did a great job.

Our New Director of Development Mary Eckel was at the Kickoff. She will start at AMSA on October 31. Mary will be working with our Development Committee, the Imagine Committee, and all members of our community. Her 15+ years of experience includes the Concord Free Public Library, Arlington Catholic High School, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Mark Vital has been working on the rebirth of AMSA's Alumni Association.

There were six alumni at their first meeting but they brought friends to the next meeting. The group plans to meet monthly. They are working on the next 5 year reunion.

#### Important Upcoming Dates

Holiday Staff Party December 13

Lottery Applications: November 18 through February 3

Arts Night January 24

Board Strategic planning Saturday January 28

Raul said it is important that we are thinking about the future!

### **C. Executive Director report Q&A**

Laura Burgess asked, "Who, separate from the board, has been involved with the construction decisions? Ellen responded that the process has been long and has included a wide group of stakeholders. "What is the building going to do?" The building will house 5 Science labs.

Raul Porras added that forms were sent out to staff and dept chairs who met with architects. There has been a lot of public discussion. It was decided that they would focus on the academic needs first and make room for the gym later in the future. The school made an effort to get lots of feedback and to see out opinions.

Roger Jarrett added that we have talked about this for 10 years. It was a clear decision made last year to prioritize the academic and safety needs over sports.

They learned that it is less expensive to build than to retrofit the 165 building due to the cost of meeting code standards.

#### **D. Parent Representative Report**

Parent Rep Laura Burgess said there has been positive feedback about the school offering field trips again. Just another sign of getting back to normal. There were complaints about bus issues. Are they bringing it up to the administration?

Ellen said the buses are not ours and we have no control.

Lynn Mclusky is our operations manager and she works directly with the bus company,

She does a great job. Last year was a nightmare but it is better this year. Parents should always reach out to Lynn McCluskey if they have questions or concerns.

Lynn meets with the North Reading Bus Company, which works through Marlborough, every week. It is a big challenge and a lot of work. The bus drivers get to pick their routes. They like our kids. We have a collaborative relationship with the bus company. They are doing as well as they can.

Families are notified of bus issues in a timely manner via text and emails.

#### **E. Faculty Representative Report**

Faculty Rep Zakery Prescott reported that the general feeling among the faculty is positive. The first quarter will be ending soon and it has gone smoothly. Much better than last year. One concern is regarding the number of interruptions during the school day; health screenings, PSAT, field trips, etc.

Zakery reported that the Professional development Challenge Success was somewhat useful, but many felt that it did not provide useful or actionable information.

Challenge Success did a survey and the administration will review the feedback.

It is not always the same experience for everyone as we have wide range of veteran and green teachers. Ellen said they will consider all feedback.

Raul mentioned that the PD budget doesn't get used by all faculty. There is personal PD money and department money available to faculty as well as the general PD budget.

National organization Challenge Success does work nationally and is considered highly recommend. The actionable part of the program will come next.

Ellen added that Mike Nawrocki has done a fantastic job of asking for faculty feedback regarding what teachers would like to have for PD.

The November 17 PD will be a follow up with the social emotional and academic student data.

Yesterday's PD was the prep for the Nov 17 PD.

Laura Burgess asked "Why don't middle school students take the Challenge Success survey?"

Ellen suggested she reach out to Kate Driver or Anders Lewis for details.

The data will apply to the lower school too. Challenge Success works with either the upper or lower school students, not both at the same time. Ellen said they are going to task the Class Advisors with developing a survey for the lower school in order to collect data.

Ellen said survey results demonstrate that students are less engaged since COVID.

The 2019 survey revealed that 58% are just "doing" school. We want them to be highly engaged.

#### **F. Flag Board discussion items**

No items were flagged.

### **V. Chair Business**

#### **A. Update - Executive Capital Director position creation**

The Chair discussed the proposed new administrative structure for Ellen's new role. Ellen has agreed to move into this new role to see the construction project through. Raul suggested that the Board could create a role that reports to the board, such as the Executive Project Director or some other title and Ellen would report to the Board. However, this will require an amendment to the bylaws.

DESE knows about the plan and will let us submit an amendment request before the usual "window" for bylaws amendments.

The Governance Committee will discuss the process and then bring details to the board. Having Ellen's role figured out ahead will help with the search. The more ED candidates know the better.

#### **B. ED Search Update**

Oct 5 consultant John Tarvin was at school on October 5 and met with parents, faculty, staff, and students.

Overall, John said he received very good feedback about what stakeholders would like to see in a new ED. It is important that the Board of Trustees make sure this is a transparent process.

Staff have opportunities to share feedback even if they couldn't be at the meetings. There will be a staff only Zoom meeting.

Dawn said the process is on track. Sowmini and Raul are on the Committee and things are going great. Zak agreed, and said the openness has alleviated fear among the faculty. We have learned a lot from our history.

The role of the subcommittee is not to choose the candidate, but to bring the possible candidate list down to a reasonable number.

Sheila Kelly left at 7:15 PM.

### **VI. Committee Reports**

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

The Development Report was part of the ED report.

#### **B. Education Committee Report**

Roger Jarrett reported that the Education Committee has met. They have brought on some student members. They will continue to measure success...and determine what they should be looking at.

### **C. Governance Committee Report**

Governance did not meet in October. The Committee will discuss the proposed new role for Ellen, as well OML training at their next meeting.

### **D. Finance Committee Report**

The Finance Committee has been focusing on the audit. They are planning on a special meeting to discuss building costs as well as the standard monthly meeting before the Special BOT meeting on November 17.

Maura Webster arrived at 7:45 PM.

## **VII. 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**

Dawn Capello said she would like to be able to spend a day at AMSA. Ellen said AMSA used to have a Trustees Day. Liz used to run these events. Roger said he will provide some background on these events. Trustees Day was a fun experience that took a half day. Teachers would volunteer to host trustees in their classroom. Raul added that visiting the school is important and can be a highlight for board members, allowing them to observe the great experiences that happen at AMSA.

The Education Committee will organize something for next April.

## **VIII. Meeting Wrap Up**

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

Roger welcomes everyone who might want to attend the Finance Committee meeting. There is a Special board meeting on Nov 17, which will be REMOTE participation. The December 1 meeting will be in person at AMSA. Dates to follow will be determined later.

Raul wanted to emphasise the benefits of using BoardOnTrack and encourages members to use it more. There are many valuable services and resources are available.

Use it to capture board goals and minutes from committees.

### **B. Collect Candidate Agenda Items and Action items for December 1, 2022 BOT Meeting**

OML training: Roger would prefer an in person OML training. Maybe have board members watch the OML webinar as homework and then have a short training during a meeting.

### **C. Summary of Action Items**

The Template consent agenda will be reviewed at Governance  
Governance will discuss the OML training.  
Committees should post their Goals in BoardOnTrack.  
The Governors extension on remote participation will expire on March 31.

Members of the public can tune in to Finance Committee meeting, but just to watch, not participate. People can write questions and reach out to Ellen or Liana for information.

#### **D. Meeting Effectiveness Assessment**

The meeting went well and ahead of schedule.

### **IX. Closing Items**

#### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

Roger Jarrett made a motion to adjourn.  
Maura Webster seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

##### **Roll Call**

Maura Webster	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Absent
Roger Jarrett	Aye
Jill Schafer	Absent
Zakery Prescott	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Nicholas Poirier	Absent
Laura Burgess	Aye
Dawn Capello	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Benjamin Hammel	Absent

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sara Snow

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#### **Documents used during the meeting**

- 10-27-22 AAFCPA Letter .pdf
- 10-27-22 AAFCPA Audit Report.pdf
- 10-27-22 AMSA School Ratios Audit Report.pdf
- 10-27-22 Financial Statement STEM Soaring Eagles Audit Draft.pdf
- 10-27-22 Aug-Sept 2022 Financial Statements.xlsx
- 10-27-22 ED Report October 2022 .pdf