

Minutes of Board Meeting
May 20, 2025
6 p.m.

The meeting was held at the Lakeland Achievement Academy. Board members in attendance were Trish Buchanan, Mike Brossart, Adil Khan, Nick Sellars, Brant Masters, Ana Kalman, Steve Earley, Zelda Abram, Carly Reifenrath, Paige Campbell and Joseph Little. Staff members present included Kristin Aiken, Cindi Parker-Pearson, Deborah Sulsona, Mary Holjes, and Kelly Lane.

Approval of Minutes

Trish Buchanan called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m. Mike Brossart moved to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2025 Board meeting. Adil Khan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Financial Report

Paige Campbell presented the financial report for the ten months ending April 30, 2025. Cash and investments total \$2.38 million. Total assets are \$3.7 million with net assets of \$3.69 million. Total revenue was \$3.6million and total expenses were also \$3.55 million resulting in a net surplus of \$80K. Deborah Sulsona updated the year-end projection. We are looking at a possible small deficit for the year-end.

Parents Report

The parents group sponsored staff appreciation luncheons at each campus. Tantrums Flightside Café, winner of our Top Chef competition, catered all three luncheons.

There will be on last parent breakfast before the end of the school year which will be held at Fred's Market for all campuses. There will also be a field trip over the summer at Dinosaur World.

Mary is almost done tallying the parent volunteer hours. The volunteer(s) with the most hours will be recognized and given a gift card.

Development Report

Our Top Golf fundraiser is scheduled for September 18. We have come up with some new sponsorship/ticket options to help raise more money. Registration information will go out via email in the next week.

We were awarded \$4,300 from the GiveWell Empower Polk grant which will be for a new database for the Birth to Three program. We submitted a letter of intent for a United Way equipment grant which was accepted. The request for proposal will be disclosed in June. Our Mosaic grant request was denied. We are also applying for grants from the City of Winter Haven, Polk CDBG, City of Bartow, and TD Bank.

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The Development team is working on their summer plans of donor cultivation and connection as well as a comprehensive development plan.

Principal's Report

All staff evaluations are almost done. The Lakeland and Winter Haven campuses have had their graduations and have gone well. Bartow's will be tomorrow night.

The last day of school for students is May 29th. May 30th is a teacher workday and then teachers return on August 1. Cindi has extended contracts for next year to all teachers. One has stated she will not be returning.

President's Report

We had a tour with Adena Kniss from the City of Lakeland for monitoring of our CDBG grant. She toured the charter school as well as oversaw an Early Intervention session. We received notification that funds are being utilized appropriately.

The Birth to Three team is collaborating with the Carol Jenkins Barnett Children's Resource Center to set up a monthly playgroup for a support group for parents with children that have a rare genetic disorder. The first meeting will be in June.

Birth to Three Early Interventionist, Becky Jacklin, retires next week after 42 years of service! We wish her well! Her caseload is being reassigned to the other EIs. We will wait until we find out about our United Way allocation before we fill that position. That application is due to United Way in early June and the site visit in the fall.

We've had group tours with CLA employees invited by Paige Campbell and with some Leadership Lakeland members invited by Heath Frederick. We have started taking video that can be shown on tours that occur over the summer when school is not in session so those people can also see the great things we do.

The house bill that would have required video cameras to be installed in the classrooms was withdrawn.

The grant writer, Marcia Wynn, has ended her contract with us as she has exhausted her leads amidst the uncertainty of state and federal grants.

A review of annual revenue over the years has shown a downward trend in United Way designations. Kristin will discuss this with agency directors' council.

Committee Reports

The Development Committee has set the location for Top Chef to Bonnet Springs Park. Other venues have been considered but will not work out. Steve Earley suggested we look at RP Funding Center since we held it there in the past. The committee continues to consider new ideas for increasing funds raised.

Paige Campbell presented the proposed 2025-26 budget on behalf of the Finance Committee. The committee closely reviewed and adjusted expenses but still had to increase fundraising over last year to present a balance budget. Adjustments as follows:

- Staff salary increases: 3% except for where the Personnel Committee had previously increased the percentage to get current staff up to scale for their position. The teacher Performance Pay schedule was also increased.
- Removed the Assistant Principal and the currently vacant COTA positions for the upcoming year.

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- The holiday bonus was removed.
- The Long Term Disability benefit was removed.
- In anticipation of a large increase in health insurance (30% proposed), a salary-based tier for an employee contribution will be implemented up to \$50 per paycheck.
- Reduce the employer match to the retirement IRA from 3% to 2%.
- Removed teacher/therapist supply funds and the board retreat expense
- Increased revenue goals across the board (contributions, fundraisers, grants, etc.)

Paige also noted that the budget still included the grant writer expense of \$15,000 but now that she has ended the contract with us that expense will be removed. Brant Masters moved to approve the budget as presented with the added request of monthly updates from the Finance Committee. Steve Earley suggested bidding out health insurance and property insurance. Mike Brossart suggested looking into if joining the school district for health insurance is possible. Mike Brossart seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Also included in the board packet is a capital budget and the Birth to Three budget as presented to United Way with our allocation request which is already part of the overall budget.

The Nominating committee recommends approval of the following slate:

3 Year Renewals

Heath Frederick

Jill Haladay

Ana Kalman

Joseph Little

Carly Reifenrath

New Board Members

Jesse Naranjo – elected parent representative

Logan Browning with Bank of Central Florida

Kurt Harvey with The Heritage Group at Morgan Stanley

Liz Plemons with Publix Super Markets, Inc.

Advisory Council Member

Peyton Sale with Sale Insurance

Mike Brossart moved to approve the slate of renewals and new board members as presented. Steve Earley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

The next board meeting will be in August. Brant Masters moved to empower the Executive Committee to transact business on behalf of the full board until the August 19, 2025 board meeting. Mike Brossart seconded the motion. Adil Khan stated a non-member of the Executive Committee should second the motion. Ana Kalman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The 2025-26 board meeting dates are included in your board packet. Deborah Sulsona will also send out calendar invites.

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Brant Masters, on behalf of The Lakeland 100 (a local philanthropic group), presented a check for \$23,000 to Achievement Academy as chosen by a guest whose name was pulled to select a charity. We are extremely thankful and honored!

Brant Masters moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Sulsona

Chief Financial Officer