



MADISON-CARVER ACADEMY

A Cornerstone School

Meeting of the Board of Directors
Location: 19900 McIntyre St, Detroit, MI-48219

Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2025

7:30 am

1) BUSINESS ROUTINE

a) Call to Order (President)

The meeting called to order at 7:32 a.m.

b) Board of Directors Roll Call

Present: David Fitch, Ken Poirier, Tanya Griffith, Elaine Tingle (arrived at 7:34 am), Torion Bridges (arrived at 7:34 am).

Absent: None

Attendees: Andy Anuzis, President; Mary Ann Johnson, Finance Director; Elizabeth Noa Carrion, Compliance Director; Grant Heugel, Operations Director; Joe Valentic, Chief Financial Officer; Dustin Quarella, Enrollment Director; Markisha Stovall, Principal; Aquan Grant-Wayne, GVSU Representative; Clark Durant; Jerusha Usry, Executive Assistant to Leadership (arrived at 8:20 am)

c) Adoption of Agenda

Fitch motioned to add Action Item 5e, to authorize the enrollment of students in grades 6 – 8 for the 2025-2026 school year, subject to the Academy's enrollment and lottery procedures, with the total number of students being as follows: Grade 6 - 50; Grade 7 - 25; Grade 8 - 25.

Fitch motioned to move Presentation 3e to 3c.

Poirier moved. Griffith seconded. All approved.

d) Approval of Previous Board Meeting Minutes

Fitch noted that a mention of the agreement that was reached at the previous meeting stating that when the Board receives a financial statement it clearly states the date in which all bank accounts have been reconciled be included in the board meeting minutes.

Fitch motioned to approved the previous board meeting minutes with the aforementioned amendment.

Poirier moved. Griffith seconded. All approved.

e) Pledge of Allegiance

Board and attendees said the pledge of allegiance.

f) Sharing of Gratitude

Board and attendees expressed their gratitude's.

2) PUBLIC COMMENT (Limited to agenda items)

There was no public comment.

3) PRESENTATIONS

a) Organizational Update- Andy Anuzis

MCA use to be a K-8 school serving over 600 students. Due to past declines in academic quality and parent satisfaction, the school experienced setbacks, prompting restructuring. However, over the last few years, a strong leadership team—led by Principal Stovall has driven a notable cultural and academic turnaround. Parent satisfaction is now the highest among all schools in the network, and the number of student clubs has increased to 30, fostering greater student engagement. While academic proficiency is still being addressed, there have been clear gains in student growth data. Financially, while the school has stayed within its budget, there was a revenue projection shortfall due to unexpected changes in state and grant funding. Mr. Durant shared his optimism about resolving a \$1.1 million shortfall through a mix of fundraising from individuals, corporations, and potential loans.

b) Academic Update- Markisha Stovall

We made a shift in focus from growth to proficiency in alignment with the state's emphasis on M-STEP performance. Reading proficiency improved from 10% (Fall 2023) to 11% (Fall 2024), and from 29% (Winter 2024) to 31% (Winter 2025). Spring 2024 reading proficiency was 41%. In math, proficiency remained at 4% from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024 but improved from 14% to 18% in winter. The Spring 2024 math proficiency rate was 36%. Incentives are used to encourage students to maintain or exceed spring performance goals. Teachers have received individualized proficiency targets and growth goals. For the winter benchmark, 5 of 14 teachers met proficiency goals, and 6 of 8 met growth goals. The school also departmentalized grades 1–5 and implemented mandatory PD through Wayne Resa to build instructional capacity, especially for non-traditional educators. Two daily ability-based intervention blocks were established for reading and math, with expanded tutoring being offered to all students. Multiple attendance incentives have been introduced.

c) Grand Valley State University- Aquan Grant-Wayne

1. Authorizer report on contract renewal and academic performance

MCA's charter contract expires in 2029, with a renewal visit expected in Fall 2028. The focus remains on academic proficiency and growth, with MSTEP data showing a slight decrease in overall proficiency and growth compared to peer schools. ELA proficiency has declined over time. Math proficiency is currently 1% higher than peer schools, though data suppression (due to small student counts) may impact figures. Schools within a two-mile radius and with similar demographics are used for comparisons. Our School Index Score is 50.9%, which is well above the threshold of 32.17%. Assessment participation is at 99%. MCA currently "does not meet" expectations for timely submissions of our Compliance and Financial documents to Epicenter, representing an opportunity for improvement. A drop was observed in enrollment in 2023, with an average enrollment of 261 students. Current enrollment is rebounding, with 336 students in Spring 2025. Our two primary goals are academic proficiency and growth, and we have several years to work on these goals until our contract is up for renewal.

d) Enrollment- Dustin Quarrella

The network-wide official fall enrollment count is 3,049 students—an increase of 400 students from the previous year. This marks a significant shift from the trend of annual declines, which averaged a loss of 150 students per year over the past five to six years. 77% of students were retained, a 7-point increase from prior years. Among non-graduating students, retention was 82%, which is higher than the citywide average of 70%. Madison-Carver grew by nearly 80 students, largely due to a strong school reputation. At MCA some grades exceeded target enrollment, particularly 3rd and 5th grades. The Dawn-to-Dusk after-school program significantly improved family satisfaction and contributed to

both retention and recruitment. Communication tools like Simple Text and the Remind app were instrumental in outreach and parent engagement. The re-enrollment and application processes were streamlined, reducing the average enrollment call from 18 minutes to 5 minutes. The goal for Fall 2025 is to increase enrollment to 3,200 students (without Pre-K), and potentially 3,314 with Pre-K programs at three sites.

e) Finance- Mary Ann Johnson & Joe Valentic

It was clarified that the exceptions noted in the audit largely stemmed from issues prior to current leadership's tenure. These issues had already been addressed through updated processes and procedures, and are no longer ongoing concerns. We have a strong finance team, but we have limited capacity. Efforts are underway to expand the team by recruiting an experienced candidate with knowledge of Cornerstone, audits, and extensive grant accounting experience. This role will enhance financial analysis, budget development, and process improvement. We have experienced a previous lack of coordination between the grants and finance teams. We are taking steps to better integrate planning and compliance moving forward, with support from external consultants and internal leadership. The district faced a shortfall due to lower-than-expected enrollment and unforeseen state funding reductions, leading to the need for additional local funding support. Adjustments are being made to accommodate these changes in future planning. Valentic reviewed the proform budget that was shared which showed a pathway to sustainability without relying on local funding, based on moderate increases in state and federal funding. We are in the process of attaining Child Care licenses for our schools, with expectations of added funding once approved. Valentic also reviewed the plan to expand our school to include Pre-K and Middle School sections. The amended budget shows under the revenues column there was an increase in local contributions to ensure we meet the 5% fund balance threshold at the end of the year. In regards to expenditures, we are below what we originally budgeted for. \$238,000 in contributions have been received to date, primarily from Verizon grants and early literacy donations. The remaining portion of the targeted \$800,000 in contributions has not yet been secured. The board discussed a projected structural deficit for FY 2024-25, where operational revenues exceed operational expenditures, requiring use of the academy's fund balance—reducing it from \$339,088 to \$278,947. While this is not illegal, it was noted as a long-term concern. There was consensus on the need for a sustainable revenue model.

4) BOARD POLICY WORK

a) Board Meeting Dates for 2024-2024: All on Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m.

1. April 29, 2025
2. June 25, 2025

5) ACTION ITEMS

- a) Approval of 2024- 2025 FOIA Coordinator - Elizabeth Noa Carrion
- b) Approval Of 2024-2025 Homeless Liaison - Elizabeth Noa Carrion
- c) Approval of 2024-2025 Recording Secretary - Elizabeth Noa Carrion
- d) Approval of 2024-2025 Budget Amendment
- e) Approval of the addition of Grades 6, 7, 8

Fitch motioned to combine and approve Action Items a-d. Poirier moved. Bridges seconded. All approved.

Action Item 5e was tabled until the next board meeting occurring on April 29th, 2025.

6) CONSENT ITEMS

None

7) AUTHORIZER COMMENTS – Aquan Grant-Wayne

A celebration for board members will be held on May 6th at the Atheneum Hotel.

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 5–9. Board members are encouraged to participate in showing gratitude.

Stakeholder survey results showed an average satisfaction score of 4.5 out of 5. Feedback indicated underutilization of GVSU resources, prompting the office to investigate and address barriers.

FOIA guidelines on school websites are being updated; GVSU staff will coordinate with school contacts.

Upcoming GVSU webinars:

April 24: School Budgeting & Finance

May 22: Efficient Governance Committee Structures

June 2: Evaluating Charter School Governance

A new law effective April 1 requires schools to include their EMO and authorizer (GVSU) in promotional materials. A one-line mention is sufficient; schools should not use the GVSU logo. Support may be available for new signage needs.

Proposed state aid per-pupil funding is increased to \$10,025 (subject to change).

GVSU updates can be found at gvsu.edu/people and in monthly board letters.

Charter Schools Week is May 12–16, including a Day at the Capitol on May 6.

For uncertified teachers, GVSU supports alternative certification and may cover up to 50% of tuition.

Tuition scholarships for continuing education are expanding: now all full-time employees with a bachelor's degree may be eligible for up to 80% tuition support.

8) ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Next Meeting: April 29 at 7:30 a.m.

9) PUBLIC COMMENT (related to non-agenda items)

There was no public comment.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:46 a.m. by Fitch. Bridges moved, Griffith seconded. The above minutes were duly adopted on 4/29/25 by the Madison-Carver Academy Board of Directors at a properly noticed meeting held at which a quorum was present.

Elaine Tingle

Submitted by Elaine Tingle, Secretary