

APPROVED



Kairos Academies

Minutes

Kairos Academies Mid Year Board Retreat

Date and Time

Saturday January 25, 2025 at 8:00 AM

We invite you join us at this Zoom link. This notice was published at www.kairosacademies.org/board at least one day prior to the meeting.

Directors Present

A. Jackson, K. Owen (remote), W. Young

Directors Absent

A. Trapp, M. Vachow, N. Plair, P. Badea

Ex Officio Members Present

K. Graham, S. Bauer

Non Voting Members Present

K. Graham, S. Bauer

Guests Present

A. Sullivan, B. Jackson (remote), J. Irby, J. Krewson, J. Tyrrell (remote), L. LeComb (remote), M. Chavers

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Jackson called a meeting to order on Saturday Jan 25, 2025 at 8:03 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

D. Welcome and Overview of Agenda

Khalil Graham reviewed the presentation overview and key understandings the SLT reviewed in their previous week's MOY retreat.

II. Kairos Academies Leadership Team

A. Current Financial Outlook

Bennie discussed his progress on five key goals, reporting that he is at 33% for leadership training and aims for 900,000 in cash on hand by June 30th. He acknowledged delays in training sessions and the need for better communication and accountability among his team. Bennie also mentioned the importance of using data from employee satisfaction surveys to improve staff retention.

Bennie shared the mid-year financial reports, indicating that year-to-date revenue is about \$5.2 million while expenses have reached \$5.5 million, leading to a 6% deficit. He pointed out that enrollment has decreased significantly, with current figures at 494 students compared to the budgeted 662. This decline in enrollment has contributed to unrealized revenue and necessitated budget adjustments.

The team discussed the need for proactive expense management, with a focus on communicating spending requirements to Bennie to avoid overspending. They explored the possibility of negotiating delayed payment terms with vendors to improve cash flow. Additionally, the importance of monitoring cash on hand was highlighted, with specific thresholds indicating financial health.

B. Review of Persistence and ADA

The ops team is focusing on academic and operations collaboration, customer service, and documentation culture as their top priorities. Enrollment has decreased to 494 students, with significant attrition occurring primarily in fifth and ninth grades. The team has implemented a records email system to better track student withdrawals and reasons for leaving, which has provided valuable data for understanding student persistence.

The team reported an 88% persistence rate among students and discussed efforts to strengthen relationships with other schools for better documentation of student transfers. They are implementing incentives for students with high attendance rates and have

begun using PowerSchool for tracking attendance. Additionally, they are focusing on improving communication with families and providing cultural supports for students.

C. Review of Kairos SpED

Jonathan Tyrrell discussed the current state of SPED compliance, noting that 96% of students have completed IEPs and 504 plans. She reported a significant improvement in compliance rates, with a reduction from 76.8% to 40% of existing IEPs being out of compliance. Additionally, she outlined key action steps taken, including hiring new staff and implementing a SPED-specific software for documentation.

The team is targeting March 15th to respond to a letter of concern, with Natalie indicating that this is a conservative estimate. They emphasized the importance of crafting a clear narrative to communicate their ongoing efforts in special education, particularly in light of recent changes and challenges. The discussion included the potential risks of public perception and the need for strategic messaging.

D. Review of Commission Site Visit Report

Jack presented an overview of the Commission's annual site visit, emphasizing strengths like alignment among mid-level leaders and effective board collaboration. He identified enhanced communication and transparency as key areas for improvement, particularly regarding urgent network-wide decisions. Specific instances, such as the rollout of Sweet 16 and the termination of a substitute provider, were discussed as examples of communication challenges.

The conversation focuses on fostering a culture of personal ownership and continuous improvement, stressing that team members should take responsibility for their actions rather than blaming external factors. Clear expectations must be set for team members, and subjective judgments should be replaced with objective assessments of whether individuals align with the organization's core tenets.

The conversation highlighted the disconnect between leadership and staff, stressing the need for a thorough root-cause analysis to improve retention and performance. Participants noted the challenges of integrating new staff from larger districts and the importance of clear communication and effective interview protocols. The need to ensure that all hires are well-suited for their roles was also emphasized.

The conversation highlighted the importance of effective communication and the need for network staff to be more embedded within schools. Participants acknowledged the challenge of balancing support for teachers with respecting the authority of school leaders. They emphasized the value of firsthand experiences in understanding the needs of teachers and students.

The conversation highlighted the need for clear communication and ownership in relation to the report for the commission. Participants discussed the necessity of including an executive summary to accompany the report, ensuring that the teachers' statements are accurately represented. There was also mention of upcoming events, including an hour of code for students, aimed at engaging them in STEM activities.

E. Review of Academic Data

Jonathan and Jack discussed the academic achievement data, emphasizing the importance of understanding both long-term trends and immediate impacts. They pointed out that while overall proficiency in English and math has declined, student growth, especially among underserved populations, has been strong. This discrepancy is attributed to changes in the student population and the challenges of reporting accurate data.

Jonathan Tyrrell shared that 50% of middle school and 52% of high school students met or exceeded their reading growth projections, indicating a positive trend in literacy. Fifth-grade students excelled in reading but need more support in math, while the transition to the Gradient platform has enhanced student engagement and feedback. Additionally, 36% of students demonstrated mastery in all subjects, and efforts are underway to address missing assignments and improve communication with parents.

F. Review of Kairos Building Plan

Jack and Marnae discussed the potential move to the GP site for the middle school, highlighting its benefits of providing separate assembly areas for both schools. They have negotiated a lease for \$265,000 annually, which is expected to be revenue-neutral despite some additional moving costs.

Participants discussed the impact of staggered school start and end times on parents, emphasizing the complications of drop-off and pick-up for children in different grades. One speaker shared their experience of managing two children in separate schools and suggested that adjusting start times could alleviate some of the stress. The need for a detailed pick-up and drop-off plan was also mentioned.

Updates on site planning revealed that the school's opening has been pushed to fall 2027 due to budgetary constraints and the need to build cash flow. The team is working to communicate with lenders and is optimistic about moving forward with a June-August timeline. However, there are risks associated with not securing new market tax credits, which could impact the project's financial viability.

III. CEO Updates

A. CEO Goals Update

A board meeting is being scheduled by Stella to review updates and obtain necessary approvals. The conversation focused on the differing definitions of "quality seats" from various stakeholders, including the Commission and Opportunity Trust. It was noted that understanding these definitions is crucial for tracking performance indicators and ensuring alignment with expectations.

B. Org Priorities Executive Updates

SLT reviewed the organizational priorities of Student Persistence, Manager Development, and Gradient Implementation with the Board.

C. Reportwell Compliance

Stella discussed the transition to ReportWell, highlighting its role as the new platform for compliance data submission. Currently, Kairos is a test school for this system, and while there have been challenges, compliance rates have improved to 90%. To further enhance communication and prevent future issues, Stella will hold regular meetings with Tanya to review due dates and requirements.

IV. Greenlight

A. Strategic Task Force Updates

Recommendations were made to continue to review long term grades served over the next year, with Jack presenting a greenlight rubric that serves and conversation guidance for the board and our conversations with our authorizer.

V. Board Work Time

A. Review of Kairos PTA

The board discussed the newly formed Kairos PTO and Kairos team's support of the initiatives over the course of the next month.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

A. Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

W. Young seconded the motion.

The team **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 1:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A. Jackson

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