

MINUTES
ASCEND ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
MEETING DATE: February 22, 2024
5251 Coconut Creek Parkway Margate, FL 33063

Annual Meeting - 3:30PM

The meeting was called to order at 3:30PM by the Chairman. In attendance were board Members DuMont, Alessi and Leonti (by phone) and Ms. Johnson, ACA Principal. In addition, attending were prospective Board Members Michael Moore (by phone), Bonnie Clemon, Sharon Airaghi and Matt Ferrelli.

- I. **AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Ratification of September 29, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

REQUESTED ACTION: Ratify items and actions taken from the last Board Meeting.

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: Review, approval, and comments

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

EXHIBIT: Meeting Minutes from September 23, 2023 Board Meeting

DISCUSSION: Final Minutes of the aforementioned Board Meeting were circulated prior to the meeting. With all Board Members having reviewed them and there being no comments, Board Chair DuMont motioned for their approval. Mr. Alessi seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Board Action:

Approved X

Disapproved _____

Tabled _____

II. **AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Review SY 23/24 Operating Budget and review of grants

REQUESTED ACTION: Review operating budget and grant updates

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: \$471,936.00 was allocated to the school for ARP/ESSER III grant. Grant information and updates will be reviewed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

EXHIBIT: Budget (Previously Distributed & On-File with District & School) and Grant Tracking Sheet (Hand-out)

DISCUSSION: Chairman DuMont opened with a discussion of the budget. Based upon enrollments from the fall and FEFP funding, the school continues to track to plan. Operating expenses are in aggregate in line with overall spend patterns taking into account FEFP and Grant entitlements. Principal Johnson indicated at the enrollments for Spring will surpass 225 students and likely approach 250, many posts FEFP count and as such the school will have to monitor grade size and teacher sufficiency and potentially need further chromebooks. Chairman DuMont outlined that there is sufficient excess capital to support these requirements along with necessary repairs to the HVAC which has been problematic for the last 2 years.

Ms. Johnson went through Grant entitlements and outlined the fact that as with ESSR 1 & 2 administration, Broward County schools continues to be behind in reviewing and processing the nearly \$450,000 of entitlements for Ascend. The Board requested to remain apprised and to continue to submit as timely as possible to maximize collection of said entitlements.

No adjustments to the budget was proposed and further the Board approved the transfer of up to \$300,000 from the main operating accounts to an interest bearing CD to maximize ROI on funds available to the school.

No further action was required at this time.

Board Action Taken:

Approved_____

Disapproved_____

Tabled__None_____

III. **AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Review of any operational matters

REQUESTED ACTION: Review/approve any operational matters

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: Any operational matters including staffing and resources will be reviewed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: TBD

EXHIBIT: N/A

DISCUSSION: Ms. Johnson opened with the following:

- A. Most significant hiring needs continue to be an Assistant Principal for Ms Johnson and addition of a Guidance Counselor to provide for promotion within. The Teacher labor market continues to be tight and so a review of competitive salaries will be necessary for the SY 24/25 budget.
- B. With enrollments on the rise, the school needs to undertake a study of necessary classroom construction and expansion to adhere to class sizes as well as to ensure sufficient enclosed classroom space. Further construction would likely be required if student enrollment surpassed 250 students as daily attendance post COVID is positively on the rise as well.

Ms Johnson and Mr Alessi agreed to move the human capital and construction analyses forward and update the Board at later meetings. No further action was required.

Board Action Taken:

Approved_____

Disapproved_____

Tabled__None_____

IV. **AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** District Updates

REQUESTED ACTION: Review any updates from the district, Broward County Public Schools

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: The school will review any updates from the district.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: TDB

EXHIBIT: None

Discussion: No specific items were requiring discussion. The school had recently completed a curriculum review and had responded to the Districts recommendations and areas for improvement. The majority of such areas included documentation of entitled special services as well as documentation of parent dialog. Ms Johnson indicated that with the largely at risk student population served, it continues to be challenging to ensure parent/guardian engagement and documentation of all outreach but a formal file sign-off will be provided and the school will reinstate register mail communications where required to ensure proof of outreach.

Mr Alessi, as former principal, agreed to review processes to ensure all appropriate measures and documentation were enabled.

Board Action Taken:

Approved_____

Disapproved_____

Tabled_None_____

V. **AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Board Member Resignation and Admittance

REQUESTED ACTION: Approve the resignation of Board Member, Cherly Leonti and Greg DuMont and approve new members

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: The school is required to have at least three board members.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

EXHIBIT:

Discussion: Chairman DuMont indicated that with enrollments on the rise, and a significant amount of legwork done by Mr. Alessi, the school was in the position to add incremental local members to the board, all having significant teaching and administrative experience in Broward County and other large school districts. With that Resolutions have been prepared to expand the Board to a maximum of 7 seats. Such resolutions were approved in writing by the current Board of DuMont, Leonti and Alessi. During the mtg DuMont proposed to appoint Vince Alessi as Board Chair, replacing DuMont (such motion seconded by Leonti) and unanimously approved. In addition resolutions were ratified to add Michael Moore, Bonnie Clemon, Sharon Airaghi and Matt Ferrelli to new seats, all of whom accepted. Contemporaneously Leonti and DuMont submitted their resignations from the Board contingent upon the new members taking the necessary education and passing all further background and security checks required by law.

Resignations should be formally complete by the next Board Mtg.

Board Action Taken:

Approved ___X_

Disapproved _____

Tabled _____

VI. **AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Public Comments

REQUESTED ACTION: Listen and address all public comments

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: The governing board is available to listen and address any questions, comments or concerns from all stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

EXHIBIT: None

Discussion: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Board Action Taken:

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Tabled _____ None _____

With there being no further actions or matters for the Board, the Mr. DuMont adjourned the meeting at 5:15PM.