

# ALLIANCE CHARTER ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

February 1, 2025

(Approved February 12, 2025)

## A. CALL TO ORDER

- a. The Governing Board of Alliance Charter Academy met in Work Session on February 1, 2025 at 11:00am .
- b. Location of meeting was the Oregon City Christian Church: 1179 South End Rd, Oregon City, OR 97045
- c. Present from the Board were Tara McLaughlin, Robert Bruders, Darla Hall, Lauree Ortman, Ann Heppner, Sarah-Reck Secunda; Present from the Admin team were Meg Snyder and Nhia Yang
- d. Absent from the Board was Lindsey Skones; Absent from the Admin team was Shelly Smith
- e. Also present was Renee Elting
- f. Tara called the meeting to order at 11:05am.

## B. Strategic Planning Process

- a. Board members and Admin team were each given binders that included planning documents
  - i. SP Suggested Steps
  - ii. Previous SP document
  - iii. Equity Lens
  - iv. Articles of Incorporation
  - v. Charter Application
  - vi. 23-25 Building Lease
  - vii. 23-28 Charter Agreement
  - viii. ORC3S Full Report
  - ix. Audit Exit Memos from 2018-2024
  - x. Surveys
    1. Survey Results 23-24
    2. Survey Results 24-25
  - xi. Annual Reports
    1. 2023
    2. 2024
- b. Separate binders and/or printed reports for past audits were also provided
  - i. 2024
    1. Draft audit
  - ii. 2023
    1. Financial Report
    2. Board Letter
  - iii. 2022
    1. Financial Report
    2. Board letter
  - iv. 2021
    1. Financial Report

- v. 2020
      - 1. Financial Report
  - c. Other Resources to be referenced during the SP process were also provided.
    - i. Portrait of a Graduate Poster
    - ii. Bethel SP (printed)
    - iii. OCSD SP (printed)
    - iv. Robert's Rules of Order
  - d. Documents to be completed by ACA Board and Admin during the Strategic Planning process.
    - i. Short term plan
    - ii. Portrait of a Graduate x3
    - iii. SWOT Analysis
    - iv. Goal Alignment
    - v. Long term plan (expected to be completed in 2026)
- C. Discussion items. *No action items during this meeting.***
- a. Recap of January 29, 2025 staff input meeting and staff survey input.
    - i. Discussion of
      - 1. How to meet teacher pay requests.
        - a. We are close to the base pay that is offered from OCSD, but we cannot meet upper levels with our limited funding.
        - b. What to consider when setting pay scale for organization: education, experience, the job description and benefit it has to the business.
        - c. Could we make the teacher and ES rate the same?
        - d. Hours worked are affected by the schedule, length of class, comprehensive vs supplemental, etc.
          - i. Could ACA create more hybrid classes for MS, add associated labs, be more clear about the department expectations from students?
          - ii. Comprehensive middle school classes are still up for debate.
      - 2. How to keep teacher workload reasonable; how to help teachers feel valued.
        - a. Parents need to be involved. For teacher support with in-class behaviors, classroom projects, and extended learning with homework and other responsibilities.
        - b. ACA began as the main teacher being the parent. Recent years have shifted a lot of responsibilities to teachers. Discussion on how to keep workload balanced between parent, teacher, and ES team.
        - c. Could content specialists train parents and ESes on how to meet needs outside the classroom?
      - 3. How our student population has changed and which students are struggling with the ACA model.
        - a. Some of this change in population has to do with the educational environment change since 2020, having students sent to us from the district schools late in their HS

journey and at risk of not graduating, and ACA not having a strong and consistent message on what the ACA model is and what that requires from students and families.

- b. The open campus model could be dangerous for the younger middle school students. Historically ACA 6th graders were required to have guardians on campus, same as the 4th and 5th grade requirements are now.
- c. Should ACA require guardians on site for Middle School students? Discussions regarding how to bring parents back on campus for students through middle school, as it was pre-covid. Returning to this model of parent involvement could assist in learning, student management, behavior, and safety.
- d. Unschooling student population has grown in recent years. These students often struggle when held to high academic rigor, this can result in challenging behaviors, lack of academic improvement, opting out of state testing (ACA is required to have a specific % of students participating in in state testing. Those scores should meet or exceed district numbers.)

4. How to improve parent involvement.

- a. Consider providing required educational meetings for new families coming in; "how to be a homeschooler at ACA".
- b. Make campus spaces more welcoming for families to educate their students. Many spaces are loud, crowded, and hard to learn in. Discussions regarding re-establishing the library space, relocating the curriculum room, and possibly increasing family study spaces in the cafeteria were discussed.

b. Marketing potentials for ACA

- i. We have a budgeted line item, but not using it to its full potential.
- ii. Consider events to join
  - 1. OC Farmers Market (year round)
  - 2. Oaks Park "Not back to school days" (Sep yearly)
  - 3. OCSD "Family Focus Forum" (Jan/Feb yearly)

c. Discussion of ES specific topics

- i. Home Visits, flexibility is the key to ES success.
- ii. How PLC weeks are used, flexibility is the key to ES success.
- iii. Learning records need clarity and consistency across the population. It is important for ESes to understand the standards, to give parents the same message, and the documents should be easy for parents to understand.

d. Discussion of staff Performance Evaluation schedule

- i. Staff trust must be gained through the process. This year is the process building year.

- ii. This time should be used as a communication opportunity for staff to express their needs as well.
- iii. IF wage increases are tied to performance evaluation (we as a board have not approved this yet so this is a potential not a reality), ACA should provide a list of what things would lead to a lack of wage increase.
- iv. Having a scale that values education, experience, job description, and performance over time can motivate employees to build their own skills.
  - 1. This way ACA can support those individuals to become knowledgeable leadership from within the organization.
  - 2. Professional Development Fund can be used for conferences, webinars, and other training.
  - 3. ACA needs to better convey and explain the soft benefits as a staff member.
- v. Staff meeting absences should include a differentiation for excused and unexcused absences, with other options for staff to be able to access the information provided during the meeting. It is important to remember that sick days are protected.
- e. Discussion of kitchen and lunch options
  - i. District visited ACA and discussed options with Shelly and Tara
    - 1. ACA can have their own Student Lunch Program through the national programs, would require staffing and kitchen protocols be met.
    - 2. ACA can order food from OCSD as individual prepackaged meals, ACA must purchase a warmer to keep food at safe temperature. Does not need special staff or kitchen protocols met.
    - 3. ACA can build their own restaurant style kitchen, it must meet Oregon state restaurant standards, or certified food truck, must also meet all Oregon state standards.
- f. Past and current Audit numbers show a history of overspending
  - i. ACA has had a habit of ending the fiscal year over budget.
  - ii. This year's tight budgeting could get us to a zero balance, creating a good starting point to build a sustainable budget.
- g. Buying a building
  - i. Buying a building requires 2-3 years of positive P&L's. ACA is lacking those positive numbers.
  - ii. The Building fund that was created at ACA inception has been depleted over years of poor budgeting.
- h. Upcoming audit plan
  - i. ACA will request to begin the next audit in summer of 2025, so that we can complete this requirement by the due date in our charter agreement.

#### **D. Adjournment**

- a. Tara adjourned the meeting at 3:45pm
- b. The Strategic Planning process is still an open agenda item for the Board to plan further meetings and/or have further discussions during upcoming meetings.

#### **E. Next Meeting Time**

- a. Regular Session- Feb 12, 2025 6pm
- b. [24-25 Meeting Schedule Link](#)