



Explore Charter Schools Board Meeting Minutes–March 26, 2024

Explore Charter Schools Board Attendees: Angie Brice Thomas, Karen Annette Francois, Shakeema Griffin, Shawn Jenkins, Anna Johnson, Lisa Lurie, Hank Mannix, and Orissa Pereira-Hamler.

Virtual: Kevin Bryant and Lindsay Danon.

Absent: Avni Gupta-Kagan.

ESI Board Attendees: Morty Ballen, Shawn Jenkins, Reshma Patel, and Jana Reed.

Virtual: Lindsay Matovich.

Absent: Brian Coad.

Other Attendees: Greg Foster, Efrat Kussell, Ebony Staley, and Jeremy Thomas.

Virtual: Eddie Natal and Tracy Rebe.

Meeting called to order at 6:01.

Welcome & Board Votes

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to approve the minutes from the ECSB Board Meeting held on February 13, 2024

Lisa Lurie seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

ESI Board approved the minutes from the ESI Board Meeting held on January 24, 2024.

Consolidation Update

Karen Annette Francois, CEO, gave an update on the consolidation process and reviewed the outcomes of the Board Consolidation Committee meeting. Karen Annette focused on the network's progress with matching staff and enrolling students at Explore, Excel, and Empower. The Board discussed the network's use of social media in its efforts to recruit students.

CEO Update

Karen Annette began the CEO update recapping the recent SUNY renewal visit at Empower. The Board discussed the feedback from SUNY and reviewed the next steps in the renewal process. Karen Annette then reviewed recent academic data from the ELA and Math dress rehearsals ahead of the state exams. The Board focused discussion around the network's strategy in response to dips in academic performance in specific grades, including 3rd and 5th grade in ELA and 8th grade in math. Members of the Board previewed the full set of results during the Accountability Committee meeting and advised the network on which data to bring to the full Board. Additionally, Karen Annette previewed the shared priority for the 24-25 school year. Finally, Jeremy Thomas, MD of Communications and Special Projects, shared trends coming out of the high school matching process. The Board discussed how the elevated definition for college-preparation high school the network adapted impacted the results. The Board also discussed the new criteria for defining college-preparation high schools as well as how the network includes prep programs and schools outside of the DOE, like parochial and boarding schools, in the high school matching process.

Q2 Fiscal Update

Greg Foster, COFO, updated the full Board on Q2 financials for both ECSB and ESI. Both the ECSB and ESI Finance Committees reviewed the financial dashboards ahead of the meeting. The Board asked questions about funding sources for SPED services and how the network is ensuring compliance with SPED services. The Board also discussed the expenditures related to the consolidation of Exceed.

ESSER III-ARP

Greg updated the board on how the network is using the funds related to ESSER III-ARP.

No public comment at 7:12.

Executive Session

ECS Executive Session to discuss the medical, financial, credit, or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to go into executive session at 7:12 pm and invited ESI board members to join.
Shawn Jenkins seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned for the ECSB Board to come out of executive session at 7:42 pm.
Shawn Jenkins seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm