

Minutes of Board Meeting January 20, 2026 6 p.m.

The meeting was held at the Lakeland Achievement Academy. Board members in attendance were Trish Buchanan, Adil Khan, Paige Campbell, Janice Jones, Karli Wilkinson, Jill Haladay, Liz Plemons, Brant Masters, Sheilitha Williams, Logan Browning, Zelda Abram, Mike Brossart and Steve Earley. 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 6:02p.m. Adil Khan moved to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2025 Board meeting. Mike Brossart seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Financial Report

Paige Campbell presented the financial report for the six months ending December 31, 2025. Cash and investments total \$2.28 million. Total assets and net assets are \$3.5 million. Total revenue was \$2,068K and total expenses were \$2,238K resulting in a net deficit of \$170K. Paige reminded the committee members that because the United Way changed their fund year to begin January 1st, and informed us in June 2025 of gap funding for July through December, the revenue for those six months was recorded in last fiscal year. This affects how our monthly financials look since we are receiving the monthly funding but it's recorded as a pledge receivable. Deborah Sulsona noted that our January 2026 FTE funding reflected the change from the October FTE count. Total FTE funding increased by just over \$250K over what was budgeted for this year. Deborah will add the year-end projection column next month.

Parents Report

The fall basket fundraiser raised \$2,600 including a \$1,000 donation from a single family! This goes towards the parents group for several events.

Mary Holjes is working on the yearbook. She has also secured a new location for a spirit night. The northside Beef O'Brady's has agreed to donating 10% of the day's sales on Tuesday, March 10. Thank you to Joseph Little for his help in setting this up. We're hoping this one is successful and can have another one in October at the southside Beef's.

Thanks to many board members and other donations received for food assistance, we were able to help several of our families and staff. Mary read two appreciation emails from parents.

Development Report

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Kelly Lane reported that we currently have \$104K in sponsorships and ticket sales for Top Chef. She is still working on those. The Community Leaders have begun fundraising. No events have been scheduled yet. Kelly provided a list of silent and live auction ideas. Please let Kelly know if you can help with anything.

We have begun to utilize approved grant dollars. We purchased 40 chairs for staff that will be reimbursed. Also, the Polk County CDBG grant was finally approved this month. We can go back to October 1st and submit for services provided.

Principal's Report

The next FTE count week is coming up on February 2 – 6. We currently have three openings but have staffings scheduled next week to fill them.

We currently have 93 on our waiting list after culling the list and will get many more in the next few months. We will begin offering a monthly informational meeting for families who are on the waiting list. The Principal, School Nurse, Resource Parent and ESE Coordinators provide information then take them on a short tour.

Teacher observations and evaluations begin next month. Cindi has had one teacher inform her that she won't return next school year.

President's Report

We received our allocation award letter for the new funding year of January 1 – December 31, 2026. We were awarded \$238,512.87 after having our allocation cut last year to \$220,512.87. The Birth to Three team is working on year-end reporting due to United Way in January and Deborah Sulsona has completed the revised budget. Kristin shared the United Way agreement with the Board packet for review.

An Early Interventionist (EI) position is listed on the employment page of our website. This position was added in the proposed budget and we feel we need to move forward in preparation for the future retirement of a long-time EI.

The paraprofessionals received letters informing them of the salary increase that the board approved in November. They were surprised and very grateful.

Publix Charities granted us another capital improvement opportunity. After confirmation that receiving funds from this grant would not hurt a future capital campaign request, we asked for \$50K to replace the Building B roof in Lakeland. It is not currently failing but is the oldest roof. This will be a summer project.

Kristin Aiken and Joseph Little held a conversation with a similar school in Orlando called Quest. They recently had a successful \$40 million campaign. They have offered for Achievement Academy staff and board to come tour their facility and continue the conversation

Committee Reports

None

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

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Kristin had emailed the United Way Partnership Agreement to the board. United Way changed the language to “intend to award the full amount” rather than will since the new allocation window bridges their own fiscal year. Mike Brossart moved to approve the United Way Partnership Agreement. Janice Jones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Sulsona

Chief Financial Officer