



**Cardinal McCloskey Community Charter School
Board of Trustees**

Board Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2022

1.0 The meeting was called to order by Phyllis Thorne, Chairperson, at 6:02 p. m.

2.0 Attendance: Was taken by Dr. Reva Gershen-Lowy

Board Members: Ms. Phyllis Thorne, Ms. Joy DeVries, Dr. Reva Gershen-Lowy, Dr. William Ursillo, Mr. Jim McCarthy, Ms. Dunica Charles and Sister Patricia

Excused: N/A

Charter School Staff: Jennifer Fedele, Grace Bendick, Allyn Thompson, Eleanor Hurdle, Jo Williams and Christian Adamkiewicz

CMCS Partners: Kamlesh Singh and Chris Monroe

Guests: Margie Medina, Leslie Cruz

3.0 Sanctuary Community Meeting was facilitated by Phyllis Thorne

4.0 Motion to approve today's agenda – June 14, 2022

A motion to approve the June 14, 2022 agenda was duly made by Dr. Reva Gershen-Lowy, seconded by Dr. William Ursillo, the motion was approved unanimously.

5.0 Motion to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2022 meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2022 Board Meeting was made by Dr. Reva Gershen-Lowy, seconded by Dr. William Ursillo, the motion was approved unanimously.

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2022 meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2022 Board Meeting was made by Joy DeVries, seconded by Dr. William Ursillo, the motion was approved unanimously.

6.0 Sanctuary Commitment – Ms. Joy DeVries gave an overview on how the meetings are conducted using the Sanctuary model and noted it is a great way to set the stage and tone for the Board meetings. This was evident at the SUNY meeting where the reviewers got involved in the participation of the Sanctuary Community process and got a taste of what is being done by the students, staff and Board members. It also gives everyone goals and provides incite in what needs to be accomplished at the meetings and throughout year. Ms. DeVries also noted that utilizing this model provides a way of everyone working together to achieve the goals that are being set as we move toward the upcoming renewal process. Sister Patricia will present the next commitment at the July Board meeting.

7.0 Finance Committee Report – Ms. Leslie Cruz, CSBM Representative, provided the Board members with a copy of the annual budget for the next school year that needs to be reviewed, approved and submitted by June 30, 2022. Copies of the reports are included in the Board meeting packet.

Ms. Cruz provided an in-depth summary of the comparison of the annual budget between the FY22 and FY 23 budgets. Ms. Cruz presented an itemized review of the annual budget and provided a breakdown of the actual expenses, revenue and future projections. Ms. Cruz also reviewed the flexibility in the budget and how funds were appropriately utilized to balance the budget. The school also received \$182,000 from the Bloomberg Grant, which will be included in the total income for FY 23. The total budget for FY23 is approximately \$9,945,375.61 which is based on 342 students. Ms. DeVries made a motion to approve the annual budget for the FY 23 school year.

8.0 Chair Report – Ms. Thorne reviewed the items below:

8.1 CSP Grant Proceeding – Ms. Thorne noted the CSP Grant was originally for \$880,000 and to date the school has received all but \$300,000. We were notified that, due to discrepancies by the NYS Department of Education, we will not be receiving the balance of the grant. The CSP grant was from the United States Department of Education and was being monitored by the NYSED. Several other charter schools in New York State are in the same situation.

Ms. Emily Kim, from Zeta Charter School, contacted Ms. Thorne and Dr. Gershen-Lowy to see if the school wanted to join them in a class action suit against the United States DOE. Our attorney, Susan Briggs, has been in contact with Ms. Kim and we have also notified Mr. Ralph Rossi, from CSI, who agrees CMCCS should participate in the suit. Dr. Gershen-Lowy also noted the attorney representing the charter schools works for the Arnold Porter Law Firm and they are providing their services pro bono. The Board members discussed how this will affect the budget and also, by joining the class action suit, this will help create professional partnerships with other charter schools in the area. All Board members agreed to move forward with the class action suit. More information will be provided at a later date.

8.2 Lease Agreement – Ms. Thorne noted that Mr. McCarthy is looking at other options in regard to the 501(c)3. Mr. McCarthy provided the feedback below:

- Use CMCS to sign the lease as an alternative to the Friends of Organization – Mr. McCarthy contacted the NYC DOE Charter School Office but has received no feedback regarding the use of CMCS as the Friends of Organization for CMCCS. When meeting recently with Mr. Rossi he noted that the CMCS affiliated members of the Charter School Board would have to recuse themselves when voting on specific actions.
- Mr. McCarthy received two referrals for law firms, (Lisa Holtsmeyer and Cliff Schneider), that could assist with establishing a Friends of Organizations for the Charter School. Dr. Gershen-Lowy noted that Mr. Cliff Schneider works in the same firm as Ms. Susan Briggs, the current attorney for the Charter School. Ms. DeVries and Ms. Thorne noted that Ms. Briggs also creates Friends of Organizations and CMCCS has utilized her services

to begin the process. Mr. McCarthy noted he would like to see a draft of what the By-Laws for a Friends of Organization would include. Ms. DeVries suggested Mr. McCarthy have a one-on-one meeting with Ms. Briggs to discuss all concerns of the Friends of Organization. Ms. Thorne will contact Ms. Briggs. Ms. DeVries forwarded information to Mr. McCarthy on establishing a Friend of Organization for charter schools.

- Ms. Beth Finnerty spoke with Ms. Thorne and offered to speak to the Dominican Sisters of Sparkhill, on the Charter School's behalf, to see if they could include the operating expenses in the lease agreement. The Board members discussed the offer and agreed to have Ms. Finnerty speak on behalf of the Charter School.

8.3 Follow-up on Proposed Additional Board Members - Ms. Thorne spoke with Ms. Finnerty regarding the resumes that were sent to CMCS for their review to approve prospective members to the Charter School Board. Ms. Finnerty will follow up with Ms. Thorne at a later date. Ms. Thorne noted, in addition to filling the vacant seats, she is seeking to add two more seats to the Board for a total of 11 Board members.

8.4 Date and Time of the Board Meetings – Ms. Thorne noted, unless CSI agrees to extend the waiver not to meet in person, after July 15, 2022 all meetings will be held in person. Due to the Independence Day holiday, all Board members have agreed to move the July Board meeting from July 5th to July 12th.

At the previous Board meeting, Ms. Thorne had asked if the Board members wanted to change the date and time of future Board meetings. After an in-depth discussion the Board members agreed to add this item to next Board meeting agenda. Mr. McCarthy asked that the annual calendar of meetings for the Board and Committee meetings be added to the website.

8.5 Budget Presentation – Covered in the Finance Committee Report

9.0 Previous Meeting – Action Items

10.0 Principal's Report – Ms. Fedele provided the Board members with the Principal's Report for their review. Below are some highlights from the report.

- Ms. Fedele provided the Board members with a report on the SUNY 3rd year visit. The main focus of the visit was an assessment of the academic program and included evaluations of student work, classroom visits, staff interviews and other academic related resources as outlined in the SUNY required evaluation pre-visit documents that were previously submitted.
- The SUNY team provided a debriefing at the end of the visit that focused on a preliminary sharing of findings. The SUNY team agreed with Ms. Fedele that the school should utilize the services of a "Coach" to assist the Administrative staff with areas where they need additional training and support. A written report will provide more details and will be shared at a later date.
- Student Enrollment – There are currently 70 students fully enrolled for the next school year. Staff are contacting families to continue completing the registration process. Kindergarten slots are available and student recruitment is on-going.
- The Charter School has received funds from the Bloomberg Grant that will provide approximately 130 students with 20 full days of summer school.

10.0 Discussion –

11.0 Motions

- 11.1 Motion to approve the FY 2023 Annual Budget** – Mr. Jim McCarthy requested a roll call vote. The motion passed with six votes in favor and one abstention. Ms. Thorne, Dr. Gershen-Lowy, Dr. Ursillo, Ms. Thorne, Ms. DeVries and Sister Patricia voted in favor and Mr. McCarthy abstained.

A motion to approve the FY 2023 Annual Budget was duly made by Joy DeVries, seconded by Dunica Charles and carried; the motion was approved and accepted.

- 11.2 Motion to acknowledge the hard work that Ms. Leslie Cruz, CSBM Consultant, has accomplished on the completion of the FY 2023 Annual Plan**

A motion to acknowledge the hard work that Ms. Leslie Cruz, CSBM Consultant, has accomplished on the completion of the FY 2023 Annual Plan was duly made by Phyllis Thorne, seconded by Joy DeVries, the motion was approved unanimously.

- 11.3 Motion to approve CMCCS to move forward in joining the Class Action Suit against the United States Department of Education**

A motion to approve CMCCS to move forward in joining the Class Action Suit against the United States Department of Education was duly made by Joy DeVries, seconded by Dunica Charles, the motion was approved unanimously.

- 12.0 Proposed Executive Session (if necessary, subject to Board approval) - N/A**

- 13.0 Action Following Executive Session – N/A**

14.0 Reports

- 14.1 Executive Committee Report** – No report submitted

- 14.2 Academic/Sanctuary Committee Report** – Ms. Thorne provided a copy of the minutes from the May 18, 2022 Academic/Sanctuary Committee for Board members to review. Below are a few highlights of the meeting:

- The Academic Committee is continuing to review the school policies and procedures and making adjustments where needed and keeping in mind the Sanctuary model. The Committee reviewed the following policies and provided links for Board members to review suggestions and updates.
 - Grievance
 - Growth for Success Plan
 - Disciplinary Policy for Students with Disabilities
 - Commitment to Excellence

- 14.3 Finance Committee Report** – The Finance Committee Report was discussed by Ms. Leslie Cruz at the beginning of the meeting.

- 14.4 Fundraising Committee Report** – No report at this time.

- 14.5 Ad Hoc Governance Committee** – Mr. McCarthy noted the June 7, 2022 minutes stand as submitted. The Committee discussed whether the Charter School should move forward with the action case against the U. S. Department of Education regarding the CSP Funds. Mr.

McCarthy also suggested the Board members revisit the discussion on the Friends of Organization.

14.6 Partner's Report – Dr. Ursillo noted the June 2022 Partner's Report stands as submitted. The report details the collaboration of various tasks that were accomplished between CMCS and CMCCS.

15.0 Public Comment – N/A –The Board meeting was held by remote access only.

16.0 Action Items – Review of SUNY Visit

17.0 Adjournment

A motion duly made by Phyllis Thorne, seconded by Joy DeVries and carried unanimously; the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.