DRAFT

# Libertas Academy Charter School

# Minutes

## Retreat!

**Date and Time**
Friday June 12, 2020 at 8:30 AM

**Location**
MEETING TO BE HELD VIA ZOOM:
Description:Join Zoom Meeting
https://us04web.zoom.us/j/5069946767?pwd=QXEvbzlHb0tYZWE4VHl6MCtrVFlGUT09

Meeting ID: 506 994 6767
Password: 12345

**Trustees Present**
A. Surrette, D. Barrows (remote), L. Davis (remote), M. Walachy (remote)

**Trustees Absent**
H. Zavala, J. Lauren, J. Lopez-Figueroa, K. Diamond Kayiatos, T. Curtis

**Ex Officio Members Present**
M. Montero

### I. Opening Items

**A. Record Attendance**

**B. Call the Meeting to Order**

L. Davis called a meeting of the board of trustees of Libertas Academy Charter School to order on Friday Jun 12, 2020 at 8:41 AM.
A. Surrette made a motion to approve the minutes from LACS Board of Trustees Meeting on 05-19-20.
L. Davis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## C. Board Chair Welcome & Updates

The chair opened by sharing gratitude for the team for what has been the shortest and longest year. Now more than ever, it is pretty evident of how important a strong Board is. This is a strong and mighty team.

Chair shared her reflections about the year. Chair shared wins, challenges, uncertainties and opportunities.

Wins :
*New Trustee -Kari!
*Solid Fundraising in a difficult climate (130k?)
*High Trustee attendance at meetings - small but committed group
*Swift decision making to pause expansion - Tough decision but shows strength of board to come together and make sound decision for the betterment of the school as a whole.
Academic Wins:
*Improvements in school culture indicators (suspension rates)
*Improved daily attendance (96%+)
*Improved MCAS performance (student achievement) from Y1 to Y2
Challenges:
*COVID and remote learning obstacle
*Decision to pause expansion - many pros and cons and even though we made the "right" decision hard saying goodbye to 8th grade class
*Recruiting and fundraising when quarantined has been difficult
*Accountability percentile low
*Overall MCAS performance is below the state average (lots of room for growth)
Uncertainties:
*Re-opening school for Fy21, what will that look like?
*Unions - MM and I had a chat with Erica Brown - Since 2017 they have seen an increased risk in western MA of unions trying to chip away at charter school autonomy but unionizing teachers. Will be important to educate ourselves on this more in FY21. Erica gave us suggestions for being proactive , many of which MM and his team are already doing (budget transparency, teachers having a voice in decision making, compensation programs staff believes in). One thing she suggested that we

aren't doing is having HR knowledge come to the school to talk to faculty in an effort to gain feedback on the school in an anonymous way so the teachers feel safe to be honest.
Opportunities:
- Redesigning the ED Evaluation as a means of outlining our expectations of the ED and support his growth & development
- Charter Renewal process: an opportunity to reflect on our progress and make any necessary adjusts to our program so that we continue making positive gains across all metrics
- Securing a permanent building to support our continued growth
- Growing our Board!

Chair went over the agenda for the day.

## II. FY20 SCHOOL REVIEW & FY21 SCHOOL CONTINGENCY PLAN

### A. Year in Review

ED Shared the following:

1. Year in Review- quick. **45 minutes.**
    1. Delaying high school
    2. Progress to goal before Accountability
    3. Using elements of the delayed expansion plan
    4. Shared update regarding facilities
    5. Looking ahead
        1. Charter Renewal application will be submitted next school year. We will wait until we have started the facility work so that we have a strong plan for high school expansion. Goal is to submit the application by Mid-April 2021 as by this time we would have had significant facility work, strong to final plans for our highs chool curriculum and a headcount for talent & student enrollment number.
        2. 3 years from now… Strong middle school. A high school in its second year of operations. 1 renewed charter with conditions (not probation!).
            1. We will accomplish this by continuing to make significant progress on our accountability plans + overall accountability ratings in a strong place + consistent improvement in MCAS performance.

**PPT Flow**

1. **Part I**
2. Mission
3. MM’s Reflections (see above)
4. Our Goals

5. Progress to Goals
6. Success and Failures
    1. Include COVID 19 academic engagement
7. Major Initiatives Updates
8. **Part II**
9. Our Path forward
    1. 3 year ED Goals (Renewal & Launching our High School)
    2. Review the renewal process here -> this is a time consuming process along with launching a high school
        1. Our current accountability goals
    3. Next step: Draft Strategic Plan for the next 3 years that outlines granularly the plan (COVID19 drastically shifted how my time was spent this Spring)
        1. Will include the High School Planning Project Plan (show facility timeline)
        2. Our Full Growth Plan (headcount?)
        3. Major Initiatives Being Considered: Teaching Fellowship to grow our talent pool in preparation for a High School Launch. Building a leadership Bench (Coordinators and Teacher Mentors). High School Planning Advisory Committee (meets monthly or bi-weekly) -> students and teachers.
10. **Part III- House Keeping Business**
11. High School Delayed Expansion Plans
12. Budget Proposal

**Our biggest success stories:**

1. 3rd year in a roll that we had a clean audit and ended with a balance budget (did not need tap into a line of credit)
2. Significant improvement in our school culture as evident by a significant reduction in our discipline numbers and an increase in our attendance numbers.
3. PIR onbaordign & coaching. Transitioned fully to HOS by mid-year. This a big win for us!
4. Improvement in attendance, with significant decrease in chronic absenteeism.
5. Staff retention is very strong
    1. 100% Leadership Level roles are returning (For the third year in a row)
    2. 100% of support staff is returning
    3. 81% (22 out of 27) of teaching staff is returning
        1. 3- involuntary
        2. 1- grad school
        3. 1- career change
    4. Overall retention is at 88%
6. Diversity at LACS- we've always been committed to this from the beginning. We often reflect on our hiring practices and ensure we have equitable hiring practices while maintaining a high bar. This is something we are proud.

1. Overall POC: 52.38%
2. Leadership Team: 62.50%
3. Teachers: 40%

7. Average attendance before closure was 96.17% vs 93% last year
    1. Chronic absenteeism last year was 25% (47 students out of 189), this year it was 12.75% (35 students out of 275)
8. Suspension rates, 15 incidents, 5.60% of students. (28 total incidents, some repeat offenders)
9. Staff Recruitment- took this on solo this year (from start to finish: full-time job in most schools. (Recruit) Posting roles, resume screening, interviewing, follow-up, sell the role). We have one open role as of today (ESL Teacher or Science)

**Gaps:**

1. Homework completion data 50% of students completed 100% of homework
2. MCAS Performance Data -> unsure where we stand this year. Internal data showed promise that we were on track to perform better than last year (which led to us outperforming SPS in both areas)
3. Reading growth is stagnant. Students are making growth but not where we need them to be.
4. Attendance is stronger, overall, but our chronic absenteeism list is still a bit too high.

### B. Break

### C. COVID19 Contingency Plan

## III. FINANCE

### A. May Financials

D. Barrows made a motion to approve the May financials.
A. Surrette seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

### B. FY21 Budget

M. Walachy made a motion to approve FY21 budget as presented.
D. Barrows seconded the motion.

- Conservative approach to Tuition rates prediction.
- 4 different scenarios; agreed to scenario C, which is what we presented today
- Explained some of the large gap variation between FY20 & FY21
- Personnel staffing approach to ensure we are fully staffed
- Cost activities around recruitment

- Expectation of Tuition rates to come out this month.
- Revenues budgeted - based on conservative approach - 5% reduction in tuition rates, expenses remain flat FY20-FY21; however, shifted to reflect maintaining the system in FY12.

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

### C. Break

## IV. FY21 BOARD PLANNING

### A. Draft FY21 Goals

The Chair shared with the team results from the Board self-assessment. The chair reviewed the findings and items that she Board should focus their energy on going into FY21.

The Chair presented the proposed FY21 Goals:

1. Annual self-assessment of the Board
2. Board meeting materials are sent/posted 48 hours in advance
3. Recruitment
    1. Targeted annual recruitment plan: FY21 goal= 3 new trustees
    2. Draft a target 3-year recruitment plan
4. 82% attendance rate for each Trustee (9 out of 11 meetings)
5. Board completes 2-3 comprehensive board trainings and webinars
    1. (1) Development/Fundraising Training
6. Trustees engage in an annual touchpoint with LACS while school is in session.
7. Continue 100% Board giving.
8. Attend Annual Stakeholder Event
9. ED Committee to update & document the ED evaluation process
10. ED and Board work together to draft a succession plan for ED & Chair. Review annually.
11. Financial Policies and Controls- review and update it annually
12. Draft a multi-year development plan.

### B. FY21 Calendar

## V. FY21 BOARD MEMBERS & OFFICERS

### A. Dr. Williams - Potential New Trustee

Reviewed her resume.

TS- did she express a committee placement?

LD- this did not come up in conversation but will probe.
M. Walachy made a motion to approve Dr. Williams nomination to join the Board of Trustees.
D. Barrows seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

### B. Board Officiers

The Governance committee presented the slate of officers for Board consideration.

Lauren Davis, Board Chair
Hector Zavala, Vice Chair
Kari Diamond, Secretary
Tony Surrette, Treasurer

L. Davis made a motion to approve the slate of officers presented by the GC. Lauren Davis, Board Chair Hector Zavala, Vice Chair Kari Diamond, Secretary Tony Surrette, Treasurer.
D. Barrows seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

### C. Committee Appointments

LD- we will tackle this in the coming months. Will reach out to the committee chairs.

## VI. Closing Items

### A. Closing Thoughts

MW will be retiring but has graciously agreed to support as needed. LD is recommending that we let MW go but to ask her to support us with growing our Board.

### B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
L. Davis