APPROVED

Libertas Academy Charter School

Minutes

FY24 BOT Annual Meeting

Date and Time
Friday June 28, 2024 at 8:00 AM

Location
146 Chestnut Street
Springfield, MA 01103

Trustees Present
C. Resto, J. Gunther, K. Diamond Kayiatos, K. Stewart, N. Coakley (remote), S. Lapolice, S. Williams

Trustees Absent
A. Seymour, N. Barker, P. Kkayego, T. Curtis

Ex Officio Members Present
M. Montero

I. Opening Items

A. Arrival & Breakfast

B. Call the Meeting to Order

K. Diamond Kayiatos called a meeting of the board of trustees of Libertas Academy Charter School to order on Friday Jun 28, 2024 at 9:35 AM.

C.

Opening Remarks

Kari welcomed the group and reviewed the plan for the day. Congratulated the group on another wonderfully successful year.

D. Tour of Construction Site

Shakenna, Carlos, Sarah, Jeff and Kari toured the new space with Modesto. Great progress has been made!

II. A YEAR REVIEW

A. Year in Review

Modesto presented a year in review:
Overall a very exiting year and one of the hardest with the huge capital campaign and building project. Need to refocus his focus internally next year.

Highlights:
- 10 students to Berlin, Germany for first international trip! Great way to get to know kids more deeply and helping to serve as even better mentors
- IEP/504s full compliance - huge accomplishment that most schools don't do well. Next step to work on even better supporting them.
- ELL/Access - previously in the 50% but focus on this paid off and created better student experiences
- College team and Dual Enrollment program - working to increase and improve but students participated in 2 semesters of classes at HCC.
- Student Life - focused on this for High School with lots of new clubs, field trips, events, etc. Hired a student program director for next year
- Sports program - growing! Next year officially in a MIAA league.
- Creating programs like "Does College Make Cents?"

Shakenna asked about dual enrollment vs AP classes - Modesto said they are learning that it depends on the kid. Some kids and the schools they want to apply to need to do AP vs others want the extra credits from dual enrollment
Shakenna asked about greater college resumes (beyond academics). How do we help kids tell their story? Modesto answered they are working to talk to kids about what they want, passions, and then help them get where they need to be. Will be working with Seniors in the fall on this.

B. Update on Goals

Lower Academy
Highlights:
- Flexible Interventions and Support to meet students where they are.

Challenges:

- Number of staff transitions this year which impacted the school culture team spread too thin.
Meeting or exceeded most goals.
Suspensions missing goals just slightly - speaks to the school culture impacted noted above but numbers are in line with other charter schools. Need to refocus on the small things so they don't become large things.
MCAS data not in yet available - expecting to be close to our goals (which were increased from last year's)

Upper Academy
- Hit most goals.
- Missed on ACCESS goal, student experience, and school attrition
  - High School is trickier though new building helps
  - Compared to other Charters in this stage of their life we are ahead
- Jeff asked if attrition is from kids who are new or who have been with us. Modesto answered that we've been losing more kids who have been with us. Much of this is due to the expectation of what High School "should" be. Hoping that the new building will help but our program is hard and rigorous so hard to prove it's worth it. Working to also strengthen the partnership with parents to understand the needs of students. We understand why this is hard, but also thinking about how we can do this better.
- Shakenna asked about greater community opportunities to help parents with their needs and to understand the importance of the school work. Modesto answered, yes, we would love to try and support them more.
- Shakenna asked about mental health counselors for students. Modesto answered, we have counselors on staff and have a good partnership but need more support, as always.
- Nicole mentioned partnering with board connections, namely her expertise, so the school can focus on academics. Modesto wants to focus on these type of things next.
- AP and MCAS data not in yet.
- Jeff asked if we've thought about having strong students sit for the AP exams even if they didn't take the class. Modesto said, no but that's a very interesting idea.
- Needs for next year - Adult investments in culture, we have SENIORS next year so need their next year plans to be strong.

III. Finances

A. Review & Approval of Annual Budget

Discussion of MassDevelopment Loan - we don't think we need the loan but will complete the application just in case. Prefer to use some of the money raised to cover any possible gap.

Jeff asked about the government grants. Modesto answered that assumptions made that we don't know what will happen in the future so were conservative.

Feel good with the extras built in to cover any surprises - we have a good sense of our basic expenses given historic needs.

Jeff commented that he sees lots of padding in the budget which is good. Do we have a sense of how looking forward to keep the budget balanced? Modesto answered that we will be fully enrolled (around 610), operation costs on the current building, etc. which will balance out. He has done a mock up of the 2026 budget and have a sense but don't have real numbers yet. There is a good amount of extra here that could be tightened if needed. Also doesn't include any fundraising that we could do going forward.

Sarah asked a question about the "Allowance-Landlord" line. This is for areas that we can add/change for the new building. Will use this completely. Allowance could increase if further savings are made/found. And this will help us not tap into our reserves as much as plan.

J. Gunther made a motion to approve the Annual Budget as proposed by Modesto.
K. Stewart seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Break

IV. Annual Report

A. Approval of LACS Annual Report

Looking for preliminary approval of the Annual Report. Final draft will be complete in July and we will vote via email once done.

K. Stewart made a motion to approve draft of Annual Report.
J. Gunther seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Board Goals

A. Approve Annual Board Goals

Group reviewed last year's goals. We did not meet the goal of drafting a 3-year recruitment plan or adding 3 new trustees - though we brought on 2 great ones! Kari reminded the group that Tiffani cycles off this fall.

Kari also reminded the group to make a gift to the school as we want to be able to say that 100% of the board participated. We are just 3 gifts away!

As for 2024, the goals are to remain the same as 2023 with the addition of having everyone attend one of the online workshops from Board on Track or MCPSA.

VI. ED EVALUATION & COMPENSATION

A. Evaluation

K. Stewart made a motion to go into executive session.
J. Gunther seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
J. Gunther made a motion to exit executive session.
S. Lapolice seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. FY23 BOARD PLANNING

A. Slate of Officers & Committee Appointments

S. Lapolice made a motion to approve the slate of officers as proposed.
K. Stewart seconded the motion.
Chair: Kari Diamond
Vice Chair: Azanda Seymour
Secretary: Nick Barker
Treasurer: Patrick Kayego
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. FY24 Board and Committee Meeting Cadence

Discussed days and frequency. Suggested no changes
Will continue to provide in person and virtual options for meetings

VIII. Closing Items

A. Closing Remarks

Modesto & Kari thanked the board for their support and time. Looking forward to another big year for Libertas next year - in their forever home!

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

K. Diamond Kayiatos