



Alief Montessori Community School

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3rd Quarter Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 28, 2025 at 11:16 AM to 12:10 PM

A regular board meeting of the AMCS board members was held on Friday, 28 March 2025 from 11:16 AM to 12:10 pm in the AMCS middle school conference room at 4203 J St, Houston, TX 77072.

In attendance were Erica McCready (via zoom), Delia Presillas, Elizabeth Smith, Tim Snow and Paula Palamountain. Also present were Cerlito Salarda (AMCS Asst. Principal), Sophia Teng, Rahila Khawaja.

Paula called the meeting to order at 11:16 am after quorum was established with five board members present.

Minutes of the 20 November 2024 Board Meeting

Delia asked the board members to review the minutes of the November 20, 2024 2nd Quarter Regular Board Meeting. Erica asked what the financial and enrollment outlook of the school is so that decision could be made on the planned construction project. Delia mentioned that this is one of the items on the agenda. The minutes of the meeting was approved with a motion from Elizabeth, seconded by Erica. All five board members present, approved.

For Action Items:

1. The AMCS Business Office Team requested the board to have the financial reports and the budget discussed first. Board members agreed. Sophia proceeded to inform the board on the financial statements as of 28 February 2025 and the revisions were made on the SY 2024-25 budget:
 - a. There has been a decrease in revenue of \$200,000.00 for this school year due to a drop in enrollment.
 - b. Income Statement: Added the item "Due From" to project the income for July and August for FSP.
 - c. This is not including Title funds which are claimed in June.
 - d. On the expenditure side, the security and maintenance indicate a 23% actual expense. AMCS is not adjusting this as it is anticipating using the budgeted funds for the renovation of the aftercare room into a primary classroom this summer 2025.
 - e. By the end of the fiscal year, AMCS is projected to generate an estimated \$700,000 in net income.

After an extensive discussion on the proposed AMCS Building #4 construction project (see item #2 below), Erica moved for the financial statements and revised budget approved. Elizabeth seconded. All board members were in favor.

2. Building #4 Construction Project: Erica asked about the current financial standing of AMCS in terms of the following:
 - a. Monthly operating cost. Sophia informed the board that AMCS has a monthly expense of \$200,000.00 to \$250,000.00. Erica reminded the board and the AMCS team that at any given

time, the school must have at least three months of operating cost saved. Delia stated that AMCS has about four months reserved after all expenses accounted for each month. Tim Snow commented that he is learning so much about charter school finance. He mentioned that private school is very different in the sense that capital fund-raising is always a challenge.

- b. Sustaining sufficient enrollment numbers in light of the new construction project: Delia presented the projected enrollment for SY2025-26 which also considered the attrition rate of up to 15%. The enrollment projection indicates an increase of 19%. Erica expressed the importance of continuously increasing or at least sustaining the enrollment numbers to ensure income for AMCS.
- c. Google Ads: Erica also recommended for AMCS to explore Google Ads to promote the school, boost enrollment and track the ads connection to enrollment data. She said that Houston Heights' use of Google Ads resulted in very positive results in enrollment numbers. Mr. Salarda, the AMCS Asst. Principal, has been tasked to investigate this matter and activate it for AMCS as soon as possible.
- d. Elizabeth asked if the project would go forward with the two-story building. Delia informed the board that AMCS has the financial capacity to cover and if needed, apply for a bank loan for the \$8.5 Million budget for the construction project. Elizabeth asked if AMCS is still considering doing a shell for the 2nd floor instead of a complete 2nd floor. Delia informed the board that it would not be cost-efficient to leave the 2nd floor incomplete as it would entail more money eventually for its completion. Delia clarified that the cost of a one-story vs a two-story building is at \$6.5 Million vs. \$8.5 Million.

Paula moved for the approval of the construction of AMCS's Building #4. Elizabeth seconded. All board members approved.

- 3. Delia requested if the board would agree to continue taking care of all the action items on the agenda first before the information items since these are all related to AMCS's financial condition. The board members agreed.
 - a. The board approved the 1% salary increase for AMCS teachers and staff for SY 2025-26.
 - b. The board approved the renovation of the afterschool room into a primary classroom located in Building #1, Primary Campus.
- 4. The board approved the Instructional Calendar for SY 2025-26. Erica asked how the calendar is compared to Alief ISD's. Delia explained that since 60% of AMCS's students are from the Alief ISD area, the major school breaks and holidays are on the same dates. Delia also mentioned that AMCS follows Alief ISD for bad weather closings only and that other schedules on the school calendar reflects the activities which AMCS values highly such as in-person parent-teacher conferences and staff development days.
- 5. A board resolution certified the provision of instructional materials for SY 2025-26. AMCS is able to request allotment disbursement for its Montessori Curriculum materials as well as SBOE/TEA-Adopted textbooks and resources.

For Information Items:

6. Update on TIA Data Validation Report 2023-24. AMCS will be submitting 2023-24 data for TIA validation. The results of the data submitted this October 2024 came back in February 2025 indicating that AMCS did not meet the validation score needed to move it forward to teacher designation stage, thus, the re-submission of data for next school year.
7. Update on Houston Charter Schools SpEd Cooperative: Dissolution by June 30, 2025. In the board meeting held last January 14, 2025 at the Ser Ninos High School Campus, three out of five members present in the meeting elected to dissolve the cooperative due to the following reasons:
 - a. There would be three charter schools left in the membership with the non-renewal of George I. Sanchez Charter School and Two Dimensions.
 - b. The three charter schools have the special education personnel to carry the responsibilities forward on their own.
 - c. The Coop agreement will expire on June 30, 2025.
 - d. Erica also explained that the coop was formed when internet connectivity was still underdeveloped, thus the need for small charter schools to collectively fund and use specialized providers for special education services. These schools now have well-established special education service staffing.
8. Board Members' Training Records Update for SY 2024-25: We are receiving the training records completed by Elizabeth and Paula. Other board members prefer to wait at the end of the year to provide the training records. Every board member needs to complete six CPE hours annually, due on May 28, 2025.
9. Update on NSLP Administrative Review: 8 corrective actions were addressed and is now waiting for the review to be officially closed by TDA very soon.
10. Update on the TEA SpEd Audit: AMCS is in compliance, zero corrective action.
11. Update on enrollment trends SY 2025-26 and decision to construct AMCS Building #4. It is projected that student population will likely increase by 19% (with 15% attrition) in SY2025-26 which will allow the school to move forward with the construction project.

| Grade Level | SY 24-25 Count | SY 25-26 Proj. Count | % change |
|-------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------|
| PK3 | 47 | 43 | -9 |
| PK4 | 48 | 55 | +15 |
| Kinder | 42 | 62 | +48 |
| 1 | 26 | 47 | +81 |
| 2 | 43 | 38 | -12 |
| 3 | 39 | 42 | +8 |
| 4 | 31 | 33 | +6 |
| 5 | 26 | 32 | +23 |
| 6 | 18 | 32 | +78 |
| 7 | 18 | 19 | +6 |
| 8 | 17 | 19 | +12 |

| | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| Total | 355 | 421 | +19 |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|

This school year, projected end of fiscal year income is estimated at \$700,000.00. Increased enrollment will increase income higher than this school year.

AMCS has been working with the City of Houston Joint Referral Committee and City Council to award the undeveloped alley or otherwise known as I St. which is next to our vacant lot on 12014 6th St. It seems that half of the alley will be awarded to AMCS and the other half to the Alief Community Church. This would mean that AMCS would gain ^{about} 30 feet by 120 feet parcel of land. This would be a great space for flood detention and/or parking.

Call with Jennifer Goodman, Odyssey Academy Charter School re: school construction funding: Dr. Goodman provided very useful information and contacts to AMCS. I learned, in general terms, how to access the bond market for facility construction for schools. My impression is that it is a complex process for big schools, even more so for a small school like AMCS. Based on the information gathered, using a bank loan would be the simpler, less complicated option to fund our construction project.

12. Property for sale located at 12013 and 12019 5th St. We learned that our neighbor is interested to sell his two properties located next to our vacant lot. He is asking for \$375,000 for each 13,000 SQF residential property. HAR price is at \$220,000.00 to \$250,000.00. Paula asked if AMCS would have the funds to cover a cash acquisition of these properties, if needed, while the construction project costs activate. Delia assured the board that AMCS does have the money to cover the cash purchase at any time.

13. The board approved the time and date of the next board meeting: Thursday, June 26, 2025

14. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Paula Palen
Board President

6/26/25
Date

Egobite Smute
Board Secretary

6-26-25
Date