

Minutes of Board Meeting September 16, 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, Carly Reifenrath, Paige Campbell, Karli Wilkinson, Janice Jones, Jesse Naranjo, Jill Haladay, Steve Earley, Ana Kalman, Liz Plemons and Joseph Little. Staff members present included Kristin Aiken, Cindi Parker-Pearson, Deborah Sulsona, and Mary Holjes.

Approval of Minutes

Trish Buchanan called the meeting to order at 6:03p.m. Mike Brossart moved to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2025 Board meeting. Karli Wilkinson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Installation of Board Members

Trish Buchanan welcomed and inducted new board member, Liz Plemons. Welcome to the Board!

Financial Report

Paige Campbell presented the financial report for the two months ending August 31, 2025. Cash and investments total \$2.39 million. Total assets are \$3.74 million with net assets of \$3.72 million. Total revenue was \$719K and total expenses were \$732K resulting in a net deficit of \$13K. We are below budget but significantly better than this time last year.

Deborah Sulsona presented our Teacher Salary Increase Allocation (TSIA) Plan. This funding began in 2020 to increase the minimum base salary for teachers. It is now rolled into the base student funding. We had \$108,918 that was marked for TSIA which is divided into \$100,760 for maintenance of salary increases since 2020 and \$8,158 for growth. Our expenses for maintenance and growth surpass the funding we're given which is reflected in the plan to be submitted to the state and requires board approval. Paige Campbell moved to approve the Teacher Salary Increase Allocation plan as presented. Mike Brossart seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Parents Report

School pictures are scheduled for October. We schedule Lakeland's pictures during the FTE week to encourage full attendance. Collections for the fall basket drawing will also begin in October. This is one way the parent group raises funds for things like the Fall Festival which will be held on Friday, October 24.

Fish City Grill ended their First Tuesday event which was another way the parent group raised funds. Mary will reach out to other restaurants for something similar

www.AchievementAcademy.com

📍 716 E. Bella Vista Street, Lakeland, FL 33805

📍 @PolkAchievementAcademy

📞 863-683-6504

📞 863-688-9292



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Development Report

Our Top Golf fundraiser is this week. We have nine bays reserved and project a \$14K net income.

The Top Chef committee will meet next week and staff are already working on that. We have sent out invites to former chefs inviting them back and will begin the search for community leaders.

The Polk County CDBG grant amount increased to \$70,000 possible but also has an income eligibility requirement. The funds can be used for both programs.

The Development Committee will meet next week.

Principal's Report

Trish Buchanan shared her delight in presenting Cindi Parker-Pearson with an award for her bravery and courage. Cindi shared that the incident proved our systems in place work to keep our kids and staff safe.

We are currently fully enrolled with 157 students. Funding depends on the student matrixes during official FTE count weeks. The first FTE week is October 6-10. Students have to be enrolled and in attendance to be counted. We are reviewing IEPs and updating, if needed, to capture all of the services we are providing.

Teachers will evaluate all students by October 1. Beginning next week, Cindi will be in a classroom as a teacher will have surgery and be out 4-6 weeks.

Cindi previously reviewed the purpose of the School Improvement Plan and sent a copy to the board. Adil Khan moved to approve the School Improvement Plan to submit to the state. Mike Brossart seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

President's Report

The Birth to Three team is getting ready for the Community Investment Team visit. The number of kids we served decreased but this was mainly due to the transition of Becky Jacklin retiring and handing over her caseload to new Early Interventionist, Vanessa. We requested \$260,000 for the Birth to Three allocation. If we receive the full request, then we will look to hire another full-time EI. Any board members that can join us it will be held on Friday, October 10 from 1:00-2:00pm at Lakeland Regional Health. This is a good opportunity for board members to learn more about the Birth to Three program and the impact of early intervention.

Kristin Aiken and Kelly Lane are beginning to speak at United Way campaigns. If your company has a United Way campaign, please request Achievement Academy as the agency speaker. Also, please let us know if you designate your gift to Achievement Academy so we can ensure it comes to us.

A group of Publix employees are coming this week for a Publix Serves day. They will spread mulch, paint rusted areas of the swing set and stain and seal the wood ramp coming from a classroom.

We also continue to offer tours so more people can learn about Achievement Academy. We welcomed Dr. Martha Santiago last week and this week will tour with Callie Neslund and Gabby Fazekas from GiveWell Foundation. Please let Kristin or Kelly know of someone you may know who would like to see what we do!

Committee Reports

The Audit Committee met earlier today with Moss, Krusick & Associates (MKA) who performed our annual audit. MKA reported that Achievement Academy received the best possible audit opinion with a clean,

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unmodified opinion and no findings or recommendations were noted in the management letter or internal controls report. The organization maintains a healthy financial position with \$3.5 million in net assets. Cash on hand was \$1.7 million, representing 5 months of operating expenses. Management and general expenses were only 4% of total expenses, well below concerning thresholds. Mike Brossart moved to approve the audited financial statements. Steve Earley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Nick Sellars reviewed the current by-laws and shared his recommendations. Discussion was had concerning wording of authority over the Principal position. Nick will revisit and report back to the board.

The Vision Committee met last week and continues to look to and plan for the future of Achievement Academy.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Staff were excused from the meeting. Board Secretary, Karli Wilkinson recorded the remaining minutes. Mike Brossart made the board aware of the recent health insurance savings of approximately \$168,000 from what was budgeted. The Executive Committee previously discussed this savings and wished to reinstate the previous Holiday bonus scale from 2024 for employees. After discussion, the board agreed it was important to reinstate the 3% match for employees, considering the recent \$168k savings. Mike Brossart moved to reinstate the holiday bonuses effective immediately and add back the 1% match for retirement retroactive to July 1, 2025. Karli Wilkinson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The next discussion was based on Kristin Aiken's compensation. The board discussed several other nonprofit organizations' President/CEO salaries, noting that Kristin's salary falls on the lower end compared to her peers in similar positions. After much discussion surrounding the recent approximate \$168k in savings, and in recognition of Kristin's performance and dedication to the organization, the board agreed that it was appropriate to adjust her salary. Nick Sellars moved to approve a raise for Kristin Aiken. Karli Wilkinson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mike Brossart moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:09pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Sulsona

Chief Financial Officer