

Charter School for Applied Technologies  
317 Vulcan Street, Buffalo, New York 14207  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING 5/12/2020**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: In person,** David Quackenbush, Michael Keller, John Cinquino, Joseph Berti **Via Teleconference:** Andrea Pasioka, Michael Stevens, Danielle Salasavage, Ian Donnelly, Karen Kelley, Lisa Smith, Robert Mikulec, Kenneth Robinson

**UNABLE TO ATTEND:**

**OTHERS PRESENT: In person:** Andrew Lyle, Garrick Loveria, Robert Shannon, Thomas Sullivan, **Via Teleconference:** Tanya Moore, Ann Morgante, Sue Jurewicz, Gregory Mott, Brett Lutterbein, Daniel Scholze, Nicole Killion, Alison Kuitems, Keith Banas, Matthew Folger

**MINUTES**

Motion to approve the April 7, 2020 Minutes, including permanent committee reports and those submitted under ad hoc committee, made by Mr. Berti, seconded by Mr. Cinquino. Minutes approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**PRESENTATION**

None. Mr. Quackenbush noted that this is a momentous Board meeting in that this is the first time in CSAT's history that we have been renewed during a pandemic. Our administrative team, staff, and teachers have done an outstanding job, we are retaining our customers and doing what we pledged to do as a Board and staff. He noted the school has served 30,000 meals, distributed 1,000 laptops and teaching remotely, Thank You to everyone for a job well done!

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**Cabinet Report & Principals Report-** Mr. Lyle thanked the Board and the Administrative Team for all their work these past two months. As you know, CSAT received a 5-year renewal from the Board of Regents, the vote was 13-4. The comments from a few of the Regents were highly political. Several Regents members made comments which indicated they are not in favor of the charter movement. It became

obvious when they voted not to renew Buffalo Academy of Science, one of the highest performing charters in Buffalo. Mr. Lyle provided an update on the extended school closure and the tremendous work the faculty and staff did in three short days to provide work for the students, prepare meals, distribute laptops and hold some creative Zoom conferences with their students. All this information was submitted as required to State Ed.

In lieu of a Principals Report, Mr. Lyle introduced Alison Kuitems, CSAT's Technology Integration Specialist, to give us an overview of the technology being used by faculty. Ms. Kuitems highlighted a number of examples that CSAT has provided the teachers to use for the students: K-2 Padlet exercises & 3-12 Microsoft team exercises (examples shown) as well as on-line learning resources for teachers and on-line teacher webinars which are provided weekly. All learning resources are recorded in case the teacher cannot attend at the time provided. Mr. Berti asked if CSAT is grading students. Mr. Lyle responded that we are not as we are monitoring feedback from students. Teachers are reaching out to students who have not accessed their work. Laptop distribution will increase the work being completed. Mr. Shannon thanked the Technology staff for getting the laptops ready under short notice. Most families do have access to connectivity. Mr. Berti asked about the training we are providing teachers in this new learning environment. Ms. Kuitems commented that she is in constant contact and provides daily office hours for teachers. There is some exemplary work being done by the teachers that they share with one another. Tech support is also available to staff. Mr. Quackenbush asked if the Charter School Office is aware of what CSAT is doing. Mr. Lyle replied that they certainly are aware, and CSAT's continuing learning plans is being used as an example not only to other charters but public districts as well. Mr. Quackenbush inquired about end of year grades. Mr. Lyle said that at present there is no guidance on that issue right now. There is no doubt that the pandemic has altered education going forward. We will continue to monitor the situation as we await guidance from State Ed on how education will be provided when schools re-open.

### **PERMANENT BOARD COMMITTEES**

**Finance-** Mr. Cinquino discussed the stock market volatility in recent months and its effect on our investments. CSAT has 3 different advisors for its 3 portfolios. From Dec.-March, the market was down 20-30% while our portfolios were down 19%, 18% and 14% respectively. From Dec.-May, our portfolios were down 8%, 9% and 14% respectively. This volatility does occur every 3-4 years in the market. We do anticipate the market will come back to where it was in recent months. In terms of actual dollars, at its worst, our losses were \$1.7 million, at present, our losses are at \$850,000.

Mrs. Moore discussed the work that is taking place regrading the 2020-2021 budget. We are still awaiting word from NYS on per-pupil reimbursement and possible cuts to charter schools. Currently, the draft budget is being built with a 2% decrease. There is good news on health care costs, a 1.3% decrease. Many Covid-19 related costs are included. We will present the draft budget to the Finance Committee shortly and then to

the entire Board at the June meetings. The March financials are complete. We do anticipate a surplus for the 2019-2020 school year.

As for the SPED intercept issue with Buffalo Public Schools (BPS), we have scaled back our work with the other charter schools. We are receiving all our per pupil funding from all districts. BPS did not include our Consultant Teacher SPED adjustment with their final payment (\$394,000). Mr. Lyle and Mrs. Moore have been in contact with Buffalo on this issue but have not yet received a response. We will follow up shortly. Mr. Quackenbush commented that this is the best option to use on this matter with BPS. We will however keep our options open to a possible intercept with New York State.

### **AD HOC COMMITTEES**

**Appeals-** None

**Facilities-** Mr. Keller said that the surface lot construction will begin on Thursday with a target completion date in late June. The landscaping may take a bit longer as we need to plant trees as per City of Buffalo. As for the crosswalk, Tonawanda is looking at this as they might be responsible for taking care of it as part of the town improvement plan. The costs may be higher as we may need more concrete work. The target completion date is also the end of June.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Quackenbush noted that the final document for CSAT Foundation was included in the packet for your review.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Enrollment-** Mr. Loveria reviewed the current enrollment which remains the same as last month at 2344. Please note the difference from May 2019 which is noted at bottom of the page. As shown in the report, we are up substantially from last year. The Lottery on April 3 went well. We are still trying to have parents complete the enrollment process. At present, we are at approximately 175 enrolled for Kindergarten, which is short of our goal of 185. We also have openings in grades 2 & 3. In reaching out to parents, many indicated that due to the pandemic, taking care of enrollment paperwork was the last thing on their minds. A few also commented that they thought they were set when they received notification that they were accepted. There are still a number of parents who are undecided. Mr. Lyle commented that he has heard from other charters that they are having the same issue. Mr. Donnelly asked how we are marketing ourselves to show how we are standing apart from other schools. Mr. Lyle replied that we are working with the Communication Office to show how we are connecting with our families and highlighting examples of outstanding teacher online learning lessons. Mr. Quackenbush encouraged the staff to work on that to show how well CAST is responding to the pandemic.

**Personnel-** Mr. Lyle reviewed the personnel report. There is nothing new to report except for an update on Family Leave requests.

A motion to accept the Enrollment & Personnel report was made by Mr. Keller, seconded by Mr. Berti. Motion approved.

**Policy-** Mr. Loveria proposed for Board consideration an update to school policy on Immunization and Child Abuse and Maltreatment. The Immunization update clarifies the school and parent responsibilities. The Child Abuse and Maltreatment updates training for staff and whistleblower protection. After some discussion, the Policy updates were tabled for further discussion at the June meeting.

**Other-** Mr. Robinson asked about meals distribution and if there are any problems with families who are unable to pick up the meals. Mr. Lyle replied that we have made arrangements with a few parents and have also been in contact with the public school district of residence and those families can pick up meals there as well. Mrs. Kelley asked if there is any sense on what things will look like once school is back in session. Mr. Lyle said that there is no update yet. We are guided by Erie County Health Department. We are having conversations almost daily on what changes may take place in the buildings, on buses, activities, etc.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to move to Executive Session at 5:50 pm to discuss certain matters made by Mr. Berti, seconded by Mr. Cinquino. Motion approved. No action requiring Board vote arose. Motion to leave Executive Session and adjourn the regular meeting at 7:30pm was made by Mrs. Pasieka, seconded by Mr. Keller. Meeting adjourned.

**Next Meeting: June 9, 2020, 4:30pm**