Caprock Academy Board of Directors
Tuesday, August 13, 2024
Regular Business Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
Caprock Academy - 714 24 1/2 Rd, Grand Junction, CO 81505

Meeting can be viewed virtually via Zoom.
In order to attend the meeting via video conference, use the link below:
In order to attend the meeting by phone, dial the number below and follow the prompts:
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86350206719?pwd=eUJYZkZZZnpmN1pVcWh3dHE3clZaQT09
Meeting ID: 863 5020 6719
Passcode: 707033
During the public comment period, you may make a comment by "raising your hand," then waiting to be called on by the host. To raise your hand from video conferencing, select the "Participants" icon, then select "Raise Hand" next to your name.
To raise your hand from a telephone, dial *9 (star 9).
All virtual participants will be muted by the host unless called on after raising a hand. Raised hands will not be recognized once the public comment period has ended.

Mission: We help all students achieve their highest academic and character potential, using proven accelerated academic programs while providing a safe environment.

Board Members in Attendance: Jessica Derryberry, Ryan Schramm, Kathy Cantu, Jenna Coffman, KJ Kline, Ryan McCulley.

Board Members in Attendance on Zoom: Dave Carlo

Others in attendance: Libby Bierbaum, Tisha Moore, Shane Chatfield, Randy Wilkens, Robin Dove, Camile Stitt, Lindsay Alstatt, Carolyn Nenne, Joshua Quigley, Torrin Perrett, Kilee Peck, Aymee Beisswanger, Dana Drones, Dylan Blount, Rose Obst, Cheri Miracle, Seth Thomas, Nita Brammeier, Danelle Sinclair, Justin Sinclair.

Others in attendance on Zoom: Melissa Chavez. Kim Klene, Kimberly Melancon, Lisa Lafever, Kerri Schulze, Andrea Simmonds-Cummings, Andrew Smith, CeCe Vanderwoude, Candice Freeman, Cheala Herrera, Christina Jones, Clayton Nehring, Danielle Zimmerman, Dan Sherrill, Darlene Rice, Heather Hatcher, Horacio Salazar, Deana Orient, Jennie Morris, Jessica Rix, Michelle Jones, Raluca Liles, Sonia Akers.

I. Pledge

II. Call to Order: Jessica Derryberry, CABD President **at 6:10pm**

III. Vision

Vision: Strengthening the community through the involvement of parents, educators and community leaders working together to provide an environment that fosters academic excellence and develops strong character in our students. We shape global citizens who set life goals and practice lives of service and virtue.

IV. Presentation of Excellence: Start of school

Evan Hunt focused on recognizing the successful and positive beginning of the school year, acknowledging various achievements and areas of improvement as the school community moves forward. Back-to-School Night was well attended, and feedback for enhancement is encouraged to further improve the experience in the future. Additionally, the uniform swap was the most successful to date, raising a record amount of funds. He emphasized the positive energy and momentum within the school, particularly in the middle school, where noticeable improvements have been observed. They expressed hope that this momentum will continue throughout the year and look forward to receiving further feedback from families.

V. General Public Comments

Members of the public may address the Board during this portion of the agenda on any topic. This comment period is not limited to items on the agenda. **Public Comments are limited to three (3) minutes and the total general public comment time is limited to twenty (20) minutes total.** The Board reserves the right to limit or end public comment that it deems to be defamatory, insulting, abusive, or does not comply with character expectations of the Caprock community. Please note that this Public Comment time is separate and distinct from a parent's opportunity to seek Board review of a matter concerning a specific student and a particular class and/or a specific circumstance of administration of a policy (see the Family Handbook, Grievance Policy SE8.5). Similarly, this opportunity is separate and distinct from a Caprock employee requesting Board review of a specific employment matter (see the Employee Handbook, Grievance Policy E 15.0).

Dana Thomas a high school Spanish and AP Psychology teacher expressed interest in the upcoming grading policy presentation and potential policy review. The teacher noted significant differences in expectations between high school and elementary levels, based on their experience teaching in both settings. Additionally, as an instructor of an Advanced Placement (AP) course, which follows a college-level curriculum, they emphasized the need for a grading policy that appropriately addresses these differences.

Carolyn Nenne high school math teacher, now in her eighth year, expressed interest in the upcoming grading policy presentation and potential policy review. She highlighted the contrast between two educational approaches: standards-based grading and the traditional A-B-C-D-F system currently in place. She noted that the existing policy, which incorporates remediation, creates a blend of the two approaches but does not align with the school's vision of rigor and high performance. She provided an example from her AP courses, where students are allowed to retake math tests for partial credit, which is inconsistent with college standards. She emphasized that in higher education, students typically only have one opportunity to take a test, and this practice of remediation undermines the rigor expected of AP courses. She called attention to the fact that the current grading practices are dictated by the Board, not by teachers or universities, and expressed hope for a thorough discussion on the matter.

Rose Obsts third-grade teacher expressed agreement with Miss Thomas, emphasizing the significant differences between lower grades (K-5) and high school. She noted that high

school students are in the logic stage of learning, while third-grade students are in the modeling stage, highlighting the developmental distinction between the two. She stressed that the grading and remediation policies should be adjusted to reflect the developmental appropriateness of each age group. Rose praised the school's focus on education that is developmentally appropriate, noting that remediations can be particularly beneficial for younger students as they allow for reflection and the opportunity to grasp missed concepts. She concluded by advocating for a review of the current policies to ensure they align with the developmental needs of the students based on their age.

Nita Brammeir a SpEd Paraprofessional emphasized the need for flexibility in the grading policy, particularly for younger students whose cognitive development is still ongoing. She noted that expecting 14- and 15-year-olds to take challenging courses and perform at a high level on their first attempt may not be realistic. Highlighting instances where high-achieving students have experienced significant stress or personal hardships, such as family losses, which have impacted their ability to perform well on exams. Additionally, she expressed concerns about fairness, pointing out that special education students are sometimes granted opportunities that other hardworking students are not. She advocated for giving teachers a greater say in remediation policies, suggesting this would offer more clarity for students and allow teachers greater control in managing their classrooms.

Cheri Miracle a parent expressed concern regarding the school's credit policy, noting that their daughter, who followed an accelerated path by taking high school-level courses in 7th and 8th grade, only received credit for the course completed in 8th grade upon entering high school. She emphasized that this issue needs to be addressed in the policy, as it may discourage students from pursuing higher-level courses if they are not assured of receiving credit for their efforts.

Josh Quigley a parent, with one child who graduated last year and another currently enrolled, expressed appreciation for the efficient format of Back-to-School Night. However, they raised concerns about the absence of a School Resource Officer (SRO) on campus, particularly given their 17 years of experience in law enforcement. The parent noted that other schools in the district (D51) have armed security and, while acknowledging the school's more limited funding, urged the administration to consider implementing a similar security presence. They also mentioned that several police officers have children attending the school, suggesting that collaboration on this issue could be beneficial.

VI. Consent Agenda

a. Consent Agenda (CABOD Members may request any item(s) be removed to be considered in full at meeting)
    i. June 11, 2024 Regular Business Meeting Minutes
    ii. Treasurer's Report
    iii. Enrollment Report
    iv. CASAC Report
        1. Board Approval for CASAC Membership:
            a. Candice Freeman
            b. Evan Hunt
            c. Sydney Swaim
            d. Tracee Flenard
            e. Bonnie Butler
            f. Lori Muhr

g. Heather Thom
h. Anna Glinko
i. Marisa Barslund
j. Steven Kovarovics
k. Florence Edeigba
l. Laura Kligora
m. Miranda Cordova

v. CAST Report

Motion to approve Consent Agenda w/ amendment to move CASAC Report item 1. "Board Approval for CASAC Membership" to New Business on the agenda. 1st RS, 2nd RM, motion carried.

VII. Financial

a. Consideration and possible approval of May 2024 Financial Reports as submitted.

Motion to approve May Financial Reports 1st RS, 2nd KJ , motion carried.

b. Consideration and possible approval of June 2024 Financial Reports as submitted.

Motion to approve June Financial Reports 1st KJ, 2nd RS , motion carried.

VIII. New Business

a. BOD Nondiscrimination Training

All the Board members are required to do non-discrimination training annually. This has been provided to BOD members to review and complete.

b. UIP Review

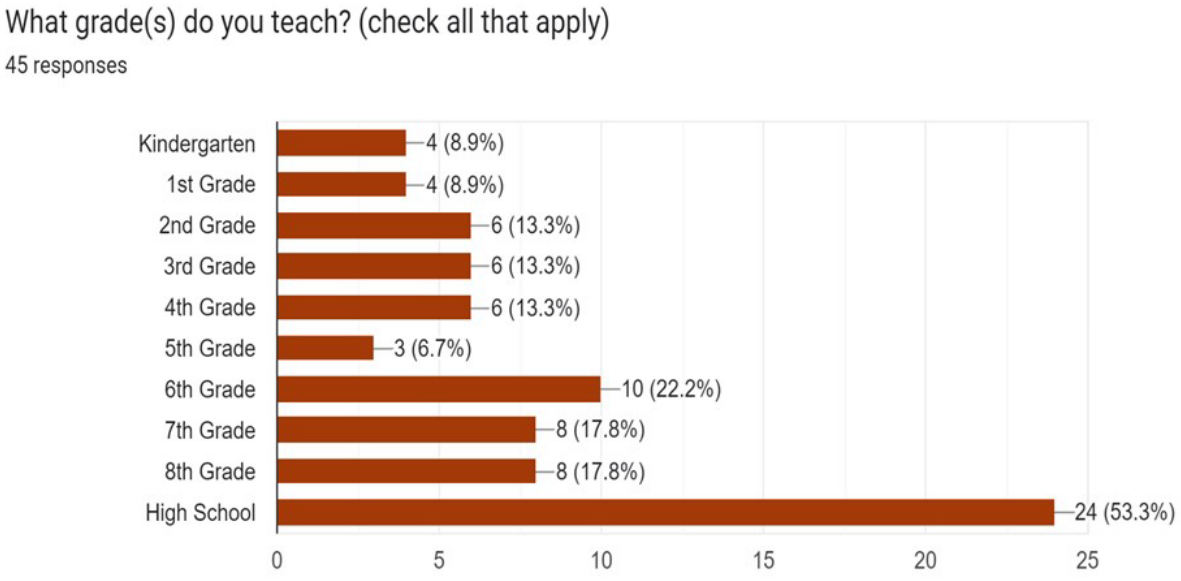
Evan Hunt discussed a report provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) for all public schools, with the current focus on the 2023-2024 report, as the updated version has not yet been provided. The report outlines key performance challenges, root causes, and major improvement strategies to guide school improvement efforts. Evan referenced low elementary ELA growth and low middle school math growth as key challenges, attributing them to a lack of curricular fidelity and expertise. The CDE recommended expanding instructional coaching and adjusting middle school scheduling, actions that the school has already implemented. Evan Hunt expressed anticipation for the new report, noting that the instructional coaching program has been in place for nearly a year, and hopes the updated data will reflect improvements. The report is expected to arrive before the next Board of Directors meeting.

c. Grading policy presentation and possible policy review

Rebecca Roseberry presented a PowerPoint on the Impact of the New Grading Policy.

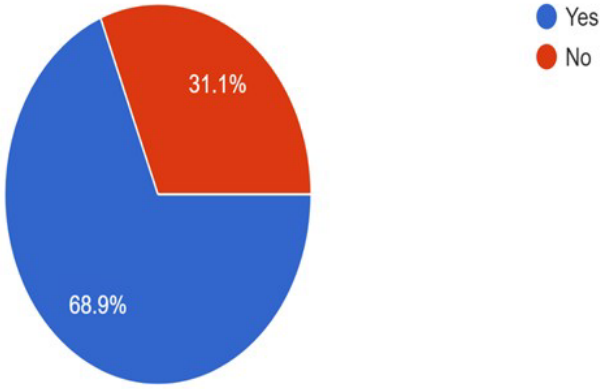
Teacher Survey and purpose

- Survey of teachers at end of last school year and captured those we missed at the beginning of this school year - no responses from new teachers
- Its purpose was to gather data on how the new grading and remediation policies were affecting teachers, students, and grades.



Have you experienced unintended negative consequences of the new grading policy regarding late work and remediations?

45 responses



Grading Policy on Late Work: Key findings

Positive Feedback:

1. **Increased Motivation and Accountability**:
   - Students are more motivated to turn assignments in on time.
   - Filling out a late form for late submissions helps maintain accountability.
2. **Reduced Stress**:
   - The policy reduces stress, helping students manage their grades better.
   - It provides opportunities for students to keep their grades above a C.

Findings (continued)

3. **Improved Submission Rates**:

- A significant decrease in missing assignments.
- Students are more willing to complete and submit work knowing they won't automatically fail.

4. Fairness and Grace:

- The policy is seen as fairer than the previous one, encouraging students to turn in late work rather than give up.
- Allows teachers to give grace to students with legitimate reasons for late submissions.

Findings (continued)

Negative Feedback:

1. **Decreased Accountability**:
   - Some believe the policy sets a precedent that due dates aren't important.
   - It allows students to turn in work late without much detriment, potentially promoting mediocrity.
2. **Increased Teacher Workload**:
   - Tracking late submissions and calculating penalties is time-consuming.
   - More inquiries from parents about grades add to the administrative burden.

Findings (continued)

3. **Mixed Impact on Student Behavior**:
   - Some students continue to turn in work late, regardless of the policy.
   - A few teachers noticed more late submissions due to the lesser penalty.
4. **Varied Perception of Effectiveness**:
   - Some teachers did not see a significant change in the quantity or timeliness of late work.
   - A belief that students who tend to turn in work late will do so regardless of the policy.

Findings (continued)

Neutral/Other Observations:

1. **Impact on Grades**:
   - Mixed views on the impact of the policy on grades. Some noted higher grades due to lesser penalties, while others saw no significant change.
2. **Classroom Dynamics**:
   - Adjustments in classroom routines to prevent students from copying answers.
   - The policy's effect on class plans when students delay work due to lesser penalties.

Summary

In summary, while the new late work policy has had positive effects in terms of reducing student stress and increasing motivation and submission rates, it also presents challenges in terms of accountability, teacher workload, and mixed impacts on student behavior.

Possible Solution

The original change in policy was a pendulum swing from a strict 50% penalty for all late work to something that might have been too far the other way. After speaking to the other deans and several teachers, I wanted to offer something that might be in the middle.

Most believed that 10% was a good middle place for grades K-6. While 10% seems to be a working solution for these ages, it might need to be a little higher to help with accountability for the older population. The suggestion is 20% for 6-12. These percentages would be the penalty. A straight 10% for K-5 and 20% for 6-12.

Late Work Policy

We also would like to suggest that the late work "drop dead" date be the last Thursday before mid-term and final term for each quarter.

We feel that learning is not happening when a student is waiting until the last week before the term is over to turn in late assignments, when it has possibly been weeks since the content was introduced. At this point, the student is turning in work for points, and learning has ceased or is minimal, at best.

Remediation Policy

Key Issues:

1. **Poor Study Habits**: Many students neglect studying, relying on the opportunity to retake tests after seeing the questions. This leads to insufficient preparation and undermines the development of good study habits essential for future academic success.
2. **Grade Inflation**: Students, including honors students, often use remediations to artificially boost their grades, making their grades not true reflections of their actual knowledge and abilities.

Remediation Policy (continued)

3. Increased Teacher Workload: Teachers face a significant burden with the need to re-grade tests and track late work, leading to a doubling of grading effort for each test.

4. Lower Academic Rigor: The current policy is perceived to lower the academic rigor and expectations at the school, as it allows students to put in less effort initially, knowing they can make up for it later.

5. Parental Influence: Some parents encourage students to not worry about deadlines or performance, knowing remediations can help recover lost points, further undermining the policy's intent.

Remediations (continued)

6. Student Mindset: Some students intentionally leave questions blank or perform poorly on initial attempts, counting on remediations to secure their grades later.

A few quotes

“Remediations for math tests has been a struggle this year. I had a lot of students who showed up and took the test not studying. They had the mindset that they could see the test, bomb it, then get a second chance to correct answers after seeing what the questions were on the test. It does not help teach good study habits that will hurt them in college. I also had students who would regularly get A's on tests and then remediate to pad their overall grade for extra points. Remediations make sense if the whole class struggled on key concepts, but for the math department it has created bad study habits and expectations that they did not need to perform well on the first go around.”

“Some students will purposely leave questions blank on assessments, saying "I'll just remediate."

“I have to grade every test twice. I had 6 math classes. During finals, I had to have them graded in under twenty-four hours to be ready for "remediation day." Then, I had to regrade them and be finished by Friday at noon. All. Six. Classes. Graded twice. How is this rigorous?”

“Despite any teacher's efforts to keep students from copying homework during class, students could still do so and earn an A on an assignment. Another consequence is that the new policy has increased my individual workload. Late work now takes longer to grade, and test remediations are more complex as well.”

"Students who complete the work late tend to fall behind. This puts them in a bad place because they are not on track with the rest of the group. If they get behind early, they are likely to be behind for the entire quarter or more. Also, if a student does poorly and scores around a 50% that shows that they are not demonstrating knowledge of the necessary material in order to move on. If they remediate, they can get all the way up to a 75%. Not knowing the material and earning a C is inappropriate."

"Student grades are not true reflections of their abilities/knowledge. This policy inflates grades, even for honors students who want to get their class grade from a B to an A."

Issues that must be addressed

- Loss of 8-12 instructional days per year *at minimum*
- Increased negative classroom behaviors on remediation days (4-8)
  - Remediations are student choice, but under current policy, offering remediation during the school day ***for every summative*** is NOT a choice for the teacher.
- Grades are not reflective of true mastery
  - Students get moved on before they are ready in core classes because retention has not occurred - points were added to a test
- Some summatives are NOT able to be remediated:
  - Science projects/labs, speeches, group work, Socratic seminars, Final Exams

Problems for finals

This past year, the high school implemented finals. We were trying to deal with a cultural issue, promote rigor, and mimic what they might see in college if they were college-bound. We felt that not having finals seemed antithetical to our goals of rigor and was confusing since the District gives finals in most subjects. Our remediation policy required us to offer remediations for finals because it was summative. Since finals were on the last week of the semester, we had to give substandard tests because the goal was to be able to grade fast, since we had to offer them a day to remediate before getting grades in. In my British Lit Honors class, I had to give them a multiple choice test in order to turn it around fast enough for remediations. Multiple choice is the worst choice for testing with rigor.

Possible Solution

The differences in those who felt very strongly about the remediation policy and those who either liked it or had no feelings was based on the subject matter and the age group of the students. Math and science teachers felt the strongest about remediation due to the nature of their subjects and testing. High school and middle school teachers were the most affected as well since we felt this is where we teach note taking, study habits, and prepare them for the expectations and demands in the real world.

Possible Solution (continued)

For these reasons, we want to propose that grade level teachers and teachers of the same discipline make a plan of how they would like to treat remediations and give their proposals to their respective Deans. The Deans will collectively approve plans that will ensure cohesion among the age levels and monitor age appropriateness of procedures.

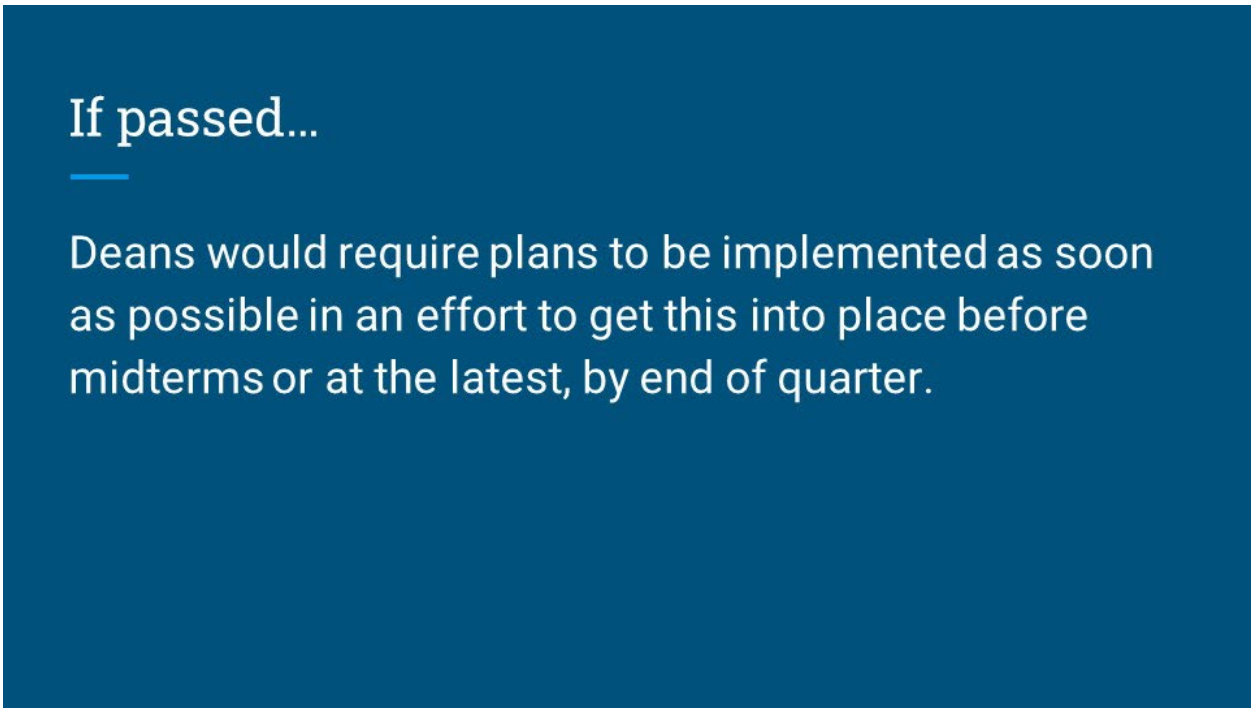
The Deans have the unique perspective of seeing everything in their departments from a bird's eye view that can be crucial to the development of these procedures. We can also assure that when there is turnover that there will be continuity.

Proposed language:

— All grading policies/remediation policies at Caprock will be built on these guiding principles:

1) **Support the pillars of the Caprock Mission and Vision**
2) **Reflect developmentally-appropriate needs of the grade levels**
3) **Reflect a continuum of student independence and ownership**
4) **Be appropriate for the needs of teachers, students, and families**
5) **Reflect consideration of families with students in multiple grade levels**

***Final approval by Head of School with a concern for consistency and the above principles**



No motion, BOD decided to not vote and will address this when represented at a later meeting.

d. Policy 7.1 review, discussion and possible vote

Presented by Rebecca Roseberry.

Policy AP 7.4 - Assignment Due Dates, Late Grades, and Remediation (K-12)
All assignment due dates are at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Unless otherwise noted by the classroom teacher, all assignments are required to be turned in on the date due at the beginning of the meeting time of the assigning class. When a student does not turn an assignment in on time, it will be the student's responsibility to communicate with the instructor in order to create a plan for turning the assignment in as soon as possible.
For the K-6, assignments turned in after the due date will be assessed a 10% penalty for every school day the assignment is late up to a maximum of 50%,(remove all of this) beginning immediately after the assignment deadline has passed. For example, an assignment turned in 3 school days after the due date will incur a 30% penalty, meaning the assignment will only be worth 70% of the grade earned.(remove all of this) For the 7-12, assignments turned in after the due date will be assessed a 20% penalty beginning immediately after the assignment deadline has passed. Late assignments must be turned at the last Thursday before midterms for first 5 weeks of quarter or second to last Thursday of a quarter after week 5.
For the K-12, one remediation will be allowed on all Summative Assessments (e.g., end of unit, end of semester, etc). Teachers will ensure that end of quarter/semester assessments will be planned in such a way as to allow time for remediation on such assessments. The purpose of remediation is to encourage students to correct misunderstandings. Therefore, students may earn 50% back on the points they have missed on a summative assessment after being given a chance to remediate. Summative assessment

remediations must be completed within the same quarter that the assessment was originally given. Formative assessment remediations (e.g., regular homework, recursive writing assignments, quizzes, etc) will only be allowed at the discretion of the individual classroom teacher. Remediations will not be allowed to make-up points lost due to turning an assignment in late but may be used to increase scores within the points allowed after factoring in the late penalties.

New language for remediation:
Deans will collectively approve plans proposed by grade level teachers and teachers from disciplines that will ensure cohesion among the age levels and monitor age appropriateness of procedures. All grading policies/remediation policies at Caprock will be built on these guiding principles:

1. Reflect developmentally-appropriate needs of the grade levels
2. Reflect a continuum of student independence and ownership
3. Be appropriate for the needs of teachers, students, and families.
4. Reflect consideration of families with students in multiple grade levels.

*Final approval by Head of School with a concern for consistency and the above principles.

No motion, BOD decided to not vote and will address this when represented at a later meeting.

e. Strategic plan

Jenna Coffman stated that herself, Evan Hunt and Jessica Derryberry met to discuss how they would like to move forward with putting together the Strategic Plan. The BOD will be doing a retreat to complete this in a timely manner.

f. Head of School Operations Update
   i. Hiring update

Significant changes have occurred since the last meeting. The K-4 Dean, Kindra Swim, has departed, and Robin Dove has been appointed to fill this position. Additionally, Horacio Salazar has been hired as Director of Facilities & Safety-Security, with a primary focus on overseeing safety and security measures. Don Christensen has also joined the team as Director of Support Services. There are also a couple of open positions being posted in the following weeks.

ii. 2024-2025 Enrollment & Waitlist Update

Evan Hunt reported that the current total enrollment stands at 910, indicating positive growth and a strong trajectory for the school. The registrars have been working diligently to reduce the waitlist. With enrollment trending upwards, there is optimism that the upcoming October count will meet the necessary targets.

i. CASAC Membership approval w/ the addition of Jessica Derryberry as the representative.

a. Candice Freeman
b. Evan Hunt
c. Sydney Swaim

d. Tracee Flenard
e. Bonnie Butler
f. Lori Muhr
g. Heather Thom
h. Anna Glinko
i. Marisa Barslund
j. Steven Kovarovics
k. Florence Edeigba
l. Laura Kligora
m. Miranda Cordova

Motion to approve 1st KC, 2nd JC motion carried.

IX. Old Business

a. Policy Review update

Jessica Derryberry provided an update, stating that we have contracted with a law firm to review the Employee Handbook. Once the review is completed, a governance committee will be established to begin the process of updating and reviewing the school's policies.

b. Board retreat review

The Board of Directors (BOD) is currently working on implementing several new procedures, including refining the communication procedure and providing a clearer structure for agenda development and review. Additionally, the BOD is evaluating its various committees and their representatives.

X. Future Agenda Items Discussion

a. Title IX policy update

The BOD is currently reviewing the development of a Title IX policy in collaboration with legal counsel and other relevant contractors. The updates will be presented to staff and the public once finalized. The policy is required to be implemented by November 1st.

XI. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn at7:51 pm 1st JB, 2nd KC, motion carried.