

CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

7:00 p.m., August 19, 2025

Date of Approval: Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Call to Order: The Board of Trustees for the Chester Charter Scholars Academy held a public Board Meeting on August 19, 2025, via Zoom. The meeting convened at 7:04 pm. An Executive Session took place in advance of the public Board Meeting to discuss personnel and litigation matters. Members of the Board in attendance (at the time of the call to order): President Francis Hoover, Ben Berger, Bill Cumby, Grant Gegwich, Pam Greenblatt, Marilyn Henkelman, Chris Klock, Zach Oberfield, Judy Owen, Alice Turbiville, Judy Wertheimer, Chanel Young. Also in attendance were Don Delson (Member Emeritus), and Head of School/CEO Akosua Watts.

Public Comments: Ryan Fisher, CCSA Director of Athletics & Character Development; Tara Park, CCSA Strategic & Special Projects Manager

Approval of Minutes

- The Board reviewed and adopted the minutes of the June 17, 2025, meeting of the Chester Charter Scholars Academy Board of Trustees
 - Motion – Ben Berger
 - Second – Judy Wertheimer
 - Ayes: 12 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

School Report, Akosua Watts, Head of School & CEO

- Enrollment Updates
 - Fully enrolled for upcoming school year
 - Waiting list at ~480 students (down from historical ~700)
 - Strongest demand in middle school and 9th grade
 - 10th grade showing higher new student numbers due to transitions
 - Some students moved/transferred after 9th grade
 - Others returned from trying private/parochial schools
- Staffing and Recruiting Updates
 - Designed an internal interview process, received good feedback from candidates, particularly for leadership roles
 - Created pipeline for alumni recruitment
 - Fully staffed except for a medical situation with one staff member

- Strategic Plan Implementation Progress - Strategic Focus Area #1/Building Excellence by Attracting, Retaining & Developing Talent:
 - Staff Leadership Expansion Plan
 - New distributed leadership model to utilize existing staff capacity
 - Positions created with stipends (approx \$40k total annual cost):
 - Benefits: staff retention, reduced leadership workload, professional development
 - Enhanced Mentor Program
 - Complete redesign from previous years
 - Application-based mentor selection (2+ years' experience required)
 - Structured components: Topic, Task, Talk format
 - Real-time tracking via shared Google sheets
 - Compensation provided for additional responsibilities
 - New staff satisfaction: all rated satisfied/highly satisfied
- Strategic Focus Area #2/Academic Growth & Student Success:
 - New curriculum scopes aligned to PSSA/Keystone standards
 - Monthly teacher reflection tools tracking 80% mastery targets
 - Integration with STAR and Firefly assessments
 - Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) codified
 - Tier 1: universal supports for all students
 - Tier 2: targeted interventions for struggling students
 - Tier 3: intensive support after failed Tier 2 response
 - Professionalism matrix launched
 - Replaced elementary "CCSA Way" with K-12 progression
 - Aligned with PBIS system (Be Safe, Respectful, Responsible)
 - Professional skills embedded: self-management, communication, collaboration
- Charter School Annual Report
 - Completed report will be submitted to the Chester Upland School District. It was noted that Judy Wertheimer's name was spelled incorrectly and will be remediated before submission.
 - Board consensus: all agreed on report submission
- School Events
 - Summary of upcoming events – board will be kept updated on current and future events and are encouraged to attend
- Summer Programs - iAM Project
 - 20 students completed Neumann University residential experience
 - 20 different students participated in Philadelphia Union internship program
 - Worked in back office and front office operations

- Helped with WSFS Sports Plex ribbon cutting
 - Completed internal projects for Union organization
 - Positive feedback on student engagement and maturity
- Basketball Tournament Inclusion, Ryan Fisher, CCSA Director of Athletics & Character Development
 - Team invited to Play-By-Play Classic at Widener University
 - Requires playing Chester High School (historical incident concerns)
 - Safety measures confirmed:
 - Multiple security guards and police presence
 - \$15-20 ticket pricing for crowd control
 - Event organizer willing to hire additional security
 - Community focus: Chester Community Coalition, health organizations to attend
 - Previous incident parents no longer in either school system
 - Board consensus: proceed with tournament participation

Committee Reports

Nom/Gov Committee, Judy Owen, Committee Chair

- Board handbook updates in progress including new strategic plan
- Risk Management Committee (VOTE)
 - Protocol for creating a new committee was established
 - Created a draft charter for a Risk Management Committee
 - Chair: Grant Gegwich
 - Members: Bill Cumby, Ian Wilcox, foundation board member TBD
 - Focus: regulatory compliance, threat assessment, crisis planning
- Ms. Hoover called for a motion to approve the draft charter of a Risk Management Committee:
 - Motion – Grant Gegwich
 - Second – Marilyn Henkelman
 - Ayes: 12 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Finance Committee, Alice Turbiville, Committee Chair

- June Financials
 - Review of June statements showed a positive result – surplus of \$1.1M, and cash on hand is \$13.5M
- Committed Fund Balance (VOTE)
 - New language will provide cash flow flexibility during budget holdups
 - Amended language proposal
 - Added “offset delays in federal, state and school district funding”
- Ms. Hoover called for a motion to accept the amended language for the Committed Fund Balance:
 - Motion – Alice Turbiville
 - Second – Zach Oberfield

o Ayes: 12 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

Strategic Planning Committee, Judy Wertheimer, Committee Chair

- Metrics Tracker
 - o Metrics to be reported out quarterly by responsible committees, dates TBD
- Facilities Prioritization
 - o Add master facilities assessment to strategic plan tracker
- Continuing Work with Align Partners
 - o Received proposal from Align Partners regarding follow up services, including Executive Director coaching

Old Business/New Business

None

Adjournment: The public meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Date of Next Scheduled Public Board Meeting: September 16, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.