



Catalyst Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2020 3:00- 5:30 PM
<https://meet.google.com/fno-xdfg-bqh>
+1 385-352-0435 PIN: 409 196 068#

Board Members Present:

Dr. Colleen Reardon, Steve Brown, Dr. Catherine Burns, Ying Hsu, Terry Toth, Larry Williams, Rick Hurd, Steven D'Souza, Andrew Jones, Ariel Murray, Velia Soto, Dr. Kimberly Hinton, and Claiborne Wade

Member Absent: None

Catalyst Staff Present: Gordon Hannon, Imran Shamim, LeAnne Wagner, Ed Siderewicz, Charlotte Myers and Michael Kasang

Guest: Monica Smith

Review and vote for approval of May 11, 2020 Board of Directors meeting minutes, July 7, 2020 Finance Committee meeting minutes, and August 13, 2020 Academic Committee meeting minutes.

- Larry Williams made motion to approve; Terry Toth seconded motion.
- All present members approved; zero opposed.

Review and vote on three-year renewal term to Catalyst Board of Directors and Finance Committee for Terry Toth.

- Ying Hsu made motion to approve; Steve Brown seconded motion.
- All present members approved; zero opposed (Terry Toth abstained).

Review and vote on three-year renewal term to Catalyst Board of Directors and Finance Committee for Steve Brown.

- Larry Williams made motion to approve; Steve D'Souza seconded motion.
- All present members approved; zero opposed (Steve Brown abstained).

Review and vote on three-year renewal term to Catalyst Board of Directors and Finance Committee for Rick Hurd.

- Steve Brown made motion to approve; Larry Williams seconded motion.
- All present members approved; zero opposed (Rick Hurd abstained).

Review and vote on three-year renewal term to Catalyst Board of Directors and Finance Committee for Larry Williams.

- Claiborne Wade made motion to approve; Terry Toth seconded motion.
- All present members approved; zero opposed (Larry Williams abstained).

Administration
Catalyst Circle Rock
Catalyst Maria

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Catalyst Circle Rock team member Charlotte Myers introduced Catalyst Circle Rock parent Monica Smith for Board membership. Ms. Smith informed the Board:

- She has 8th Grade and 4th Grade students at Catalyst Circle Rock
- She has been a District 97 in Oak Park employee for 14 years
- She has a Bachelor's degree from Robert Morris University

Next step will be Board members meeting with Ms. Smith and then voting on her membership at next meeting.

Catalyst Academic and Mission Committee:

Catalyst CEO Gordon Hannon:

- Schools are off to a strong start to SY20-21.
 - Connectivity is strong (every student is connected), devices were distributed (1,500+).
 - Desks have been distributed at Catalyst Circle Rock.
 - Protocols have been implemented for health and safety.
 - Concerns are primarily in younger grades.
- SY19-20 and SY20-21 will not have SQRP scores from CPS
- CCR received the highest rating of “Well Organized” on the 5Essentials survey from the University of Chicago, and had an average daily attendance rate above 96%, which would have given CCR the rating of 1+ on 30% of its SQRP.
- MES received the second highest rating of “Organized” on the 5Essentials survey and had an average daily attendance just shy of 96%, which would have given MES the rating of 1 on 30% of its SQRP.
- MHS received the second highest rating of “Organized” on the 5Essentials survey (level 1) and had an average daily attendance rate of 96% (level 1+). In addition, CPS reported these high school specific data for MHS (asterisk indicates best on record for MHS):
 - One-year drop-out rate 1.6% (level 1+)
 - 4-year cohort graduation rate 79.3% (level 1+)
 - Early college credit 35.1%* (level 1+)
 - College Enrollment 71.8% (level 1)
 - College persistence 80.3%* (level 1, and in top 10 of all CPS non-selective high schools)

Catalyst Director of Informational Technology Imran Shamim:

- Nine years at Catalyst, previously worked at San Miguel
- 3CX phone system allows for teachers to call students from school's phone system
- Confirmed connectivity for all students
- 980-1030 devices have been distributed at Catalyst Maria and 500+ at Catalyst Circle Rock
- Challenges have been troubleshooting device issues for families the first week.
- 7:30 AM- 7:00 PM IT troubleshooting hours
- Proactive calls to all parents to offer support

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- One new staff member has been added to IT team

Catalyst Director of Instructional Technology LeAnne Wagner:

- Seven years at Catalyst, previously worked extensively at school district in Iowa
- All scholars had devices prior to shutdown
- Schools use Google
- Use Clever for sign-ins
- Illuminate is the assessment tool
- FastBridge is the diagnostic tool being used in elementary schools
- PDs were held at the beginning of the school year and there are technology office hours every day

Academic Committee Chair Dr. Catherine Burns:

- Principals have been working extensive hours and pushed themselves to the limits to address a myriad of issues
 - Addressing COVID and racial unrest
 - Addressing SEL issues for scholars and staff members
 - Addressing IT issues, COVID issues, etc.
- Principals created hybrid and full remote plans in June 2020, and then worked through the fully remote plan in August 2020.
- Principals would like to continue in remote setting through end of 2020 and Catherine Burns and Gordon Hannon fully support this desire.

Catalyst Director of External Relations Ed Siderewicz:

- Schools started conversation several years ago on racial justice, and this has become more intentional
- Step into the conversations on racial justice
- Book discussions over the summer
 - *Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together?*
- Legacy Teams and committees at each school have been leading these conversations
- Showed film *A Most Beautiful Thing* at Kehrein Center for the Arts Friday September 25, 2020 as one of the three locations.
- On November 5, 2020 there will be a symposium on racial reconciliation at KCA.

Catalyst Maria Principal Dawn Sandoval:

- Strong attendance (95%) during SY20-21 YTD
- Structure and consistency are on-going challenge.
- IT team has been strong, but parent/scholars' issues with technology has been on-going challenge.

Finance Committee (discussion led by Steve Brown)

FY21

Revenue

- Accurate food service revenue and expenses were included.

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- Revenue up 3-4%, primarily due to public funding
- Hold harmless on enrollment
- \$550k in private fundraising
 - \$325k for the schools
 - \$225 for Kehrein Center for the Arts

Expenses

- Technology budget is up
- Compensation is up due scheduled increases for teaching staff
- Remaining expense lines are overall consistent FY20 to FY21

Paycheck Protection Program

- Catalyst was awarded PPP loan on May 8, 2020.
- Chicago Public Schools' Office of the Inspector General is investigating charter schools in receipt of loans.
- Catalyst has retained collective counsel with other charter schools
- Catalyst based its request only on salaries that were at high risk to be terminated in loan amount application and not the entire payroll.

Public comment opportunity- No public comment

Additional notes by Gordon Hannon

- Kehrein Center for the Arts capital campaign has concluded with over \$5.1M committed to project.
- **The Catalyst Schools Alumni Persistence Fund** for Catalyst Maria graduates named has been created by Terry and Monica Toth.
- Board member Steven D'Souza has secured significant STEM funding for Catalyst through Northrop Grumman.
- Marc Gaddis has resigned from the Catalyst Board of Directors.

Closure and next steps:

Board members will complete four hours of mandatory Board training by December 31, 2020.

Adjourn

At 4:30 it was moved (Terry Toth) and seconded (Steven D'Souza) to adjourn meeting.

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