



Anser Charter School

## Anser Charter School Board of Directors

### Minutes

February 18th, 2025 Anser Board Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday February 18, 2025 at 6:00 PM

#### Location

Anser Charter School

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Anser's Mission is to *educate the whole child in a collaborative learning community where individuals are inspired to be self-motivated and to feel a sense of connection and responsibility to the world.*

Anser's vision is to *foster learning that imagines a better world and works toward realizing it; set high academic standards; promote creativity, discovery, reflection and balance; embrace diversity; and use developmentally appropriate practices and real-world experiences to educate within a climate of collaboration, community, character, and compassion.*

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#### Directors Present

Brian Whitney, Erik Moncada, Hannah Read Newbill, Jessica Budzianowski (she/her), Katie Hanson, Lynne Funke, Roger Stewart, Sarah Butler, Sasha Rojas Zaragoza (remote), Suzanne Gregg, Victor McCraw (remote)

#### Directors Absent

None

#### Ex Officio Members Present

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Abby Nichols, Anne Moore, Destin Tonkin

### **Non Voting Members Present**

Abby Nichols, Anne Moore, Destin Tonkin

### **Guests Present**

Annie Edwards, Heather Dennis

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## **I. Opening Items**

### **A. Record Attendance**

### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

Roger Stewart called a meeting of the board of directors of Anser Charter School Board of Directors to order on Tuesday Feb 18, 2025 at 6:10 PM.

### **C. Approve Agenda and the Minutes of the Prior Meeting (Action)**

Hannah Read Newbill made a motion to approve the minutes from 01/21/2025.

Jessica Budzianowski (she/her) seconded the motion.

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

### **D. Opening Crew**

### **E. Avi, 2nd grade crew leader, and Nancy, 3rd grade crew leader, presented about and showed video of their crews' most recent expeditions.**

## **II. Board Training on Board on Track**

### **A. Overview of Board on Track**

Heather provided an overview of Board On Track. The goal is for committees to start using BOT in March for their agendas and minutes.

## **III. Finance**

### **A. January 2025 Budget Summary (Action)**

Finance 4A: Annie Edwards from Bluum provided an overview of financial statement. She reported that it was rewarding to see the Anser staff involved with budgeting and finance gaining deeper understanding of the budget and accounting processes. She also mentioned that she is monitoring state transportation funds in state reporting documents to make sure Anser receives the proper amount of reimbursement. She also said she is also looking at a couple of other areas in state reporting documents to monitor fund flows

and amounts. She qualified these comments by reporting that she just received the documents the Friday before the Board meeting. She is also working on getting the amended budget together.

Roger Stewart asked about Medicaid reimbursements for special education students and if those were reported in the Federal Funds line of the financial statements. Annie said that they were. He also asked about progress concerning Anser developing their processes for billing for these reimbursements. At a previous meeting Heather Dennis reported that the goal was to increase reimbursements from around \$80,000 per year to nearly \$200,000 per year. Annie and Heather reported that Nicole Robbins and Bluum staff are working together to accomplish this goal. Annie reported that Anser is receiving about \$6,000.00 per week in reimbursements.

They are also working on establishing a goal for the percentage of services successfully billed for Medicaid reimbursement. Currently Anser's percentage is not known and it is not known what a typical percentage would be for a school like Anser. They are working on all of this and hope to have answers in the future.

Sarah Butler made a motion to Approve Budget and Financial Statement.

Hannah Read Newbill seconded the motion.

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

## **B. Legislative Updates Related to Finance**

Legislative Update 4B: Heather Dennis gave an Idaho legislative update. Over 90% negative input concerning tuition tax credit bill.

The graduated funding bill looks like it might pass.

She also mentioned several other bills in process: 10 Commandments required to be displayed in all classrooms, human reproduction courses between 5th and 12th grades would be required to show high resolution photos of human fetuses, and requirements for teaching cursive writing.

She reported that a possible bill at the routing slip stage of the process would require charter schools to give preference for military families.

Heather also reported on Federal level issues. She said that Anser receives the following from the Federal Government (figures are approximate): 92K IDEA, 72K Title I, 93K Lunch Program, and 200K Medicaid (projected).

She received a "Dear Colleague" letter from the Federal Department of Education about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs. She summarized the letter for the Board.

In response to the letter, Brian Whitney and Heather crafted a letter home to parents stating that Anser is going to continue with their current approach to DEI since it is believed that the school is in compliance, but that since the current guidance contained in

the letter is not clear enough to make solid decisions, adjustments may have to be made in the future as more information becomes available.

#### **IV. Organization Integrity**

##### **A. Academic Data Review**

Academic Review 5A: Destin presented a slide deck showing the Anser Data Dashboard. The data to be reported covers the entire breadth of Anser's academic program including the three dimensions of student achievement along with other internal and state assessments. The package provides a comprehensive picture of Anser student performance.

##### **B. Lottery-Enrollment Update**

Lottery Enrollment Update 5B: Heather presented the current state of lottery applications by grade level. Some grades have more applications than 2025-26 projected openings, while others are just at the projections or below projections. Overall, however, it appears that Anser is on track to have enough applications to achieve 2025-26 enrollment targets.

Roger asked about plans to be operationalized between the close of the lottery and the fall start of school focused on securing solid commitments from parents to enroll their student at Anser. This is an important question since during fall 2024 Anser ended up enrolling 38 fewer students than had been expected. This contributed to the cost overruns that have occurred during 2024-25. Avoiding another such shortfall in enrollment is important. It is also important to keep in mind that if the graduated funding bill passes, Anser needs to carefully control enrollment so as not to go over the 600 student limit based on best 28 week student attendance outlined in that funding bill.

Staff responded that what they had planned for spring and summer new student recruitment and retention included what Anser has always done. A spring event and follow-up over the summer.

#### **V. Strategic Planning**

##### **A. Succession Planning**

Succession Planning 6A: Brian reported that 9 staff attended the two sharing sessions focused on discussing the replacement of the executive director. He presented an overview of the themes that were derived from the discussions. He will provide more detail at a later date.

Heather provided an update about the Executive Director Search Committee. The development of a screening interview and process was underway. Additional committee members were being contacted to see if they could serve.

Heather was asked about the posting of the Executive Director position. She reported that it has been sent to Bluum, Expeditionary Learning, Indeed, and the Charter School Network. She said that she is putting it at the Idaho Nonprofit Community Center also.

## **B. Board Strategic Planning**

Board Strategic Planning 6B: Heather presented a slide deck exploring essential questions and categories of these. It also contained a slide showing a possible board calendar constructed around essential questions. Each month a different essential question was explored at the board meeting. Anser board members were asked to add their essential questions to the master list by 3/10/2025.

## **VI. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 8:29.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Roger Stewart