



PRE-APPROVED MINUTES

Carolina Achieve BOD Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2025 | 05:00 PM EST

Virtual: [Carolina Achieve Public Meeting](#)

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present: Charles Lopez, John Oxaal, Thomas Nechyba, Anjanette Miller, Jeff Clark, MaKayla Booker-Johnson

Absent: Tiffany Alrefae

Guests: Trip Cogburn, Head of School

A quorum was present.

NOTICE

Notice was provided. A waiver of notice is not included.

- 1) John Oxaal called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.
- 2) Charles Lopez read the Carolina Achieve Mission Statement: Carolina Achieve prepares K-12th-grade students to achieve their scholastic, personal, and professional goals through a learner-centered educational program focusing on a strong academic foundation, Habits of Success (entrepreneurial skills), well-being, and a Home-School partnership.
- 3) Approve Agenda - Thomas Nechyba made a motion to approve, Jeff Clark seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 4) Approve September Meeting Minutes - Thomas Nechyba made a motion to approve, Anjannette Miller seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 5) Construction & School Opening Update - Trip Cogburn began the discussion by providing an update on the first few weeks of school, noting that the first quarter had been a success. Trip Cogburn notes that the teachers have protocols and systems in place, and the students are well-attuned to the rhythm and expectations. Trip Cogburn also mentioned that the teachers and students have completed the first part of the MAP testing and are now testing second language learners. Trip Cogburn concluded that the main discussion point is the playground and that the school lacks an outdoor play space.
- 6) Playground Update / Discussion - John Oxaal initiated the discussion regarding the playground project, reporting that the overall estimated cost is \$41,000. John Oxaal also noted that extensive research and comparison shopping had been conducted to ensure quality and value. The project includes special playground mulch (with the required depth), a partially hard-surfaced area for basketball and four-square, and the installation of a surrounding fence. John Oxaal added that drawings for the project have been

completed and submitted to the City of Mebane by Hubrich Construction for approval; construction cannot begin until the city issues the necessary permit.

Regarding funding, John Oxaal reported that \$35,000 has been received through a donation, and the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) has launched a fundraising drive to raise the remaining \$6,000. Trip Cogburn provided an update on the Parent-Teacher Organization campaign, noting that enthusiasm is high and that, although the drive has only recently begun, positive momentum is expected soon. Given the project's scope and timing, John Oxaal emphasized the need for the board to formally vote on proceeding with the project. A motion to approve the playground project and associated funding was made by Jeff Clark and seconded by Anajanette Miller. The motion passed unanimously. Trip Cogburn was authorized to proceed with orders once the permit was received. John Oxaal confirmed that a \$25,000 check from the donation has already been deposited into the account.

- 7) National School Lunch Program Update - John Oxaal & Trip Cogburn. Trip Cogburn reported that the school is currently averaging 45 students for lunch and 35 for breakfast each day. Trip Cogburn also expressed satisfaction with the quality of meals and level of service, though there have been a few minor issues, primarily related to milk deliveries. The school's milk distributor delivers only on certain days, requiring the school to occasionally supplement supplies. John Oxaal noted that current participation is below forecasted levels, as the initial projection assumed approximately 60% of the school's ADM would take part in the lunch program. Trip Cogburn added that participation may be lower due to student and parent preferences, as some children are selective eaters, and parents often provide meals from home if their children report dissatisfaction with school meals. John Oxaal inquired about the percentage of students in the Title I program. Trip Cogburn responded that a little over half of the students participating in the lunch program are Title I, and that approximately 45% of the overall ADM qualifies as Title I. John Oxaal emphasized the importance of identifying and addressing why some Title I students are not participating in the lunch program. Trip Cogburn suggested that technology-related obstacles might be a contributing factor, but noted that the school has been proactive in assisting families with these challenges.
- 8) Finance Update – Jeff Clark provided the Finance Committee report and noted that the committee met before the board meeting, with committee members John Oxaal, MaKayla Booker-Johnson, Anjannette Miller, and Jeff Clark in attendance. Jeff Clark shared that formal financial reports will be presented in future meetings.

Regarding the September financial period, Jeff Clark stated that based on current projections and anticipated revenue in the pipeline, the school is expected to end the fiscal year with a surplus. John Oxaal noted that the most recently approved budget was based on an ADM of 130 students; however, current enrollment reflects an ADM of approximately 114. John Oxaal emphasized the need for the board to review and formally approve a revised budget reflecting the updated ADM. Jeff Clark clarified that the budget reviewed by the Finance Committee earlier in the day was based on the

lower ADM figure. Anjannette Miller expressed that some board members may not have seen the revised budget. John Oxaal confirmed that a full financial packet—representing the current financial snapshot—will be distributed to the board within the next week. John Oxaal added that the board will be asked to approve the revised financial plan reflecting the 114 ADM at the next scheduled board meeting. The Finance Committee will continue its regular meeting schedule of 4:00 PM on the second Monday of each month, followed by the full board meeting as scheduled.

9) Committee Assignment - John Oxaal led a discussion regarding committee structure and membership.

- Finance & Development Committee - Committee Members: Jeff Clark (Chair), MaKayla Booker-Johnson, Anjannette Miller, and John Oxaal discussed the need to have the Development Committee convene jointly with the Finance Committee until further notice.
- Academics Committee - John Oxaal reminded the board about the need to initiate the Academics Committee in alignment with the school's charter. Committee Members: Thomas Nechyba (Chair), Tiffany Alrefae, and Trip Cogburn (Ex-Officio). A motion to approve was made by Jeff Clark, seconded by Anjannette Miller. The motion passed unanimously.
- Governance Committee - John Oxaal reminded the board that the purpose of the committee includes oversight of open and closed meeting compliance, adherence to the charter, recommending new board members, and reviewing any governance concerns involving board members or staff. Committee Members: Charles Lopez (Chair), John Oxaal, Larry Robbins (Legal Counsel), Anjannette Miller, and Trip Cogburn (Ex-Officio). John Oxaal discussed the committee's role in identifying and recruiting prospective board members, particularly those representing the families served by the school. A motion to approve was made by Thomas Nechyba, seconded by Jeff Clark. The motion passed unanimously.

10) Lottery & Enrollment Policy - Trip Cogburn began the discussion by advising the Board that approval was required to make adjustments to the school's enrollment timeline and policy. Trip Cogburn reported that several state-required enrollment and lottery documents required submission by the October 31st, 2025 deadline. Based on consultation with school and marketing leaders across the state, Trip Cogburn recommended moving the start of the open enrollment period earlier in the school year to support continued growth. Specifically, Trip Cogburn proposed shifting the open enrollment start date from January 1, 2026 to November 1, 2025, allowing families to apply earlier and enabling the school to finalize enrollment projections sooner. The lottery date does not require adjustment at this time. Trip Cogburn added that the next year's enrollment targets should include 100 Kindergarten, 100 in first grade, 50 in 2nd grade, and 50 in 3rd grade. John Oxaal noted that these projections appear reasonable, referencing the school's ability to enroll nearly 70 K students in the inaugural year while operating on a construction site. John Oxaal further confirmed that the current building capacity could support up to 300 students for the upcoming year. Jeff Clark added that additional space planning would be required for the following year, to which Trip Cogburn

agreed. A motion to approve the proposed change to the open enrollment start date of November 1, 2025, was made by Thomas Nechyba, seconded by Anjanette Miller. The motion passed unanimously.

11) Closed Session: Confidential Staff Discussion

- a. NC Statute regarding closed sessions: North Carolina school boards can hold closed meetings as permitted by state law, specifically [G.S. 143-318.11](#), for reasons such as consulting with an attorney, discussing privileged or confidential personnel information, and formulating plans for emergency response to school violence. These closed sessions require a motion and a vote during an open meeting that specifies the legal reason for the closure.
- b. Closed Session Attendance: Charles Lopez, Jeff Clark, Anjanette Miller, Thomas Nechyba, and John Oxaal. Trip Cogburn was in attendance as Head of School to discuss personnel updates.
- c. Trip Cogburn provided an update on the exit of a teacher.
- d. John Oxaal made the Board aware that Trip Cogburn's attendance in the following matter required Trip Cogburn to leave the meeting, as it was a conflict of interest. Trip Cogburn exited the meeting.
- e. Employment of a Development Officer. John Oxaal discussed the role, which would report directly to the Finance Committee and its Chair, Jeff Clark. A motion was made to approve the role of Development Officer by Thomas Nechyba, seconded by Anjanette Miller. The motion moved unanimously.
- f. Charles Lopez reminded everyone to return to the Public Session to continue the public meeting.

12) Calendar of Upcoming Events - Trip Cogburn reported that the school was represented at the recent Autumn Festival, which was well attended. Trip Cogburn also informed the Board that the school has been invited to participate in the Trunk-O-Treat event at Buffalo Bowling Lanes in Mebane on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Teachers and students are enthusiastic about participating. Trip Cogburn further shared that the PTO will host a Trunk-O-Treat event on campus on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 6:00 PM. All teachers, students, and families are welcome to participate. Additionally, Cone Health will be hosting a Trunk-O-Treat event on October 31, 2025, and has offered to supply the candy. Finally, Trip Cogburn also announced that the school's Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, sponsored by the Hillsborough/Orange County Chamber of Commerce, is scheduled for October 30, 2025, at 12:00 PM. The Mayor of the City of Mebane will speak, and students will provide a brief performance.

13) Charles Lopez reminded the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2025 at 5:00 PM. Jeff Clark made note to the Board that he will not be in attendance as he will be out of the country. Charles Lopez also requested that all board members submit a headshot so that a school badge can be secured for them upon arrival at the school. Charles Lopez also reminded the Board that they should be using their Carolina Achieve emails for all board purposes.

14) Adjournment- A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Thomas Nechyba, seconded by John Oxaal. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:06 pm.

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