



Explore Schools

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Explore Charter Schools Board Meeting Minutes–June 18, 2024

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

Virtual: Lindsay Danon, Avni Gupta-Kagan, and Lisa Lurie.

Absent: Shawn Jenkins

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

Virtual: Lindsay Matovich.

Absent: Shawn Jenkins and Brian Coad.

Other Attendees: Efrat Kussell, Tracy Rebe, Sabrina del Sherpa, Ebony Staley, and Jeremy Thomas.

Virtual: Carlos Zayas.

Meeting called to order at 6:10.

Karen Annette Francois, CEO, began with a celebration of previous principals at both Exceed Lower and Upper, recognizing this as the final Board meeting with Exceed as a charter.

Shared Priority Presentation

Sabrina del Sherpa, Senior Director of Literacy, led the Board through a presentation outlining the network's shared priority for 2024 – 25 and shared insights into what implementation of the ELA strategy will look like. Sabrina facilitated an activity to familiarize the Board with close reading practices as well as shared video clips and student work from a close reading lesson. The Board engaged in discussion around what the specific strategies would look like in various classrooms and how it would support students with increasing their growth on the ELA state exam.

CEO Update

Karen Annette Francois, CEO, began the CEO update announcing a new after school programming award the network was recently granted. Karen Annette then shared recent end of year assessment data in both ELA and math. The Board discussed some of the trends in the data, including how outlier grades or classes impacted the averages. The Board also asked questions about planning for next year given the data and the consolidation of Exceed. Network staff previewed how resources may be leveraged differently in response to certain trends in the data. Karen Annette closed the CEO update with an overview of the timeline for the strategic planning process beginning next year. The Board discussed its role in the process and what strategic planning timeframe made sense given the goals.

Finance Update

Karen Annette Francois kicked off the finance update by reviewing current enrollment projections for the 2024 – 25 school year. Following Karen Annette's review, Carlos Zayas, the network's Finance Consultant, reviewed the budgets for the school and ESI. The Board discussed the impact of enrollment at each campus as well as asked questions regarding the cash positions between the schools' budget and ESI's budget. Following the review, both Boards proceeded to formally vote on the SY24-25 budget.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to approve the ECSB FY 2025 Budget and 403b Match.

Hank Mannix seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

The ESI Board of Trustees approved the ESI FY 2025 Budget and 403b Match.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to approve the ESI Management Contract.
Hank Mannix seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to approve the Lavinia Group Contract and Vendor costs including: student recruitment, tech & other operations, curriculum expenditures.
Hank Mannix seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Welcome & Approval of Minutes

Due to the delay in start of the meeting, the approval of minutes was held following the budget approval.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to approve the minutes from the ECSB Board of Trustees meeting held on May 21, 2024.
Hank Mannix seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

The ESI Board of Trustees approved the minutes from the ESI Board of Trustees meeting held on May 21, 2024.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned to approve the ECSB Officer and Committee Assignments for 2024 – 2025.
Hank Mannix seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

The ESI Board of Trustees approved the ESI Officer and Committee Assignments for 2024 – 2025.

State of Talent

Tracy Rebe, Chief Schools and Operations Officer, provided the Board with an update on the state of talent across the network (including Exceed transfers), focusing on hiring for next year, year over year trends, vacancies, and what the network is anticipating over the summer. The Board asked questions about how the matching process and some of the staff wellness initiatives being launched next year.

No public comment at 7:57pm.

Executive Session

ECSB 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 7:58 pm and invited ESI board members to join.
Hank Mannix seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Angie Brice Thomas motioned for the ECSB Board to come out of executive session at 8:13 pm.
Hank Mannix seconded the motion.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm