

**City Academy Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 16, 2020**

**Members Present:** Stephen Foxley, Larry Hintze, Walker Kennedy, Nathan Seim, Kelle Smart, Taylor Woodbury

**Staff Present:** Gareth Orr, Sonia Woodbury, Ram Prasad Boppana

**Excused:** Erik Bengtzen, Mary Glauser

**Welcome:** Walker opened the meeting online at 4:17 p.m. This was a call-in virtual meeting. The information for how to call into the meeting was posted on the Utah Public Meeting website.

**Public Comment:** none

**Financial Report:** Prasad reviewed the financials

**Approval of Minutes:** Steve made a motion to approve the August 5, 12, and 19 minutes as presented, Nate seconded, and all were in favor.

**Director's Report:**

- Sonia reported that currently about a third of the student body is enrolled fully online. That percentage is slightly higher in high school. Our overall enrollment numbers are low but we continue to enroll new students. We also are continuing without advertising and outreach efforts to gain new enrollment.
- Gareth reported that teachers are facing an increasingly stressful situation with unpredictable daily attendance at school, and teaching three different sets of students – those attending M/H, those attending T/F, and the set of fully online students. Some teachers have related that the “teaching load” feels heavy with needing to prepare so many different ways.

Action Step – Gareth will gather attendance data for in-person attendance as well as attendance data for students logging in online and share with the Board.

**Review of School Opening Plan:** Given mounting concerns about the number of coronavirus cases trending up in the larger community, the Board discussed a threshold for deciding when to move to fully online education. Board members agreed that at this time they would keep monitoring. The Board saw no needed updates to the school opening plan at this time.

**Chair's Strategic Planning:** The Board noted that the pandemic has now negated what would have been our unique plans for personalized flexible scheduling that we had started to launch last February because all schools were now using some form of more hybrid and flexible scheduling. So, we will be working to re-envision the ways in which City Academy can be uniquely positioned to provide a desired secondary education.

**Adjournment:** Nate made a motion to close the meeting, Kelle seconded, and all were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

DATED the 16<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2020 CITY ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

By: Sonia Woodbury

APPROVED the 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2020 CITY ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

For audio file of meeting minutes click [here](#)

**City Academy Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 30, 2020**

**Members Present:** Erik Bengtzen, Mary Glauser, Walker Kennedy, Nathan Seim, Taylor Woodbury

**Staff Present:** Gareth Orr, Sonia Woodbury, Ram Prasad Boppana

**Excused:** Stephen Foxley, Larry Hintze, Kelle Smart

**Welcome:** Walker opened the meeting online at 4:16 p.m. This was a call-in virtual meeting. The information for how to call into the meeting was posted on the Utah Public Meeting website. All parents were also notified specifically in the weekly Monday Mail.

**Public Comment:** Amanda Disberger, Science Teacher, shared that attendance for her virtual Wednesday sessions had low attendance over the past two weeks, 29% and 21%. For her in-person classes attendance is also very low ranging from 42% to 11%. She is worried that a move to virtual classes will not improve attendance. She also requested that if the Board moves the school to remote teaching and learning, she would still like to continue with in-person science lab days each week.

The Board discussed transportation issues for students being asked to attend at school just for a lab period. The Board inquired further from her about attendance for her in-person classes. She reported that attendance for in-person classes was very good for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders, a little worse for 9<sup>th</sup> grade and very poor for chemistry and older high school students. The Board also inquired about work completion aside from attendance, i.e. even if they weren't there did students turn in work? Amanda reported that was not the case.

Gareth noted appreciation for all the ways in which Amanda has been trying to engage students. He feels strongly that when the classes are four times per week rather than the once a week extra Wednesday sessions Amanda has been trying to hold attendance will be better. He also noted that the administrative team will need to work to establish good engagement from home for all students.

**Approval of Proposal to shift City Academy to remote teaching and learning for all students:** Proposal is for four days/week of scheduled online virtual classes and one day/week of asynchronous remote learning during a regular school week. Supporting information is detailed in the summary document attached.

Goals of the proposed shift:

1. To better ensure high quality learning opportunities for all students with teachers being able to instruct every student four days/week.
2. To respond to the growing trend of City Academy parents requesting fully remote learning for their student over the last few weeks due to rising Covid concerns in the larger community and a positive case reported at City Academy 2 weeks ago.
3. To make more efficient and effective use of teachers' time and hard work with teachers being able to streamline their efforts to focus fully on preparing for and teaching their virtual classes supported by the Canvas LMS.

Review of technology to support the shift:

1. Every City Academy student has either their own or a loaned chrome book for their use at home.
2. It is our understanding that every City Academy student has access to Internet sufficient to participate online.
3. We will utilize our CARES Act and Digital Teaching and Learning Grant funds to provide teachers with home teaching station components as needed for each teacher. These components will remain useful at school and at home when we eventually return to in-person instruction.

Factors influencing the requested shift to remote teaching and learning begin on October 8.

1. Too many students are not working sufficiently through our current remote learning provisions to make good learning progress, some skip school entirely for a week at a time.

- a. Currently, 50% of all City Academy students are enrolled for school fully remotely, and the numbers are increasing daily. This is leading to increasing numbers of students who are not making good learning progress with our current arrangement of mostly asynchronous teaching and learning online.
  - b. Even students enrolled for in-person instruction 2 days/week are working remotely 3 days/week, and they too are not making sufficient progress between in-person classes.
  - c. Our teachers can make more of a difference when they are working directly with students regularly during the week.
2. We want to implement this improved teaching and learning approach as soon as possible but we also know parents need some time to arrange for the new schedule of students learning online with scheduled classes at home each day. This proposal will allow one week.
  3. We are proposing to begin remote teaching and learning with scheduled virtual classes on a Thursday to remove the confusion that sometimes occurs when something new or different begins on a Monday.

**Chair's Strategic Planning:** Walker discussed correspondence he received from parents and staff members prior to this meeting. Walker asked Board members to consider what the best way was to provide a high quality education at City Academy given the pandemic status, issues presented today, and a limited set of human and financial resources.

The Board discussed the need to pick one model and avoid the complication of science labs or something else that might meet at school. The Board discussed the CDC guidelines for closing school using 15 students or 10% of the student body testing positive. For City Academy's current in-person attendance that would be about 6 students. We have only had one student test positive so far. The Board discussed the need to set parameters for any move to remote teaching and learning and agreed to revisit this matter in their December meeting.

Taylor made a motion to shift City Academy to a fully remote model with scheduled virtual classes four days per week, and Wednesday being asynchronous learning, through the end of the first semester with a focus on improving student attendance and attainment. Additionally, the Director will have flexibility to keep the school building open for select classes as needed and for special needs services. As a part of this motion the Board agrees to monitor attendance and attainment data to ensure this change is making a difference, and will meet December 16 to reevaluate this structure. Nate seconded and all were in favor.

The Board expressed great appreciation for all teachers are doing.

**Adjournment:** Taylor made a motion to close the meeting, Erik seconded, and all were in favor.  
Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

DATED the 30<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2020 CITY ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

By: Sonia Woodbury

APPROVED the 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2020 CITY ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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