

**Community School of Digital and Visual Arts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (Special Planning Session)**

Date: March 21, 2025

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Time: 4:00pm

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Joe Battle at 4:00pm

CSDVA Board Members In Attendance:

Others In Attendance:

II. School Leadership Report

- **Instruction and Academic Preparation**

The leadership team presented a comprehensive update on instructional strategies in preparation for upcoming End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments. Targeted interventions have been embedded into the daily schedule, allocating a full hour for focused academic support in ELA or math, with science added for grades five and eight. Students identified as nearing proficiency based on MAP and EOG data are receiving targeted assistance.

- ESL teacher Mr. Jackson was recognized for co-teaching fifth grade in response to the long-term absence of the regular ELA instructor. Ms. Williams, originally the science teacher, has assumed dual responsibilities in science and ELA for fifth grade.
- A simulated EOG is scheduled for the week of May 16 to enhance student testing stamina and technical readiness. Instruction is being adjusted based on ongoing data analysis. Motivational strategies, including weekly celebrations and year-end incentives, are being used to encourage student effort and focus.

- **ELA Support and Coaching**

ELA Coach Cheryal Isaac continues to provide intensified support across grade levels. Her efforts include reteaching plans, instructional modeling, and direct coaching, particularly in classrooms requiring additional instructional support.

- **Exceptional Children (EC) and LETRS Training**

Updates were shared on the ongoing EC audit conducted by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), with the school successfully completing the prior written notice phase and continuing file submissions into May.

- The school has joined Cohort 2 of the state-mandated LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) training. The two-year initiative is aimed at improving foundational literacy instruction. While the state covers training costs, additional hours required by teachers are uncompensated. The board discussed the potential for stipends and requested a detailed hours breakdown and calendar alignment for further review.

- **Esports Program and Digital Expansion**

The school's esports program has officially launched, with students in grades five through eight participating in competitive play. Leadership is exploring mentorship partnerships with HBCU esports teams. Plans are also underway to expand digital

professional development for teachers with support from an NCDPI-recommended partner.

- **School Culture and Events**

Teacher Appreciation Week was celebrated with various events and recognitions. The school hosted its first in-person athletic banquet since the pandemic, honoring student-athletes and a long-standing parent volunteer. The Sportsmanship Award has been renamed in memory of Coach Vincent Gibbs.

III. Budget and Financial Updates

- **Budget Overview**

Mr. Crawford provided an update on the FY2022 budget. Although a deficit currently appears on record, it does not reflect pending ESSER funds or the newly awarded \$100,000 transportation grant. Additionally, the school received a \$50,000 donation from Dr. Perry Jeffries, a longtime supporter. These funds are expected to stabilize the budget without drawing on reserves. Official adjustments will be submitted to Acadia North Star for realignment.

- **Public Funding Considerations**

Board members discussed potential increases in per-pupil funding from Durham County, following Orange County's recent \$400 per-pupil increase. Updates from Durham are pending.

- **Literacy Support Donation**

The board acknowledged a \$5,000 donation from Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity for the installation of 10 mini libraries throughout the school. Mr. Palmer and his chapter were thanked for their ongoing support.

IV. Personnel and Staffing

- **New Staff Position – Coordinator Role**

The administration proposed, and the board unanimously approved, the creation of a new coordinator-level staff position. Ms. Case, currently serving as the school's nutrition supervisor, will assume expanded duties including nutrition oversight, payroll and HR support, and student-parent engagement related to chronic absenteeism. While the role was initially designed as an assistant director's position, it was refined based on internal discussions and Ms. Case's unique skill set. Board members acknowledged that the position's structure may require revision if filled by someone else in the future.

V. Strategic Initiatives

- **Summer Training – “Hard Reset”**

Leadership introduced a proposal for a comprehensive summer training initiative (“Hard Reset”) to align staff with the school’s renewed mission as the Community School of Digital and Visual Arts. The training will focus on school culture, digital instruction, professional development, and expectations alignment. The board expressed support but requested detailed cost estimates before making a formal funding decision. A full proposal will be submitted at the June board meeting.

- **Marketing and Enrollment**

Enrollment currently stands at 222 students, with 10 confirmed withdrawals and 27 eighth-grade graduates. Of 60 prospective new enrollees, 42 have confirmed intent to enroll. Leadership emphasized relationship-building with new families and advocated for increased investment in sustained marketing efforts, including signage, radio, and digital advertising.

- **School Identity and Vision Alignment**

Board members agreed that refining and clearly communicating the school’s identity and instructional focus is a prerequisite for successful marketing. Leadership acknowledged this and reiterated their focus on building a strong educational product supported by cohesive staff culture and instructional consistency.

VI. Accountability Models

- **Alternative Accountability Framework**

The board discussed new state-approved accountability model options, including those with a greater emphasis on academic growth. Leadership will analyze available models further and provide a recommendation at a future meeting. The deadline to adopt a model is August 1, 2022.

VII. Next Steps and Deliverables

- Ms. Pryor will return with a detailed LETRS training breakdown and stipend proposal.
 - A revised and balanced summer budget proposal, including costs for professional development, Jump Start, and marketing—will be presented in June.
 - The leadership will conduct further analysis on the new accountability options before August
 - The board and administration will collaborate to finalize implementation plans for the summer “Hard Reset.”
-

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned
