

Beacon Academy Charter District 4124
 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, September 23, 2021, 6:30 p.m.
 3415 Louisiana Ave N, Crystal, MN 55427
Beacon Academy is authorized by Innovative Quality Schools
P.O Box 580, Hutchinson, MN 55350

CALL TO ORDER Wendy Terry called the meeting to order to at 6:35 p.m.

1.ROLL CALL present at time of meeting unless otherwise noted	Present	Absent
Board Member		
Wendy Terry (President)	✓	
Kris Gapinski (Vice President)	✓	
Aaron Price (Treasurer)		✓
Paige Roth (Secretary)	✓	
Elizabeth Brobeck	✓	
Matheu Weidenbach	✓	
Joanna Pederson	✓	
Elizabeth Warpinski	✓	
	✓	
Sean Koster(ex-officio)	✓	
Mike Reeder (ex-officio)	✓	
Mike Pocrnich (ex-officio)	✓	

MISC. ATTENDEES: MARY PETERS, ALYSSA RODER,
 MARIE GEISLINGER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(Choral reading of the Pledge of Allegiance)

3. BEACON MISSION STATEMENT

(Choral reading of the Beacon Academy Mission Statement)

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion:	To approve the agenda							
Made by:	• Kris Gapinski			Seconded by:	• Elizabeth Brobeck			
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x						
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

5. Approve Appointment of Community Member:

- Mary Peters has applied to fill the open community seat through June 2022

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Motion:	To approve appointing Mary Peters to serve as the community member for the 2021-2022 school year:								
Made by:	• Elizabeth Warpinski				Seconded by:	• Joanna Pederson			
Discussion:									
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x			
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x			
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x			
	Joanna Pederson	x							
	Kris Gapinski	x							
Decision:	Passes								

6. Public Comment

The board will recognize anyone from the public who wants to speak at this time. The board reserves the right to limit the time of the public comment. The public will not have the opportunity to speak or comment on any agenda item after the public comment has passed.

7. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Board members read the agenda and disclose if they have any real or perceived conflict of interest with any agenda items.

8. Approval of the Consent Agenda:

- The following items were pulled from the consent agenda:
 - Regular Board Meeting Minutes
 - Emergency Board Meeting Minutes
 - Policy 505

Motion:	To approve the consent agenda								
Made by:	* Kris Gapinski				Seconded by:	*Matheu Weidenbach			
Discussion:									
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x			
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x			
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x			
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X			
	Kris Gapinski	x							
Decision:	Passes								
A. Approval of Minutes: Board Retreat – August 26, 2021 B. Staffing Update C. Uptown Lawn and Snow, Inc.									

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Regular Board Meeting Minutes

For items 4 and 8 it was recorded that Elizabeth Brobeck was absent and Paige Roth was present.

Motion: To approve the Regular Meeting Minutes with the corrections.								
Made by: * Kris Gapinski			Seconded by: *Elizabeth Brobeck					
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision: Passes								

Emergency Board Meeting Minutes

For items 4, 6, and 7 and for the attendance log it was recorded that Aaron Price was present when he was absent for the meeting.

Motion: To approve the Emergency Meeting Minutes with the corrections.								
Made by: * Matheu Weidenbach			Seconded by: • Joanna Pederson					
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision: Passes								

Policy 505

Policy 505 will be added to the governance report. This will become item G.1 on the agenda.

Motion:	To move policy 505 to the governance report for discussion.							
Made by:	* Matheu Weidenbach			Seconded by:	• Joanna Pederson			
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

9. Board Reports

A. Finance Committee, Mike Pocrnich

1. Review/Approve August 2021 Financial Report

- August Financials have an updated working budget.
- The audit fieldwork is completed. The drafts are currently being reviewed.
- Year to Date surplus is \$437,938.
- Cash balance is \$2.2 million.
- We are anticipating having between 90-95 % of our holdback from last year by the end of October.
- The third page of the financial statement say July 2021; this will be corrected to say August 2021.

Motion:	To approve the finance report with the date changes on page 3:							
Made by:	*Matheu Weidenbach			Seconded by:	• Joanna Pederson			
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

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2. SpEd Finance and State Payments Training

- About 30% of the budget is related to special education.
- Federal funding is separate from state funding. These are the primary sources for special education.
- Some special education funds come from our general education funding.
- We get reimbursed for salaries & benefits, contracted services, and SPED transportation.
- State funding has a reimbursement of 95% of the cost.
- This reimbursement can lag up to 18 months before payout. This is seen especially when there is growth in the program.
- Federal funding is a finite amount. Beacon is allocated to receive \$120,835 for FY21. Unused funds carry over to the next year.
- Schools must have a Maintenance of Effort, which means that we need to spend as much as or more than the previous year. If Beacon spends a smaller amount, they must provide justification for the decrease in spending.
- Schools are paid by the state twice a month, totaling 24 payments. These payments are metered out as equally as possible.
- Typically, we receive 90% of our revenue by the end of the fiscal year. 10% is held back and paid in August, October, and November of the following year.

B. PTO – Marie Geislinger

- Beacon Academy policies state that all fundraisers go through the Beacon PTO. Any fundraiser that raises more than \$5,000 must be approved by the school board.
- PTOs main goals are to build community and raise funds for the community.
- Many of the items last year needed to be over Zoom.
- PTO was able to recoup their spending from the previous school year.
- PTO is planning to have the same fundraisers as previous years. To rebuild the community, PTO is planning to host more events and opportunities for engagement.
- They hope to have a classroom contact for each elementary classroom.
- They want to host their first event before the end of December.
- Parent education nights are currently being planned for pandemic education, a specialist night, and a Beacon spirit night.
- Some spirit nights being considered are Culver's, Chipotle, bowling, roller skating, and a brewery.
- ButterBraids is a fundraiser for middle school students. This will be from November 18th-29th. Typically, PTO receives about \$5,000. These funds will go for middle school events.
- Beacon Dash is for all students at Beacon Academy. This will be held from May 18th – 27th. This is used to replenish the PTO budget. They are hoping to raise between \$10,000-20,000. A field day is planned for May 27th.
- The flower sale is being considered. The flower sale has been used for Wolf Ridge funding in previous years. With Wolf Ridge having been cancelled in 2020 and is still tentative for this year, it is unsure if the fundraiser will happen and where the funds will go if there is no Wolf Ridge. When the decision is made for Wolf Ridge, the plan for the flower sale fundraiser will be finalized.
- Marie Gueslinger provided the board with the proposed budget for PTO.

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- PTO is still accepting teacher grant proposals and has included some funds in the budget. There is automatically provided funds to teachers for classroom expenditures. Teachers can also apply for additional funds through a grant application.
- Marie Gueslinger is planning to return in January to present plans for the second half of the year.

Motion:	To approve the PTO fundraising plan for the 2021-2022 school year:							
Made by:	• Joanna Pederson				Seconded by:	• Elizabeth Brobeck		
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

C. Executive Director, Sean Koster

1. Enrollment Report

- Enrollment is currently at 510. This is lower than last year's enrollment.
- The PPP loan helped us maintain a surplus.
- We are predicting a \$600,000 deficit. Finance is predicting about 2 years to break even.
- Long range budget with the enrollment adjustments will be presented next month.
- Sean Koster does not believe we will need to apply for loans but we will need to budget carefully.
- Charter schools in the state experienced an average increase. This increase was only seen in specific areas.
- Many families in Hennepin County went to private school or homeschool.
- Larger districts are experiencing a loss of enrollment as well.
- In the summer, we lost families because we did not offer distance learning or a mask mandate. We have now lost some families because a mask mandate has been implemented.
- Sean is working with Ann Marie regarding transportation concerns. Satellite stops are difficult for some families.

2. Review/Approve Board Member Working Agreements

Motion:	To approve the working agreements for the following board members:							
Made by:	• Kris Gapinski				Seconded by:	• Lizzie Warpinski		
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth			x
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson			x	Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

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3. Marketing Update

- Summer marketing events included Whiz Bang Days, Crystal Frolics, Crystal Farmer’s Market.
- Write-ups occurred in Sun Media, Plymouth Magazine, New Hope Community Guide.
- A postcard mailer was sent out this summer.
- Our website saw an increase of almost 20%, with 1,240 sessions averaging 1.34 minutes on the site and an average of 2.13 pages visited.
- We are currently on the 1st page when “charter schools” is searched. We appeared 22,868 times over a two-week period.
- The marketing company has also created video and audio ads for Beacon Academy which aired on YouTube and Spotify.
- Yard signs for Beacon Academy will be available during conferences.
- It was suggested to have a marketing push in January before our enrollment deadline. Sean said there are plans for postcard mailers around that time.
- Beacon has a Facebook page. These posts are duplicated on Instagram and Twitter. An outside company creates the posts. We do not have enough staff currently to create our own personalized posts. The company sends the posts to us the month prior for approval. Requests for post designs can be sent to the company.
- Joanna suggested that it be thrown to the teachers to generate posts for exciting events happening in the school. This would lessen the amount of work for one individual posting.
- Lizzie Warpinski suggested finding more events for students to participate in outside of school, like competitions, performances, etc.

4.PPP Loan Update

- The PPP loan forgiveness was forgiven in its entirety. This was over \$800,000 in funds last year.

5. Review/Approve In-House Substitute

- We have one in-house sub currently and Sean Koster would like the board to approve a second position.
- There is a substitute shortage in the metro area.
- If we post internally, we can hire someone who has a BA.
- We are currently pulling support staff to cover absent teachers.
- This position would almost be an equivalent cost to using a temp service. It would be slightly higher due to benefits.
- We could fill this position through the temp agency, but we would then have to pay a fee to the company.

Motion:	To approve hiring an in – house substitute:							
Made by:	• Lizzie Warpinski			Seconded by:	• Joanna Pederson			
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						

Decision:	Passes

6. Review/Approve PTO for Staff Testing Positive

- Last year, federal funds were provided through FFCRA to provide pay for staff out due to COVID. The board previously approved continuing this through the 2020-2021 school year when the FFCRA expired in December.
- There is little guidance coming from federal or state to cover time off when staff must quarantine this year.
- Many staff do not have the option to work from home at Beacon.
- Sean Koster would like to have board approval for staff who must take more than 5 days off due to COVID. The 6th-8th days would be covered by Beacon.
- This would not impact the staff paid time off payouts at the end of the year.
- Lizzie Warpinski was wondering about staff who test positive twice. Those staff would then have to take nonpaid days during their second quarantine. Staff have had to take unpaid days for health reasons in past years.
- There is a concern that staff may not test for fear of getting a positive result, having to quarantine, and take unpaid time off. Anyone who is unvaccinated must be tested regularly. Those who are vaccinated will not be required to test.
- Wendy Terry suggested having a PTO donation pool. Governance created a policy in the past but it did not get approved by the board.
- Sean Koster brought up that this is not just a COVID related concern. There are other emergencies that are not pandemic related, and we must be equitable in our plan so it encompasses all concerns. --This PTO proposal will only cover COVID related absences. FMLA and short-term disability do not cover COVID absences. FMLA will only cover hospitalizations or being a caregiver for COVID.

Motion:		To approve the plan for PTO absences: if someone tests positive for COVID, the 6 th -8 th day of absence would be covered by the school and would not impact the end of year payout.						
Made by:		• Matheu Weidenbach		Seconded by:		• Kris Gapinski		
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:		Passes						

7. New Revenue from Governors Pandemic Enrollment Loss Support

- About \$153,000 will be coming from the government based of the enrollment loss from the years ending in 2020 and 2021.
- This was already included in the budget when a \$600,000 deficit was projected for the end of the fiscal year.
- There will be requirements on how we spend this money.

8. COVID Update

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- There is currently one staff and one student out who tested positive.
- Overall, there have been three students and four staff who tested positive.
- There are spreadsheets tracking symptomatic absences and if negative testing has been provided to the school.
- There will be a student testing on site program rolled out soon. The nurses' group that assists with vision and hearing screening can provide the testing every other Thursday. This testing program will be optional for guardians to enroll their students. This program is through MDE and will be a pcr test.
- A federal mandate is now requiring either vaccination or to have regular testing for unvaccinated staff for all companies that employ over 100 people. This program will be starting in mid- to late- October. It is legal for MN schools to ask staff for their vaccination status.
- Communication for positive cases is going out at the end of every week for middle school families. Elementary families will be contacted for positive cases in their individual classrooms.
- We are not a 1:1 school and are not set up to go full distance learning again. If we did have to close the school for quarantining, we could not launch technology and would probably have to provide asynchronous learning only.

Recess was called at 8:23 pm.

The board reconvened at 8:32 pm

D. Board Training

1. Parliamentary Procedures

- This is the rules and procedures used to conduct orderly meetings with reasonable discussion and clear decision making.
- Boards chooses their own process which are established in the by-laws and in policies 203, 203-1, 203-5, 203-2, 203-6.
- These rules determine who gets to vote, how an individual will vote, and how voting occurs.
- Beacon follows Robert's Rules of Order.
- The agenda is set by the board chair and the executive director. Anyone can request an item for the agenda. This agenda is sent our 3 days in advance. Items can be added to the agenda at the meeting only by motion.
- For discussions, only board members may participate. Any members of the public may speak if they are invited to by the chair.
- If needed, the chair determines the order of speaking for board members.
- The decision-making process is motion, second, discussion, restate motion (by chair), vote, and announcement of the vote results.
- Motions are passed by a simple majority. The chair has the same right to vote as any other member.

E. Curriculum Committee

They will meet the first Monday of every month at 4:15. First meeting October 4th.

F. Fund Development Task Force

- Has a parent member who has experience writing grants.
- They meet the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00. The first meeting is October 5th.

G. Governance Committee

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1. 505 Distribution of Non-school Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees

- This item was pulled from the consent agenda by Lizzie Warpinski.
- Distribute and distribution definition includes posting or displaying material. Will this apply to public vs. private property? The question is if the materials are displayed on items owned by employees, will this policy be in effect?
- For social media posts by staff on their private accounts, are they still speaking as a representative of the school on their private accounts?
- There is a policy already created for social media. It should be cross-referenced for this policy.
- Sean Koster attended a legal conference that stated staff should not be penalized for posts that occur on their private accounts outside of school hours.
- Governance is going to take a closer look at the definition of posting/displaying material to determine how this impacts social media and personal/Beacon property.
- A question came up about why this policy was created.
- It is referenced in another policy, 443.

Motion:	To send policy 505 back to Governance for further revision.								
Made by:	* Matheu Weidenbach				Seconded by:	* Joanna Pederson			
Discussion:									
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	
	Aaron Price			X (absent)	Paige Roth	x			
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x			
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x			
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X			
	Kris Gapinski	x							
Decision:	Passes								

1. 443 Political Campaign Activities – Students and Employees

- Joanna was wondering how 443 tied to 505. 443 references 505 under item IV.B.2. 505 is the distribution policy and 443 is about political campaigns.
- The definition of “political materials” references “public issues” which is defined below it. Joanna would like more clarity on the definition of what is a political issue. Matheu stated that this is difficult to definitively define with the shifting nature of politics.
- Matheu would like a process for students/staff to appeal what is determined to be political, like the one created for policy 505.

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- A question came up with how this would impact oral language and discussion. Students are still able to discuss political topics during the school day.
- Another concern was if this policy would stifle the staff's ability to intervene in situations that could be hurtful to another student but would be considered political. If the speech is considered harassment or hate-speech, it is covered under a different policy and staff can intervene.
- A concern is that this policy will be weaponized against those whose existence is considered political.
- Another concern that this policy would cause some teachers to leave Beacon. We are currently in a teacher shortage and would this exacerbate our staffing needs?
- The intent of this policy is to cover all political avenues. Allowing one political agenda means that we must allow all political agendas.
- Has there been specific cases within our school that demonstrate a need for this policy? Last year, there were complaints and displays occurring that would fall under this new policy.
- Policy 505 is referenced but was not approved. 443 needs to be tabled until 505 is ready.

Motion:	To table the discussion on policy 443.							
Made by:	*Lizzie Warpinski				Seconded by:	*Joanna Pederson		
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price	x			Paige Roth	x		
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x			Mary Peters	X		
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

H. Employee Retention and Compensation Committee

-Meetings will occur this year on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:45 am. The first meeting will be on October 12th.

I. Executive Committee Meeting

-Starting in November, they will be meeting the 1st Thursday at 5:30. They will meet the 2nd Thursday of October.

Adjournment

Board Retreat- October 28, 2021

Old Business- None

Action Items- None

NEXT MEETING IS October 19, 2021

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn at 9:53 pm forwarded by Kris Gapinski seconded by Joanna Pederson. Approved unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 9:53 pm.

Approved on _____

Paige Roth, Secretary
Beacon Academy School Board