

**ALLIANCE CHARTER ACADEMY
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**

January 10, 2024

(Approved February 14, 2024)

A. CALL TO ORDER

- a. The Governing Board of Alliance Charter Academy met in Regular Session on January 10, 2024 at 6:00pm via Google Meet
- b. Present from the Board were Tara McLaughlin , Sarah Reck-Secunda , Robert Bruders , Lindsey Skones, Darla Hall, Shannon Meade , and Cecilia Morgan
- c. Also present were Julia Dillon, Karen Downing, Margo Edinger, Meg Snyder, Shallon Smith, Shelly Smith, Lindsay Coombes, Torey Michaelson-LeClaire, Lauree Ortman, Jana Drew, Kathleen Mixer-Cantrell, Lori Rux, Lindsay Freedman, ACA PTO, Denice Crombie, Katie Matthis, Gayle, Carly Carruthers, Jarod Kendrick, Ericka Engle, Renee Elting
- d. Tara called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Vote to approve
 - i. December 13, 2023 Meeting Notes
 - ii. January 3, 2024 Meeting Notes
 - iii. January 3, 2024 Meeting Notes (Executive Session)
 - iv. January 7, 2024 Meeting Notes
 - v. Today's Agenda
 1. Tara moved to approve the consent agenda with unanimous consent; consent agenda has passed.

C. RECOGNITION/APPRECIATION

- a. Shelly thanked ACA for the hard work - Board Members are fully activated, administration team has taken on extra responsibilities/outside of the realm of their regular jobs; she specially wants to thank Renee Elting for her work on campus - she is ensuring the critical work is getting done, devotion to the school; thanks to the greeting committee who stand outside every morning and spread the joy; thanks to the entire staff for maintaining the bright spot in the midst of difficulties
- b. Robert would like to thank our community and staff for their patience with all the challenges we've faced. Thanks to Renee for all the help with the financial needs. Thanks to the Board for stepping up.
- c. Tara thanked the Board members who are working so hard during this time.
- d. Darla thanked Shelly for coming to help ACA.

D. PUBLIC INPUT

- a. Tara made a statement regarding public input. The Board has recently received much information and contact from the community - emails, text messages, phone calls, hallway conversations - regarding Board topics and other concerns. Tara wanted to caution that communications should be sent to two specific Board members, rather than the entire Board to ensure that we do not fall into the legal concerns regarding serial communication. Public input is always welcome during our regular sessions.

E. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

- a. Enrollment
 - i. Enrollment at 366
 - ii. Informational Meeting on 1/9/24 was well attended, as of today there were 9 requested applications
- b. ACA 2022-2023 State Testing Results
 - i. Only one grade level/subject failed to beat the district scores (2022-2023 4th grade reading) - Rosemary B. is drafting a continuous improvement plan
- c. Science Department presentation
 - i. Margo Edinger - 5th grade Science
 - 1. In 2021-2022, OCSD scored 39.2% and ACA scored 33.3%
 - 2. Margo began working on the Continuous Improvement Plan and determined the following steps for improvement
 - a. Familiarized herself and students with the test
 - b. Content discussed with students, tools and tips shared with students, developed strategies
 - c. Work with the ES's to encourage participation
 - d. Offered practice sessions to all 5th, 8th, and 11th graders
 - e. Incorporate more ODE assessments in all classes
 - 3. In 2022-2023, State 30%, OCSD 32%, and ACA 71%!

F. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Student Representative - Julia Dillon
 - i. Encouraged by the participation in Spirit Week
 - ii. Winter Formal next Friday, January 19th (for high school students and 8th grade by invite, students are permitted to bring outside guests)
 - iii. Student Leadership will be volunteering at a Laundry Facility on January 24th - they are still looking for more volunteers
 - iv. Would like to know how she can set up a way for students to communicate with her and bring up topics. Shannon clarified that past reps used comment boxes, bulletin boards.
- b. Treasurer Update - Robert Bruders

- i. Robert moved to remove Matt Lacy and Christine Caponi from our US Bank accounts as signers; Tara seconded; all ayes. Motion passed.
 - ii. Monthly budget to actual reports show that we are \$200,000+ under budget, but that is not accurate. We have not yet taken care of all liabilities and those still need to be deducted and reflected.
 - iii. 2022-2023 Audit Update - Robert indicated that the audit was completed and submitted to ODE on time. ACA has a copy of the final report in hand.
 - iv. Meeting with Texas Life - If you are an employee and get life insurance through Texas Life, it is portable and can be transferred to another job. Also, your premium does not change. Renee and Shallon have further details for interested staff.
 - v. Concern over tracking expenses to be deducted from budget, a bookkeeper would help ensure this area.
 - vi. W2/1099s will be out by the end of the month
 - vii. Robert will work with Lindsay Coombes on grant reporting and Federal/State reporting that needs to be completed by the end of January
- c. Chair Update - Tara McLaughlin
- i. Pay Scale Revision
 - 1. We have discovered a variety of issues tangled into this situation of a pay scale revision with Xenium, we are attempting to untangle these topics to make the appropriate decisions for the payscale.
 - 2. Staff was asked to bring ideas for a solution and we will consider them along with information we are collecting.
 - a. Documents have been received; 2 documents/proposals have been submitted by knowledgeable staff and the Board is reviewing them.
 - 3. Xenium has been paused due to their lack of understanding of our needs and unique situation.
 - ii. Staff Interviews
 - 1. We have been collecting the necessary information to hold quality meetings with our staff
 - a. Meetings need to be scheduled with all individual staff members, along with 2 Board members
 - b. All Board members expressed willingness to help with staff interviews.
 - c. Tara created a calendar where Board members can select days they will participate and staff can sign up for 30 minute time slots
 - d. Staff members should bring their contract to the meeting so we can compare paperwork and ensure correct signatures.

- e. We want to ensure that staff members are content and comfortable with their contracts. We want to make sure that everything is made right for every employee.
 - f. Tara and Ceclia will draft the email to staff, Shannon will create a Google Form, Sarah is continuing to work on determining the questions for staff
2. Scheduling appointments
 - a. 30 minute time slots
 - b. 2 Board members at each meeting
 - c. We must meet with every single staff member to ensure we are not overlooking details.
 - d. Interviews will be spread out over 2-3 weeks

G. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Xenium
 - i. [Compliance Assessment Report](#) and [Compliance Presentation](#)
 1. It seems like a daunting amount of information, but it is like an audit. This report is a roadmap of priorities that is helpful to ACA as we make needed changes.
 - ii. Is Xenium cost effective for us?
 1. Xenium has been utilized, but we have seen overages of our contracted hours that are not sustainable.
 2. Staff are still welcomed to call them to receive support
- b. Policy recheck from December meeting - Tara moved to put these policies off to the February 14th meeting; Robert seconded; all ayes.
 - i. EHB - Cybersecurity, Optional
 - ii. EHB-AR - Cybersecurity, Optional

H. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Outsourcing Payroll options
 - i. Xenium and Express - The Board decided to move away from these two proposals.
 - ii. True Blue - This proposal would be in place of hiring a Business Manager. The cost covers all bookkeeping, accounting, payroll. It appears to be cost prohibitive.
 - iii. Cardinal - A simplified fix for payroll
 - iv. The Board asked Renee Elting to share her thoughts with the Board
 1. She recommended moving forward as quickly as possible with a decision to convert to Quickbooks online
 2. She would need Kelsey from Springwater in place for 8-10 hours per week to help in the Finance Office and Cardinal in place in order to make it through the rest of the school year

- 3. Cardinal is simplified and just processes payroll and checks
- 4. TrueBlue is a one stop shop and would provide us with all we need for payroll, accounting, bookkeeping. When we consider the cost of True Blue, we should take into consideration the total cost of an employee (salary, benefits, etc).
- v. Tara moved to migrate from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks Online, including the payroll module, with a monthly plan cap of \$600 and a cap of \$1000 on a migration/implementation fee; Robert seconded; all ayes. Motion passes.
- vi. Tara motioned to move forward with Cardinal for payroll processing as the estimate reads; Shannon seconded; all ayes. Motion passes.
- b. Executive Director 2024-2025 Search
 - i. Work Session (in person) February 7th, 5-6:30pm to start the process
 - ii. Build a to do list and timeline
- c. Interim Director Search update
 - i. We received two applications for the Interim Director and will be interviewing both. Our two candidates for our Interim Director position are Shallon Smith and Shelly Smith. We are moving forward with interviews next week.

I. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Robert moved to remove Matt Lacy and Christine Caponi from our US Bank accounts as signers; Tara seconded; all ayes. Motion passed.

	Aye	Nay	Abstained	Absent
Tara	X			
Sarah	X			
Robert	X			
Lindsey	X			
Shannon	X			
Cecilia	X			
Darla	X			

- b. Policy recheck from December meeting - Tara moved to put these policies off to the February 14th meeting; Robert seconded; all ayes.

	Aye	Nay	Abstained	Absent

Tara	X			
Sarah	X			
Robert	X			
Lindsey	X			
Shannon	X			
Cecilia	X			
Darla	X			

- c. Tara moved to migrate from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks Online, including the payroll module, with a monthly plan cap of \$600 and a cap of \$1000 on a migration/implementation fee; Robert seconded; all ayes. Motion passes.

	Aye	Nay	Abstained	Absent
Tara	X			
Sarah	X			
Robert	X			
Lindsey	X			
Shannon	X			
Cecilia	X			
Darla	X			

- d. Tara motioned to move forward with Cardinal for payroll processing as the estimate reads; Shannon seconded; all ayes. Motion passes.

	Aye	Nay	Abstained	Absent
Tara	X			
Sarah	X			
Robert	X			
Lindsey	X			

Shannon	X			
Cecilia	X			
Darla	X			

J. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 8:58pm by Tara

K. NEXT MEETING

- a. January 17, 2024 - Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Lindsey Skones, Board Secretary