

Charter School for Applied Technologies

Board Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2025



Public Comments Minutes

- Minutes from 11.04.2025 ○ Motion to Approve – Andrea Pasioka ○ Second – Steve Kottakis ○ Motion approved.

Presentation:

- **Music Band Trip– Mr. Sibbitts, Mr. Zappavigna, Ms. Carissimo**
 - Mr. Sibbitts discussed highlights from this year so far: two students from the HS were accepted into All-state jazz ensemble – French horn and trombone players, and some others, Buff State Choir Concert (both choirs were invited!), Honor Group, winter concerts next week (M, T, W), Modern Band oldies concert featuring students playing instruments they don't normally play – this Thursday! Pep band plays the basketball games and will play with Canisus University a few times this year, also several students pursuing careers/college for music are working hard on this.
 - **Marching Band trip for the year – WASHINGTON, DC**
 - 40-50 students to the Music in the Parks competition at Kings Dominion Theme Park
 - There are some fundraisers going on to support the music initiatives
 - Mr. Sibbitts gave the details for this trip including overview, transportation, lodging/meals, attractions/schedule, fundraising, and student costs
 - Funding is provided by Band Boosters budget and Marching Band Transportation Budget
 - Seeking approval from the board to head out of state:
 - Motion – John Cinquino
 - Second – Andrea Pasioka
 - Mr. Berti voiced that he appreciated the changes made to the band trips and Mr. Cinquino asked how the students are chosen for the trip, Ms. Smith suggested the Civil War battlefield in Fredericksburg to visit.

Administrative Reports – Mr. Lyle

- **Administrative Report** – Mr. Loveria ○ Meeting with M&T Foundation to review our ECCP program. Mr. Loveria believes that there is a good possibility to be able to purchase another vehicle to support our Internship Program. ○ Bringing school choice up to Niagara Falls for CSAT, seems like it could be helpful in recruiting students. We will have to have at least one bus to be able to support this. Going to hold a public forum at the Underground Heritage Museum on January 5, 2026. Niagara Falls is 4x the size of Lackawanna and we bus from there, so we are looking to recruit especially from the K-5 levels.
- **Principal's Report** - Mr. Heyden ○ Mr. Heyden focused on the culture components working this year at CSAT MS. Bridge between elementary and high school. RALPH values.
- Safe, inclusive, rewarding environment highlights:
 - Tier 1: competitions – ie “Race for Respect” (both staff and student competition) with visuals to demonstrate for students the progression of the competition – students chose the winning prize: a kickball tournament! Tier 1 continues to support overall other with Eagle bucks and the Eagle Store, lunch with an administrator

- Music Department: Pep Band, MS students put on “Annie Jr.” the musical (35 students), Holiday concert, Polar Express movie night, lots of culture building in this department
- Clubs and activities: art club, book club, knitting club, run club, student council
- High Honor Roll breakfast: 72 students achieve High Honor Roll, 128 students on Honor Roll
- Next step: recognize all students every day for the positives they are doing in the building ▪ Spirit Week next week
- Tonight is the first all-girls wrestling meet – 15 girls!
- Athletic participation: has been growing at the middle school. Holds students accountable and
 - Female athletic participation has increased in wrestling, volleyball, basketball, soccer.
 - Wrestling continues to show strong interest with high retention.
 - Overall tryout numbers have increased.
 - Addition of boys’ volleyball is a very popular addition.
 - Girls modified basketball team beat last night.

Permanent Board Committees

- **Quality Assurance** – Ms. Pasieka
 - Middle school focus this month:
 - Ms. Pasieka related the details from the last QA meeting focusing on the middle school presentation.
 - Students next year to take Algebra I in 8th grade – (about 40). Currently they are in 7/8 accelerated math.
 - Discussed growth and progression of ELA and Math growth through IXL on a monthly basis
 - Discussed some of the behavior issues and summary – Mr. Heyden also noted that outreach to families has really had a positive effect on reducing significant behaviors.
 - Discussed the results of some of the top questions from the Satchel Pulse survey and challenges and successes
 - High School highlights – we are coming up on midterms and Regents (January), 206 students taking Regents in January
 - Elementary school – Junior achievement, moving forward with developing a plan for essential learning standards, in process of working through AIS referrals
- **Finance (Audit)** – Mr. Cinquino
 - Annual audit summary: The auditors gave out a summary and presentation, along with the details and letters
 - Clean opinion on the financial statements – highest rating
 - Audit “yellow book” report – no findings
 - Single audit – focusing on ESSR funding – no issues or findings
 - Audit met the filing requirements by NYS
 - Long term debt is presented as current this year
 - Audit adjustments: related to the long-term lease on the balance sheet for the MS building, accrued payroll for summer pay – increase of \$282,000 (lease liability and readiness asset)
 - No difficulties or issues with the audit and deadline of November 1 was met with no issues
 - No material weakness management letter
 - Comments and observations: steady improvement with periodic reviews of payroll, independent reviewer of payroll
 - Net loss of \$435,000 (expenses exceeded that) – salaries increased and benefits by \$3.3, million, increase of tech expenses, contracted services increased as well
 - Revenue – increase of \$1.2 million

- Total # of students down slightly but offset by increase in student rates
 - Healthy financial position – strong and healthy as of June 30, 2025 – consistent with last year's and it's apparent that everyone is invested in the viability and consistency of the organization.
 - **Questions/comments:** material change in the payroll – total payroll was up 10% - anything over 5% is considered “material”, review process looks at changes per individual employees – looking for unauthorized compensation.
 - Mr. Cinquino discussed segregation of duties as pivotal to the financial stability and that some of the loss is a conscious decision to continue to operate at same staffing levels, post-ESSR dollars to provide continuity of learning for students. Mr. Berti noted that we are starting to see a return on this investment with the student data.
- **Career Readiness** – Mr. Kottakis
 - Mr. Berti discussed Xello investment – presentation in January – how will this work for our program evaluation, shout out for today's Etiquette Lunch with the high school students.
 - Mr. Bigouette discussed the Etiquette Lunch. We had 10 students use the “career closet” to support the dress code. 85/87 students in attendance at Etiquette Lunch.
 - Highlights of events: Celebration of Reading and Etiquette Lunch – our partnerships with community organizations and businesses is really strong.
 - Xello – strong push K-12, well involved in Media Studies in 7th and 8th grades. Portfolios work also in the process. Students are talking about Xello.
 - Van is a constraint for us with the Internship Program. Hindering our ability to get the internships all together. There was some discussion about the ask for the additional van(s) and how that would work.
 - If anyone has connections involving law enforcement, it would be very helpful. – Law enforcement, criminal justice, and firefighting. Mr. Cornacchio cited interest from students in manufacturing but not as many manufacturers are interested. Trying to build relationships – we are building a stronger relationship with Tesla right now. Ms. Smith has a client (Brinkman) in Rochester that could be a possibility, and she will inquire about an introduction. Mr. Bigouette would like to have them out for the Career Fair at least.
 - There was a suggestion put forth by board members to increase the level of banking with M&T to help support the partnership with them.
- **PTO** – Mr. Campbell
 - Mr. Campbell discussed the PTO meeting on December 16th – this will be a virtual meeting, touching base for the family that is sponsored for the holidays.

Ad Hoc Board Committees

- **Appeals** – Mr. Loveria
 - 1 – student permanently suspended in October. 7th grade student. Long history of physical aggression so the appeal was declined.

Old Business

- **None.**

New Business

- **Enrollment** – Mr. Loveria
 - 2287 – below the 2341 number where budget line is. Applications are trending now same as two years ago, fresh source of enrollment with the work in exploring Niagara Falls as an option from which to recruit, offers are out for students on the wait list. Discussion of why 136 students on the wait list for 9th grade. 55 applications for 9th grade for next year already. Mr. Berti suggested putting forth a survey to the families as to why they are applying to CSAT when students apply.
 - Forecasted idea of what the enrollment will look like in 3 months? Offers are out but we do not know at this point. We will probably not hit the budget number. We are missing \$1.4 million based on the numbers at this point.
- **Personnel Report** – Mr. Lyle
- Mr. Lyle discussed the personnel report.

- Motion to Approve – Andrea Pasioka
- Second – Steve Kottakis
- Motion approved.

6:02 pm - Executive session to discuss matters related to personnel.

- Motion – Bryan Carlo
- Second – Terrell Chambers
- Motion approved

Motion to leave executive session with no items requiring Board approval and adjourn.

- Motion – Kevin Cornacchio
- Second – John Cinquino
- Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Agenda Setting

Next meeting is **January 13, 2026**

Attendance in person: Joseph Berti, Bryan Carlo, Andrea Pasioka, John Cinquino, Steve Kottakis, Jason Campbell, Kevin Cornacchio, Lisa Smith, Terrell Chambers

Others: Andy Lyle, Garrick Loveria, Tanya Moore, Sue Jurewicz, Patrick Heyden, Brett Lutterbein, Dara Seeley, Chris Bigouette, Shane Lynch, Dan Scholze, Nicole Killion, Lindsay Gress, Rob Mikeluc