

The Chatfield School
Minutes of the Board of Directors Regular Meeting
August 27, 2025 - 5:00 PM

Present at this meeting in an official capacity: Matt Schaller, Jennifer Vanacek, Alex Wolfe, Stephen Elzerman, Kristen Ball, Bob Kurtz (school co-director), Kristi Huestis (school co-director), Angela Irwin (SVSU appointed mentor for the Board), Michelle Kyles (Teachers First), Frank Patterson (Teachers First)

1. **Call to Order:** 5:01 pm
2. **Roll Call:** Elzerman (present), Schaller (present), Vanacek (present), Wolfe (present), Ball (present)
3. **Approval of agenda:** Moved by Ball, supported by Schaller, the agenda be approved as presented. Ball - aye, Elzerman - aye, Schaller - aye, Vanacek - aye, Wolfe - aye. Motion carried.
4. **Presentations - Teachers First (Role and Summary of Services):** Michelle Kyles, Executive Director of Teachers First, gave a detailed overview of the working relationship between Teachers First / Midwest Management and The Chatfield School; they reviewed a Slides presentation that addressed several categories of services provided by TF/MM and how they address individual needs.
5. **Approval of Proposed Regular Meeting minutes from July 30, 2025:** Moved by Vanacek, supported by Elzerman, the minutes be approved as presented. Ball - aye, Elzerman - aye, Schaller - aye, Vanacek - aye, Wolfe - aye. Motion carried.
6. **Monthly Financials - July 2025:** Frank Patterson of TF/MM presented the financial reports for July, including the timeframe for the State budget and its impact on school finances, and grant award expectations; questions were raised about preemptive planning in case the State budget is not confirmed in time for October's required costs, and Board members discussed the possibility of approaching local financial institutions should a short term loan be necessary, and the loss of "rural" grant dollars (as we have been redistricted out of a rural designation). Moved by Schaller, supported by Ball, the July financial report was approved. Ball - aye, Elzerman - aye, Schaller - aye, Vanacek - aye, Wolfe - aye. Motion carried.
7. **Correspondence:** Staff members sent correspondence to the Board requesting consideration of re-categorization of professional staff (who are not assigned to a classroom) for purposes of contract and compensation agreements. The Board thanked them for their correspondence and agreed to discuss the request.
8. **Public Comment (agenda items only):** Questions regarding the loss of the rural grant funds were discussed in open conversation; a map of the designated rural/non-rural areas was reviewed, and all agreed that the map has been modified in a way that does not benefit our school.
9. **Directors' report:** Kristi Huestis and Bob Kurtz provided a comprehensive written report, and highlighted key items including special events and new staff / new roles; Board members asked questions on funding and scheduling.

10. ESP Report: Michelle Kyles provided a written report, with graphs on compliance (with authorizer and State requirements) and encouraged the Board to communicate any questions or concerns to her through the school directors.

11. New Business

- a. **Fundraising Platform - Zeffy:** This software (Zeffy) has been evaluated by staff and found to be a good option for managing fundraising activities, with no fees; co-directors will move forward to implement it.
- b. **Board Committees:** Finance Committee-membership is set, dates for meetings need to be established; Wellness & Food Service Committee to be established (these topics can be combined), Matt Schaller to lead

12. Old Business

- a. **Policy Updates (Spring 2025):** Proposed wording for several policy updates was reviewed, however, some errors were discovered and policies will be returned to NCSI for correction. Moved by Ball, supported by Schaller, the policy discussion is tabled until the September meeting. Ball - aye, Elzerman - aye, Schaller - aye, Vanacek - aye, Wolfe - aye. Motion carried.
- b. **Security Planning - Closed / Executive Session:** Moved by Schaller, seconded by Wolfe, the Board enter closed session pursuant to Section 8 (1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute, including written opinion of legal counsel which is subject to attorney-client privilege. Ball - aye, Elzerman - aye, Schaller - aye, Vanacek - aye, Wolfe - aye. Motion carried.

Guests were asked to vacate the room at 6:42 pm. At the conclusion of the closed session, a unanimous vote was made to re-open the meeting to the public, and guests were invited back at 6:59 pm.

13. Public Comments: Several staff rose to comment on the current contract renewals and lack of indication that compensation will be increased; some key points included:

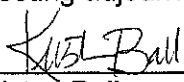
- Outstanding achievements of the school can be largely attributed to the staff members' skill and experience, commitment to the mission of the school, and foundational values that are supported and promoted in every classroom
- Veteran teachers and staff who have remained at the school through difficult times are keenly aware of the financial challenges and are anxious for transparency in communication about budget issues
- In comparison with local schools, the compensation package offered to Chatfield staff is not keeping up with cost-of-living increases or longevity recognition
- The Board could have communicated better about financial issues during the transition to the new management company

The Board thanked the commenters for their input, and gave a brief response to these items and more; the staff asks that salaries be reviewed and the Board was open to that discussion.

14. Confirmation of next meeting: Wednesday, September 17, 2025

15. Adjournment: Moved by Schaller, supported by Vanacek, that the meeting be adjourned. Ball - aye, Elzerman - aye, Schaller - aye, Vanacek - aye, Wolfe - aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 pm. Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Kristen Ball.



Kristen Ball

9.17.2025

Date