

Charter School for Applied Technologies

Board Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2026



Public Comments

Minutes

- Minutes from 05.20.2026
 - Motion to Approve – Mr. Carlo
 - Second – Mr. Kottakis
 - Motion approved.

Presentation: Northeast Charter School Network (zoom) – Anna Hall, CEO

- Ms. Hall gave a presentation about Northeast Charter School Network
 - Who: represent many charters in NYS, non-profit
 - What:
 - School support: connections, resources, opportunities, relationships
 - Across the state
 - Annual conference held in October, statewide engagement, opportunity for schools to connect,
 - Monthly webinars (trainings, roles, data, special education, school tools, etc.),
 - Advocacy in budget/school tuition calculator
 - Trainings, cohorts, leadership development, connections for school leaders running charter schools
 - Local/regional
 - Monthly meetings for area charter leaders
 - Representing charter schools with local officials, etc.
 - Common enrollment platform – Enroll Buffalo Charters (EBC) – student recruitment tactics
 - Individual
 - Facility issues, unions, renewal issues, etc.
 - Advocacy: Statewide, local, individual
 - Statewide at legislative level – FUNDING (how charters vs other schools are funding, disconnect between these formulas), addressing bills intended to connect districts with charters (i.e. public vote), authorizer engagement, potential future policy changes, new reporting requirements
 - Local – district policy and practice – ex transportation – engagement with school board and superintendent, student registration
 - Individual – responsive/problem solving and looking for opportunities for relationships outside of the charter area regardless of school model, media relationships to amplify voice of the charter
 - Beliefs: “stronger together – it’s about the kids”
- *Question from Mr. Verrall about aid for transportation* – Ms. Hall gave response about how NECSN organization helped to create a “system within a system” in Rochester and the issues with transportation in Buffalo.
- *Question from Ms. Smith about equity about how charters are impacted by bussing* – Ms. Hall described the tracking template/system that many Buffalo schools used to track the data and they brought that info to BPS, the “bidding process,” confirmation that a bill was killed that students within 1.5 miles (who attend charters) will not be serviced.
- *Question from Mr. Shannon about technology* – specifically charters not being allowed to join with BOCES – Ms. Hall relayed that this is something they are working on alongside other charters.
- **Current topics:** hold an annual board convening, federal tax credits – offsets for non-core programming that are eligible for funding (for donors), SGOs, state budget, local issues – sped funding, IDEA, excess cost aid, cost calculation (sped) – they have created a tool to support this in a way that is favorable to charters; transportation, enrollment, path to operating pre-K.

- After the Zoom, Mr. Berti discussed some context to this meeting with Ms. Hall. Long ago the organization was smaller and did not have the clout, and was a high fee. The suggestion was for the board to discuss the fee with Ms. Hall. They are well liked with state ed.

Administrative Reports

- **Administrative Report** – Mr. Lyle and Mr. Verrall
 - Mr. Lyle discussed that Susan Gibbon's letter was distributed to the board with the minutes.
 - Mr. Verrall - Re health insurance: worked with HR to concerted effort to move people towards a high-deductible plan for insurance, worked to incentivize it.
 - There is support from the board for a high-deductible insurance plan.
- **Principal's Report** - Mr. Heyden
 - Mr. Heyden discussed year in reflection. Core practices at the middle school.
 - Continued to promote RALPH and NEST
 - Renewed vigor for 2026-2027 school year
 - "Physical aggression" discipline is down
 - Temperature of the school is down – safer learning environment
 - Increase in incentive-based activities such as clubs, student council, athletics especially football
 - Attendance – 100 students absent 5x or fewer for the year, 5 perfect attendance
 - 3 student dances this year
 - Career readiness field trips
 - Field day is planned for 6/25
 - Ongoing effort to bridge between elementary and high school
 - 8th grade testing in the gym
 - IXL in its second year
 - 6-8th grade incentive – also for staff
 - MTSS procedures for next year – academics, culture, behavior
 - Master schedule to best suit students and staff
 - Instructional coaches created 101 Lesson O, trackers, diagnostics, conferencing to keep the students growing and reflecting
 - Summer program – 138 registered students – with athletics as a part of it

Permanent Board Committees

- **Quality Assurance** – none
- **Finance** – 2026-2027 Budget – Mr. Cinquino
 - Mr. Cinquino gave a refresher on the process of budget and discussed the budget summary and highlights.
 - Ms. Moore discussed presenting a deficit budget in terms of depreciation being added, but outside of that \$530,000 in the black, because of the covenant to have a certain amount of cash on hand and the requirements of the bond. Currently outstanding: \$13 million
 - Key drivers: (pattern over time) – suggested review of this slide
 - Can see the impact of staff FTEs increase
 - BPS increase in per pupil rate (but ours was slightly higher than the increased rate)
 - Hopefully BPS does not change numbers from last year
 - Budget is built on NYS and Buffalo-published numbers
 - In the budget will be the increase for health care – 20.88% overall average increase
 - 6 plans to choose from (with diff increase rates)
 - Employee benefits – incentives for high-deductible plan (realize savings after this year over time)
 - Mr. Cinquino commented regarding the first page of the newsletter, salaries and benefits – 77% of budget this year.
 - Explained that budgets were bloated by ESSR dollars, so next year should be the last year for this – formula was based on this amount
 - Enrollment levels – number of seats is the same but budget amount has changed
 - Usually budget at 98% but this year 97.6% (2308/2365).
 - Projection column is a reasonable projection – so we believe we can hit

- 2308 is the target number not 2294 – we have the back up for this
- Waitlist in 3-4 (added classes and increased sizes) – adjusted and added classes in 3-4, slight increase in size K-4
- Comparison slide of districts and per pupil rates
- Expenses: highlighting salaries and benefits
 - Many benefits are based on percentage increase in salaries – ex workers comp, FICA, unemployment, TRS
 - Overall union members increase is moving from one step to the other (3.38%) – non-union is 3%
 - Additions with staffing: we are showing a difference of 13 (7 instructional and 6 non-instructional) – about 1/2 of the positions were added throughout the school year (ex maintenance and HR)
 - Adding – couple of coaching positions at the ES, more ENL support, flex teachers, two teacher fellows
 - Mr. Loveria discussed process of having “teacher fellows” as a recruitment tool for teachers
 - Other expenses: sped increases (\$3 million vs \$1.7 last year) – due to levels of services weighted adjustment, now there is one rate for all services 20% or greater (1.41% rather than 0.9%); BOCES aid – consultants and contracted services \$500,000 is for those costs; capital spending – creating career center, new gym floor at ES for examples
- Operation is on an accrual basis vs a cash basis
- Mr. Cinquino suggested reviewing the newsletter given to the board because it gives background and summary that is helpful to understanding the budget. We have the resources to maintain and refresh tech equipment.

Motion:

- Approve: Mr. Donnelly
- 2nd: Mr. Chambers
- Budget approved.
- **Career Readiness** – Mr. Kottakis
 - Mr. Kottakis discussed the CR meeting, recognizing Ms. Gress and Mr. Bigouette for their work.
 - Internship #s are growing - % of students that need to complete the internships are lower due to challenges with the program/transportation/placement, need more public and private sector involvement
 - MS Expo is tomorrow night! 5pm-7pm
 - Seniors – graduation planning and colleges (pg 14)
 - Manufacturing – Mr. Bigouette announced that a student received a “blackbelt” certification in tech, he also got a job at Tesla (had college credits, internship from CSAT)
- **PTO** – Mr. Campbell
 - Mr. Campbell discussed the movie night last week (about 40 families). Planning for Fall Fest begins (for October), raffling off Bills tickets for season opener.

Ad Hoc Board Committees

- **Appeals** – Mr. Donnelly discussed an appeal and it was granted after consultation with school leadership.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- **Enrollment** – Mr. Loveria discussed the enrollment report. Actual numbers on pg 16 of the board packet – 2270. Projections for next year are strong and looking like 2309 at this time.
 - Niagara Falls? 14 applicants so far, 5 definites
- **Personnel Report** – Mr. Lyle

- Mr. Lyle discussed the personnel report.
- Motion to Approve – Ms. Pasieka
- Second – Mr. Chambers
- Personnel report approved.

Motion to Adjourn

- Motion – Mr. Kottakis
 - Second – Mr. Cinquino
- Meeting adjourned at 6:19pm.

Agenda Setting

Next meeting is **June 23, 2026.**

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

Others: Andrew Lyle, Garrick Loveria, Tanya Moore, Bob Shannon, Eon Verrall, Sue Jurewicz, Patrick Heyden, Ann Morgante, Brett Lutterbein, Dara Seeley, Chris Bigouette, Lindsay Gress, Tanya Mank, Tara Jefferson, Tara Puff, Nicole Killion, Nadine Williamson