

Minutes of Board Meeting August 19, 2026 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, Zelda Abram, Paige Campbell, Karli Wilkinson, Janice Jones, Jesse Naranjo, Keri Martin, Debora Misch, Randy Estrada, Kaylee Crawford, Liz Plemons and Steve Earley. 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 6:02p.m. Paige Campbell moved to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2026 Board meeting. Karli Wilkinson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Recognition of Service

Karli Wilkinson was recognized for her ten (10) years of service. Thank you, Karli! Trish Buchanan also recognized Steve Earley and Janice Jones for their long tenures and status as Emeritus board members and presented them with a plaque.

Installation of New Board Members & Officers

Trish welcomed and inducted four new board members: Keri Martin, Debora Misch, Randy Estrada, and Kaylee Crawford, who was elected as the parent representative. We welcome each of you to the Board!

Trish also installed new board officers: Adil Khan as Board Chair and Nick Sellars as Secretary. Remaining officers will be installed next month. Adil chaired the remainder of the board meeting. Adil recognized Trish's time as Board Chair and presented her with a gift of our appreciation.

Financial Report

Deborah Sulsona presented the financial report for the one month ending July 31, 2026. Cash and investments total \$2.7 million. Total assets are \$4.1 million with net assets of \$4.09 million. After conversation with our audit team and our CPA, an adjusting journal entry was made after the financials were sent in the board packet. Revenue received in July from the United Community Wellness grant was for June expenditures and was reclassified to record the income and receivable as of June 30, 2026. After that adjustment, total revenue was \$277K and total expenses of \$334K resulting in a net deficit of \$57K. July has three payrolls but the first one hit the bank account on June 30 so the expense was recorded in the last fiscal year. Therefore, we will track ahead of budget in payroll all year until the same thing happens next summer.

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Principal's Report

We lost two teachers just before school started. A Lakeland teacher gave a 2-week notice and a Bartow teacher gave a one-day notice. Both went to teach in Hillsborough where due to a property tax referendum, teachers currently have a \$6,000 bonus added to their salary. The Lakeland teacher called after one week asking for her job back. We also were able to place a para who has been working towards her degree in education in a teaching position. She will have her temporary certificate issued soon. We still need to hire a speech therapy assistant. Students returned last week. We are not full yet but our ESE Facilitators are working to fill the remaining spots.

This summer, Cindi also worked on some maintenance needs as well as reporting such as the FSSAT (Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool) and the School Improvement Plan that was emailed to the Board of Directors. Brant Masters moved to approve the School Improvement Plan. Nick Sellars seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Parents Report

Mary Holjes is meeting all the new families and students. She will be setting up parent breakfast to begin next month.

President's Report

We have hired a new Early Interventionist for Birth to Three. She has her ITDS certification and is bilingual. We are very glad that we are able to show United Way that we have filled that position since being down an EI was pointed out at last year's visit. The CIT visit will be scheduled sometime between late September and mid-October. Kristin will email the board members when we know the exact date as we'd love to have great board representation.

We've been able to purchase some very specialized equipment for speech and physical therapy from a United Community Wellness grant. Speech received five (5) communication devices and PT will get a Spider Cage, aimed improving strength, balance, and motor skills. We also received a \$14,000 grant for marketing materials which will include several videos and some printed materials.

We had a change in our Development Team over the summer. The Development Director position is currently vacant and Ashlee Cofer has been promoted to take on additional responsibilities. Kristin and Ashlee are starting now on Top Chef and so far, have seven chefs confirmed and three community leaders confirmed.

Top Golf is next month. We have \$8,500 in sponsorships committed and four teams. Once it's over, we will need to evaluate whether we want to keep this event.

Ashlee has been tasked with sending a monthly impact message to those in our database. This will highlight our achievements without asking for money. She will also plan more donor cultivation activities.

We are partnering with Lakeland Linder airport for a Wings for Autism event mirroring what Tampa and Orlando airports are doing. This event allows parents of kids with special needs do a dry run of airports and airplanes.

We were able to get the Building B roof replaced just in time this summer as we noticed a small leak the week before. We were able to request \$50,000 from Publix Charities for capital improvements and had planned ahead to have the roof replaced.

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We have received our benefits renewal package from our broker, OneDigital. We offer our employees four options with the lowest being one that Achievement Academy pays 100% for. Overall, we are looking at a 17% increase whereas we budgeted for 20%.

With the rehire of the Teacher that had a two week lapse in employment, we drafted a policy for the personnel manual stating that if an employee is rehired within 30 days they can return to their same salary and benefits level as when they left as long as they return to the same position and are eligible for rehire. The Executive Committee recommended a change to within 90 days. Nick Sellars is reviewing the draft policy and will bring it before the board for a vote next month.

Committee Reports

Kristin will send out an updated committee list after the new board members have made the selections. The Personnel Committee plans to meet tomorrow.

Unfinished Business

Adil Khan encouraged all board members to attend the Board Retreat on Saturday, September 9th.

New Business

Kristin asked board members to complete the annual conflict of interest form as required for our annual audit.

Trish Buchanan moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Sulsona

Chief Financial Officer