

APPROVED



Advanced Math & Science Academy Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday July 27, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Trustees Present

Bela Gorman (remote), Darren Rose (remote), Evan Przyborowski (remote), Gregory Theos (remote), Jill Schafer (remote), Maura Webster (remote), Raul Porras (remote), Sheila Kelly (remote), Sowmini Sampath (remote)

Trustees Absent

Laura Burgess, Roger Jarrett

Ex Officio Members Present

Lisa Mobley (remote)

Non Voting Members Present

Lisa Mobley (remote)

Guests Present

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

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 Jul 27, 2023 at 6:02 PM.

The Chair called to order and announced that the meeting will be recorded but will not be livestreaming. Attendance was called.

The Chair announced they would go into executive session at the end of open session to discuss

The Chair welcomed Dr. Mobley to her first Board meeting as the Executive Director. He also welcomed new board members, Darren Rose, Evan Przyborowski, and Greg Theos. He noted that Evan and Greg are alumni from the class of 2016.

Raul said he is looking forward to this being an exciting school year with new leadership, the construction project, and 2023-2024 being a renewal year.

B. Record Attendance

C. Appoint Timekeeper

Timekeeper: Sowmini Sampath

D. Public Comment

No Public Comment

II. Votes

A. Approve Minutes from the Annual Meeting on June 1, 2023

Sowmini Sampath made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Annual Meeting on 06-01-23.

Maura Webster seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Sheila Kelly	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Gregory Theos	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Evan Przyborowski	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Absent
Laura Burgess	Absent
Maura Webster	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye

B.

Approve minutes from the Special Meeting on July 11, 2023

Maura Webster made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 07-11-23.

Sowmini Sampath seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Maura Webster	Aye
Laura Burgess	Absent
Gregory Theos	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Absent
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Evan Przyborowski	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye

C. Election of Vice Chair

Sheila Kelly made a motion to approve Maura Webster to assume the position of Vice Chair for the remainder of Dawn Capello's term, which will expire on June 30, 2024.

Bela Gorman seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Bela Gorman	Aye
Evan Przyborowski	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Absent
Raul Porras	Aye
Maura Webster	Abstain
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Gregory Theos	Aye
Laura Burgess	Absent

D. Student Handbook Approval

The Governance Committee reviewed the Student Handbook updates and brings them to the full board with a recommendation to approve. (See attached document.)

Mike Nawrocki was in attendance to explain and clarify the updates.

Highlights:

Eliminated language about unexcused absences affecting grades.

Language was added regarding AI Chat specifically relating to academic honesty. They did not want to get into being restrictive with AI tools. In May and June there were some detection tools used to flag possible plagiarism. Turnitin.com is used by English Department.

It was suggested that the handbook include where the use of AI is appropriate. It was noted that if you read the section in context, it is clearly referring to academic honesty and no other clarification is necessary.

Class dues will take the place of the money collected during dress down days. The collection will not be a burden on staff, rather this will be handled through the Business Office with the online SchoolBucks. AMSA will continue to have dress down days, but students will no longer be charged to participate. The funds will help with senior costs. To ensure equity in participation, class dues will be included in eligible students' financial assistance support.

Clarification language regarding criteria that would result in the loss of senior privileges. Reference to a Student Directory was removed as recommended by the school's legal council.

Bela Gorman made a motion to approve the handbook changes as presented.

Gregory Theos seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Roger Jarrett	Absent
Maura Webster	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Evan Przyborowski	Aye
Gregory Theos	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Laura Burgess	Absent

E. 2022-2023 Annual Report Approval

The annual report is how a charter school demonstrates faithful to its charter. The Accountability Plan for each charter term is used to provide supporting evidence of how well the school is meeting its goals and objectives.

It was noted that the Director of Development had been inadvertently left off the administrative roster. Correction was taken.

Maura Webster made a motion to approve the 2022-2023 Annual Report, with correction made to the administrative roster.

Darren Rose seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Raul Porras	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Laura Burgess	Absent
Maura Webster	Aye
Gregory Theos	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Jill Schafer	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Absent
Evan Przyborowski	Aye

III. Capital Campaign Update

A. Update

Maura Webster proved a brief update.

The Loop Road construction has begun!

They are working on AMSA's 2 Million Dollar Goal. The Development Committee meeting has been postponed.

Maura reminded the Board that students will present their projects on grant animal prosthesis at AMSA on Friday. Mike Finkle published notification of the grant presentation on the school website. The timing was confirmed just two days ago. The AMSA community was provided information on Instagram as well.

IV. ED Update

A. Update

Dr, Mobley presented her first report. (See attached report)

Liana and Lisa attended the Marlborough Planning Board meeting. The site plan was approved!

Next step is to release a rough GMP to Finance Committee around August 25. The final GMP will be released to the Board by Sept 11 and then the plan is for the Board to meet on Friday, September 15 to vote on moving forward on the construction costs.

They continue to work with the Department Chairs to negotiate their contract.

Reporting obligations

Annual Report completed

Renewal Application this year-work about to begin.

Student Opportunity Report was completed this week.

The audit process is underway.

Student registrations are being finalized.

Operations is busy with transportation logistics.

Dr. Mobley is busy meeting her staff and getting up to speed.

She attended the PTO uniform sale and has started her own Instagram account so people can follow what she is doing.

Dr. Mobley is spending time with the MCPSA learning more about the charter world.

V. Faculty Rep Update

A. Update

Greg Theos presented his first faculty update.

He met with Dr. Mobley for an hour and a half today. He appreciated the time.

He reported that some of the faculty feedback was in reaction to the yearbook updates, but the majority of the comments were about teacher compensation, which is their number one concern.

Teachers contracts will be renegotiated this year.

Greg presented a chart that showed a comparison of teacher compensation with other districts. Teachers want to feel that are valued and respected. He realizes that it is not an apples to apples comparison, since charter schools have to pay proportionally more out of their budgets for expenses that other districts do not. Regular public school districts shave resources for that charter schools do not. One example is the health benefits and other benefits in general. AMSA's health insurance is more comprehensive than other districts.

Bela Gorman suggested that he might want to add a column to show benefits, paid time off, professional development funds, etc.

Raul Porras thanked Greg for his work to present on the teacher's behalf. Raul said it is the Board's their intention to move toward increasing salaries, understanding what is sustainable and feasible. This is a challenge that the board is planning to take on.

AMSA does well by hiring people who may not have a degree in education but have industry experience. However, if you want to attract and keep talent, there has to be a competitive compensation. The Board is working on this challenge.

VI. Chair Business

A.

Family/Staff Survey Update

Raul Porras provided a summary of the Family and Staff Surveys.

See attached document.

The Board runs the surveys and Panorama provides benchmarks.

Does the Board take action on the results?

Everyone has a part to play in the surveys..all stakeholders, Administration, faculty, the board members, and families.

Results demonstrated three areas of focus:

Academics-achieving excellence

Student Behavior- rise in concern.

Mental health concerns-how are we taking care of our students? Monitoring stress levels and improving performance.

What does the Board do operationally? How does the board make decisions while taking into account trends. It is important for everyone to know that they do read the feedback. Families should consider how they can play a role in fundraising and other concerns and how they can be a part of the solution.

The survey response rate could be higher. There is a decline in family participation.

The Board wants to make it a goal to increase participation.

The Board did not conduct a survey in 2020 due to COVID.

The survey asked for suggestions and they received some.

Most people do not know what the Board does.

The Board needs to do a better job on communicating what they do since most people do not know what the Board does.

Raul invites and encourages members to become a member of the Survey Task Force, which helped him to understand the school better. Participation is Key. The timing of surveys is up for discussion. Padmaja offered her opinion, pointing out that many survey questions are repetitive. She suggested that they could construct some better questions.

Mike Nawrocki agreed with the behavior concerns rising since we returned from COVID. The majority of issues are in the communal areas, not in the classroom. Almost every incident seems to stem from cell phone use. There is a need to increase student supervision, set expectations, model behavior, and assist teachers with classroom management.

B. Board Self Assessment Update

Raul provided an update on the Board self-assessment. (See attached document.)

He shared what the tool in BoardOnTrack looks like.

Only 41% of Board members participated.

It is important to have 100% participation to get an accurate understanding. Raul asked all board members to complete the self-assessment.

Raul wanted to remind members that BoardOnTrack is a tool and a service that provides advice and support on how to be a more effective board.

Action: All Board members to complete self assessment.

C. Update on ED Goals

Dr. Mobley met with the ED Support Task Force to discuss the ED Goals for 2023-2024. They discussed how the goals will directly relate to AMSA's core values and mission and how they can be measures. Dr. Mobley plans to have her goals finalized before the next bot meeting.

D. Special meeting 8/31 to review financials in advance of September construction project decision

Raul proposed the board hold a special meeting on August 31, to focus on reviewing construction costs. The Board will not be ready to make decision at this meeting, but it will be very important for the board to have as much information available, to understand the financial landscape, so they can make a good decision. Understanding the financial impact is essential. They will meet remotely.

Final bids and cost information will be available by September 11. The Board will have a few days to digest the information, and then meet on Friday, September 15 to vote on moving forward with the construction project.. or decide to pause.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee Update

Liana presented the financial statements. (See attached document.)

The Finance Committee has had many meetings. They have created a capital expense worksheet, which identifies all major projects for the next five years. It is important to understand the financial impact when voting on the construction project number.

B. Education Committee Report

The Education Committee did not meet. There is no report.

C. Governance Committee Report

Sheila Kelly reported that the Governance Committee reviewed the Student Handbook and the Annual Report at their July meeting.

Policies and procedures that are in progress.

Governance has refined some of the board documents and will share at another meeting.

D. Development Committee Report

The Development Committee meeting was postponed. There is no report.

VIII. Other Business

A. Getting together not as a board.

Raul thinks it would be a good idea for board members to spend some social time together, apart from an official board meeting, with no deliberation or discussion regarding board matters.

He suggested they wait until school starts.

IX. Call to go into Executive Session

A. Roll Call and Purpose of Executive Session

Maura Webster made a motion to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board. The Board will not reconvene.

Bela Gorman seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Raul Porras	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Laura Burgess	Absent
Jill Schafer	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Gregory Theos	Abstain
Roger Jarrett	Absent
Evan Przyborowski	Aye

The Chair invited Dr. Mobley, Liana McLaren, Mike Nawrocki, and Joe Bartulis to attend.

The Board went into executive session at 8:00pm.

X. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Sheila Kelly made a motion to adjourn.

Jill Schafer seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Jill Schafer	Aye
Bela Gorman	Aye
Darren Rose	Aye
Roger Jarrett	Absent
Raul Porras	Aye
Sowmini Sampath	Aye
Maura Webster	Aye
Laura Burgess	Absent
Evan Przyborowski	Aye
Sheila Kelly	Aye
Gregory Theos	Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sheila Kelly

Documents used during the meeting

- 7-27-23 Handbook Changes 23-24 Memo 2020.docx.pdf
- AMSA 2022-2023 Annual Report DRAFT .pdf
- ED Report for 7_27_23 BoT Meeting.docx (1).pdf
- 7-27-23 BOT May-June 2023 Financial Statements.xlsx