



# Atmosphere academy

## Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes May 25, 2022

Atmosphere Academy Charter School  
Meeting held over Zoom

**Board Members Attending**

Dr. Michael Lagas.  
Mr. Jesse J. Greene, Jr.  
Mr. Alan Dillon  
Mr. Colin J. Greene (ex officio, CEO)

**Board Members Not In Attendance:**

Mr. Jim Spitzer

**Others in Attendance:**

Mr. Peter Markey (Item 6.1 only)  
Mr. Gabriel Rosenblum  
Mrs. Elizabeth Kelly  
Mr. Christian Roman  
Mrs. Katherine Brennan  
Mr. Benjamin Pah  
No other public in attendance

**Agenda Item 1. Call to Order**

At approximately 5:09 PM, Dr. Lagas called the Board meeting to order.

**Agenda Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was not performed.

### **Agenda item 3. Board Reports**

The Finance Committee met this month. Those topics were covered later in this meeting.

The High School Committee met this month. During the High School Committee Meeting, the board discussed curriculum planning, summer program, and hiring for the high school. Those topics were covered more in depth later in this meeting.

The Middle School Committee did not meet this month.

### **Agenda Item 4. Comments From the Public**

There were no comments at this time.

### **Agenda Item 5. Revision and Adoption of the Agenda**

Mr. C. Greene presented the Agenda for approval by the Board.

Mr. J. Greene moved to approve the Board Agenda for May 2022.  
Dr. Lagas seconded the motion.

Vote Aye: Dr. Lagas, Mr. J. Greene, and Mr. Dillon  
Vote no: None

Motion adopted. Agenda approved.

### **Agenda Item 6.1. Finance Update**

Mr. Markey presented the financials for the month ending 4/30/2022. Mr. Markey presented the financial scorecard and noted that as of 4/30/2022, Atmosphere had cash of \$2.7 million after receiving the last per pupil payment. Year-to-date, there is a revenue of \$15.3 million. Through April, Atmosphere has an operating surplus of just over \$1.1 million. Mr. Markey further discussed the facility allowance and communications with the DOE. They did remit the last per pupil payment on time.

Mr. Markey then presented the statement of financial position. Atmosphere's financial position has been steady throughout the year. Atmosphere's accounting team is working on the annual audit. The interim work for that audit is taking place now. Atmosphere expects to collect more grand funds in the month of June.

Mr. Markey presented his weekly cash planning document. Mr. Markey noted that we must watch the cash balance closely in the month of June. FS-25s have been submitted for outstanding grants for SY 21-22.

Mr. C. Greene touched on an issue with Atmosphere's workflow, as there are expenses missing in QuickBooks. QuickBooks needs to house all expenses, both current and future, to ensure that the budget numbers are reflected properly. The board further discussed the process for cash planning and the parts of the process that need to change moving forward.

### **Agenda Item 6.2. Governance Update**

Atmosphere recognized Father Thomas Lynch, a former trustee on Atmosphere's board of trustees. Father Lynch allowed Atmosphere to use Our Lady of Angels' facilities when Atmosphere was first opening back in 2015. Father Lynch was an advocate for Atmosphere Academy and a great partner. Time and time again, he gave Atmosphere a platform to tell its story or took it upon himself to do so. He will be dearly missed.

The board made a motion to recognize Father Lynch.

Mr. J. Greene moved to approve the motion to recognize Father Lynch.  
Dr. Lagas seconded the motion.

Vote Aye: Dr. Lagas, Mr. Dillon and Mr. J. Greene  
Vote no: None

The board and officers went on to share memories and anecdotes of Father Lynch, his willingness to help, and his compassion.

### **Agenda Item 6.3. Board Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Rosenblum presented the April Board meeting minutes for approval by the Board. These were sent to the Board in advance for their review.

Mr. Dillon moved to approve the Board meeting minutes for April 2022.  
Dr. Lagas seconded the motion.

Vote Aye: Dr. Lagas, Mr. Dillon and Mr. J. Greene

Vote no: None

#### **Agenda Item 6.4. Middle School Update**

A group of Atmosphere scholars recently returned from a trip to the Island School in the Bahamas. Mrs. Kelly led the trip, and was able to speak about their experience. Mrs. Kelly spoke about how Atmosphere scholars embodied the core values and worked together as a team in the Bahamas. The scholars were extremely well behaved and were able to learn a lot. Mrs. Kelly noted that some scholars did not know how to swim, but quickly learned and the next day, participated in a cliff jump, a great accomplishment. Mrs. Kelly spoke about some of the activities that scholars did – these included cliff jumping, swimming, snorkeling, and cave exploration. Atmosphere has built, and will continue building, a meaningful partnership with the Island School. There are many more opportunities for partnership that Mrs. Kelly explored while she was there.

Mr. Rosenblum provided an update on enrollment and registration. Overall, Atmosphere's numbers are strong. About half of prospective families have attended a registration event. The challenge moving forward will be to ensure that all families attend registration.

#### **Agenda Item 6.5. High School Update**

Mrs. Brennan opened the high school update by speaking about partnerships with higher education institutions to hire teaching assistants who would go through a certification program after being hired. Mrs. Brennan began by discussing the NYU partnership, and explaining that Atmosphere will not be moving forward with the NYU partnership due to the fact that their terms are fixed and inflexible. Mrs. Brennan went on to discuss the Relay Graduate School of Education partnership, which Atmosphere will be moving forward with. Relay agreed to all terms to be changed in the contract. This partnership will allow Atmosphere's teachers to be certified faster and for less tuition than if they did this on their own.

Mrs. Brennan went on to discuss her work with the English department and Atmosphere's new English Director, who will be starting in July. Atmosphere's new English Director has high standards and a specific for achievement within the English department.

Mrs. Brennan presented Atmosphere's High School Arts program, which will be closely aligned with Atmosphere's Social Studies programs. All grade levels will have arts classes that culminate in Arts End of Year Events, which will include, for example, an art fair, orchestra concert, etc. Next school year, all middle school grade levels will have a full year of art classes, not just electives, which will lay a pathway for students to continue their work in the arts in the high school.

Mr. Pah discussed potential trip options for Atmosphere's High School. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Atmosphere will send scholars to Europe. Atmosphere needs to decide whether they will visit multiple cities during this trip, or one country. The trip options are as follows:

- Rome, Paris and London
- London, Paris and Geneva
- Brussels and Berlin
- Spain
- Greece

This provides a very exciting opportunity for Atmosphere scholars, who would be able to explore Europe and connect their experiences to the material they learn in the classroom.

Mr. Roman presented a Culture update. Mr. Roman is continuing to develop the Apprentice Culture Manager to ensure that he is prepared for opening the high school. Mr. Roman is beginning a partnership with Montefiore's School Health program to support best health practices among Atmosphere's students. Atmosphere will have a College Counselor Program Developer in SY 22-23. In this position, the College Counselor Program Developer will create a robust program to prepare scholars for high school. Scholars will be encouraged to focus on college preparation, think about careers that they would like to pursue, and get ready for the standardized testing that colleges and universities require for admission. Two of Atmosphere's School Counselors will be transitioning to the high school, as both have experience as a high school counselor. Mr. Roman and the culture team will ensure that Atmosphere's culture is presented at New Scholar Orientation to ensure the proper tone is set at the beginning of the year.

Atmosphere's officers finished the high school update by providing a hiring update for the high school.

### **Agenda Item 7. Executive Session**

At approximately 6:47 PM, the Board moved to enter Executive Session to discuss:

- a) the medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation.
- b) the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition, sale, or exchange of securities, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value.

Mr. Dillon moved to enter Executive Session.

Mr. J. Greene seconded the motion.

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Vote Aye: Dr. Lagas, Mr. J. Greene, and Mr. Dillon  
Vote no: None

After the discussion, at approximately 7:49 PM, the Board moved to exit executive session.

Mr. J. Greene moved to exit Executive Session.  
Dr. Lagas seconded the motion.

Vote Aye: Dr. Lagas, Mr. J. Greene, and Mr. Dillon  
Vote no: None

### **Agenda Item 8. Consent Agenda**

There were no consent agenda items.

### **Agenda Item 9. Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

### **Agenda Item 10. New Business**

There was no new business.

### **Agenda Item 11. Adjournment**

At approximately 7:49 PM the Board moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. J. Greene moved to adjourn.  
Dr. Lagas seconded the motion.

Vote Aye: Mr. J. Greene, Dr. Lagas, and Mr. Dillon  
Vote no: None

Meeting adjourned.