



**COEUR D'ALENE CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 20, 2021**

LOCATION	Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy 4904 N. Duncan Drive Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
CALL TO ORDER	Chairman Verhaeghe called the meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 5:00 PM. Board members present: Dan Forsgren, Scott MacPhee, Dan Redline, Cheri Rose-Kociela, Amy Verhaeghe Board members absent: None Director MacPhee confirmed a quorum was present. Other attendees: Michelle Bredeson, Dan Nicklay, Glenn Mabile, Becky Brausen, Roger Gerdes, Sarah Gerdes, Julia Kopczynski, Diane McCrae, Mike McCormack, Ben Meine, Nicole Montgomery, Vanessa Ohmes, Dr. Bill Proser, Dianna Renz, Gretchen Renz, Tyler Vranich
PLEDGE TO THE FLAG	Chairman Verhaeghe led the pledge of allegiance to the flag
PUBLIC COMMENT	Chairman Verhaeghe reminded the public that those who wish to make public comment are requested to notify the board clerk in advance of the meeting, but will allow those who did not sign up to comment tonight. It was requested that public comment be limited to 2 minutes per person. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diane McCrae spoke against the mask mandate.• Gretchen Renz spoke against the mask mandate.• Dr. Vanessa Ohmes spoke in favor of the mask mandate.• Tyler Vranich spoke against the mask mandate.• Sarah Gerdes recognized the incredible pressure put on organizations to promote masks and vaccines.• Roger Gerdes advocated for transparency as to how decisions are being made.• Ben Meine spoke against the mask mandate.
MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES	Chairman Verhaeghe called for a motion to approve the minutes from August 23, 2021. <i>Motion: Director MacPhee moved to approve the minutes from August 23, 2021. Seconded by Director Redline, the motion carried.</i>
CPO REPORT	None at this time.
PRINCIPAL'S REPORT - D. NICKLAY	<u>Enrollment Report</u> Principal Nicklay shared that current enrollment is 619 which is 8 fewer than opening day and is typical from historical data. <u>Alumni Update</u> Principal Nicklay provided an alumni update on Maya Burgess ('17) who went to George Fox University, double-majoring in international relations and politics and is now heading to Honduras to teach English.

**VICE PRINCIPAL'S
REPORT - A. LIPPY**

Principal Nicklay provided the Vice Principal's report in Mr. Lippy's absence. The soccer girls remain undefeated and the soccer boys are also doing well. Girls' volleyball won their last game. Middle school cross country and volleyball are underway - there are over 40 girls playing middle school volleyball.

**REGULAR COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

Finance & Long Range Planning Committee

The Finance & Long Range Planning Committee met last week and discussed a preview of the plan for professional development and the policy change that was put into place last month. They also discussed special education funding and the current enrollment.

Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee did not meet this month.

Education Excellence Committee

The Education Excellence Committee met briefly and agreed that they would like to avoid returning to online school.

Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is continuing to meet regularly for the April gala. The committee is currently working on securing sponsorships.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Verhaeghe called for a motion to hold an executive session as authorized by Idaho Code 74-206 sub section A & B.

Motion: Director MacPhee moved to enter into executive session as authorized by Idaho Code 74-206 sub sections A & B.

Director MacPhee led a roll call vote: Director Forsgren - yes, Director MacPhee - yes, Director Redline - yes, Director Rose-Kociela - yes, Chairman Verhaeghe - yes, the motion carried.

Entered executive session at 5:36 PM.

Motion: Director MacPhee moved to return to open session, seconded by Director Rose-Kociela, the motion carried.

Returned to open session at 5:43 PM.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Medical Benefits

Mr. Mabile reminded the board that a couple of months ago he came to them regarding an employee who wanted an HRA as an alternative to our current medical insurance plan. After doing research Mr. Mabile learned that we are not able to offer the type of plan that this employee desires without restructuring all employee medical benefits to a new plan. Director MacPhee suggested that Mr. Mabile should survey the employees to see if they would be interested in a new plan. Mr. Mabile agreed to do so but pointed out that suggesting a benefit reduction would not be a good way to attract employees. Currently the school is in a school benefit trust, which avoids tax and has buy-in to the trust.

COVID Response 2021-2022

Chairman Verhaeghe reminded the public that they have been heard and regardless of the decision, it is not political or based on personal preference. The goal is provide the best education possible and to be in-person and figure out how to keep kids in school with the tools that we have. Chairman Verhaeghe wanted to give each board member a chance to share their thoughts.

Director Redline asked to hear from Principal Nicklay as to his perspective. By and large,

Principal Nicklay believes that students are glad to be in school. He recognizes that nobody likes the mask, but believes it to be a nuisance that people put up with to be in school. So far there have been 5 confirmed cases this school year, and the biggest thing we have going for us is parents being willing to keep their kids home when they are sick.

Director Redline stated that he supports the wearing of masks. He acknowledged that the situation in Kootenai County is overwhelming the community and believes it to be a way to protect our staff and students.

Director MacPhee had asked the board clerk to send the other board members some links that he found regarding the wearing of masks from the National Institute of Health. He realizes that his own children have had troubles with the wearing of masks and pointed out that the United States has never advocated for masks on a national level until the COVID-19 pandemic. Director MacPhee shared several studies regarding the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of masks.

Director Forsgren asked Principal Nicklay what percentage of students would need to be out of school before we would be forced to move online. Principal Nicklay estimates that 30% of students would need to be out before it would be necessary to move to online-only.

Director MacPhee reminded the audience that the Charter Academy board is an all-volunteer board who are very invested, and all care deeply about this school.

Director Rose-Kociela spoke in support of masks. Masks are not always worn correctly but are overall effective.

Chairman Verhaeghe noted that nobody likes masks! They are not 100% effective, but nor are they 0% effective. There are valid studies that support both sides of the argument. The statistics are up to interpretation. She noted that the intention is not to keep masks permanently, as a children are not high risk for COVID.

Director Redline asked about legal action – what are the legal risks if we don't take reasonable precautions?

Director Forsgren questioned at what point the short-term requirement would end. Chairman Verhaeghe noted that as long as the hospital is in crisis, we would continue the mask requirement, re-evaluated every month based on Kootenai Health numbers as opposed to state numbers.

Director Redline recalled that at the August meeting there was a discussion about cases potentially spiking at the end of September and dropping off through October. This would be similar to what has happened in other communities. Director Redline also noted the importance of protecting the school staff and keeping long-term absences to a minimum.

Chairman Verhaeghe wanted the public to know that this decision was not one the board was taking lightly and one that all board members were struggling with.

***Motion:** Director MacPhee moved to drop the mask requirement and make masks optional for students. There was no second.*

***Motion:** Director Redline moved to continue with the current policy of allowing Principal Nicklay to continue to dictate a COVID response plan appropriate for the situation at hand.*

Chairman Verhaeghe noted that the board needs to be the one making the decision at this time.

***Motion:** Director Redline amended his motion to continue the mask mandate for Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy. Seconded by Director Rose-Kociela, the motion carried, with Directors Forsgren, Redline and Rose-Kociela in favor, and Director MacPhee opposed.*

NEW BUSINESS

SPED Manual

Principal Nicklay presented a SPED manual that needs to be approved on a yearly basis.

***Motion:** Director MacPhee moved to accept the SPED manual for the 2021-2022 school year, and revisit at the September 2022 board meeting. Seconded by Director Forsgren, the motion carried.*

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included professional development and leadership premium stipends, hiring of three coaches/advisors, and accepting one resignation.

***Motion:** Director MacPhee moved to adopt the consent agenda included in board packets. Seconded by Director Rose-Kociela, the motion carried.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Verhaeghe opened the floor for additional public comment.

- Dianna Renz is concerned that the board is opening a door that leads to a dangerous precedent that may be difficult to walk back from.
- Tyler Vranich spoke against the mask mandate.
- Julia Kopczynski spoke against the mask mandate and believes the school's job is to educate kids and not to save the world.
- Roger Gerdes spoke against the mask mandate.
- Gretchen Renz spoke against the mask mandate.
- Sarah Gerdes is very appreciative of the school and believes it is the best choice in the city. She said everyone needs to come together, be positive, and get on with educating students.

Chairman Verhaeghe noted that it was not planned to have a mask mandate before school started but hospitalizations were increasing. Chairman Verhaeghe recognized that this was a hard decision.

Director MacPhee acknowledged that even though the decision did not go the way he wanted it to, he does recognize that this is the best school in Coeur d'Alene and his student will be in school, with his mask on, tomorrow morning.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Verhaeghe called for a motion to adjourn at 6:53 PM.

***Motion:** So moved by Director MacPhee and seconded by Director Rose-Kociela, the motion carried.*

Cheri Rose-Kociela, Secretary