APPROVED

ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL
helping students learn to use their minds well

Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School

Minutes

Educational Excellence Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday October 8, 2026 at 8:30 AM

In accordance with Georgia's open meetings requirements, notice of this meeting has been posted at both campuses and on the ANCS website.

Committee Members Present
Emily Hansen (remote), Kilamba Augusto (remote), LaNiesha Cobb Sanders (remote), Lara Zelski (remote), Mark Sanders, Nicole King, Rhiannen Laurent

Committee Members Absent
Duanne Davis, Mark Boswell, Shannon Rutledge

Guests Present
Alastair Pullen

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

LaNiesha Cobb Sanders called a meeting of the Educational Excellence Committee of Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School to order on Thursday Oct 8, 2026 at 8:33 AM.

C. Approve Minutes from September Meeting

Lara Zelski made a motion to approve the minutes from Educational Excellence Committee Meeting on 09-10-26.
Mark Sanders seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Educational Excellence

A. Agenda

Enrollment Update

- At full enrollment: 629 students (charter cap 628, 2% variance allowed)
  - One over due to staff child on waitlist; no class-size impact as one 6th grader is in resource for most of the day
- Waitlist exceeds total enrollment, an anomaly for charter schools right now
  - APS has lost 7,000 students since 2016 due to birth rate trends and urban outmigration
- FTE count window open; enrichment and extension program expected to increase state funding vs. last year
  - Each gifted-identified course with a gifted-endorsed teacher generates additional FTE funding
  - Teacher endorsement push serves both student outcomes and funding

Enrichment and Extension Program

- Cluster model: differentiation happens within the regular classroom, not pull-out
  - Teachers use graduated difficulty, SCAMPER, choice boards, and quilt challenges
  - Students have product choices; divergent thinking and creativity are explicit goals
- Giftedness defined broadly: not just high academic achievement
  - Creative, artistic, and divergent thinking all part of identification
- Twice-exceptional students (IEP + gifted) served concurrently through both programs
  - Scheduling allows services in both areas without conflict
- Teachers now have access to APS Gifted Drive, PBL Project website, and state DOE Inspire resources
- ANCS joined the Georgia Association of Gifted Children; group attending annual conference in late February
- Program information published on the website, with careful language: “enrichment and extension” not “gifted program” to avoid pull-out misconceptions

Professional Development: Elementary Campus

- Literacy focus driven by House Bill 1193 (requires a literacy coach at every school)
  - Two instructional coaches working with Metro RESA to ensure compliance

    - Continuing Metro RESA literacy specialist support (coaching coaches and teachers, as in prior year)
- Benchmark curriculum: Amy from Benchmark returning in spring for a second visit this year
- PLC-style collaboration: structured meetings facilitated by teacher leaders, building leadership capacity
- Teacher Clarity: moving from awareness (last year) to consistent practice in all 4 components
    - Success criteria, standards clarity, and student-facing learning expectations
- SEL theme for the year: community, what it means to be part of one and contribute to it
    - Lindy and Leslie developing responsive lesson plans for classroom use
- Community and culture: Alina facilitating faculty meetings at both campuses; identity work session coming this month
- New teacher monthly meetings: deeper dives into Conscious Discipline, curriculum implementation, grading, and assessment
- Conscious Discipline: Nicole Mercer (18-year partner) visited Tuesday, met with all teams and parents

Professional Development: Middle Campus

- Data-driven instruction is the school-wide goal for Georgia LEADS this year
    - Teachers bring formative data to staff meetings; broken down by reteach, small group, or extension needs
    - Roll-off days used for subject-area teams to work with instructional coach and MYP coordinator
    - This year's roll-off focus: assessment design and math borrowing across 7 non-math subjects
- IB framework: ANCS became an IB school in 2018; next evaluation cycle approaching
    - IB Global Conference attended by Dale Scott (IB/MYP coordinator) to stay current on rubric changes
        - Rubrics moving toward standardization across all subject areas
    - Mackenzie (Canadian educator) training attended: "Exploring the Inquiry Mindset, Cultivating Cultures of Curiosity"
    - IB subject-area trainings and "Creating Authentic Units" planned over the next couple of years
- Math highlights
    - 50 students now enrolled in online Algebra 1 (up from ~30), driven by MAP scores and data
    - Planning year for an in-person Algebra class; timeline and entry criteria being finalized
    - Roll-off day planned soon to tighten the plan; Aaliyah Clemens leading data-driven instruction work

AI in Schools

- Faculty meeting this week: teachers took 2 Gemini/NotebookLM modules (baseline awareness + practical tools)
    - Tools linked to teacher clarity and math integration work
    - Teachers also shared how they are currently using AI with students (data collected for future PD)
- AI working group led by Makisha Rogers and Dale Scott (K-8, both campuses)
    - Developing policies, procedures, and school philosophy around AI
    - Intentionally includes AI enthusiasts and skeptics (especially humanities teachers)
    - Deeper questions: what does AI mean for constructivist, IB learning? How to prioritize questioning over answer generation?
    - Report and recommendations expected in spring; will be brought to this committee

Next Meeting and Upcoming Business

- Vote on the 2028/29 school calendar
- AI task force report-out
- Charter compliance report updates as needed
- Email LaNiesha to add or amend draft agenda topics

Next Steps

- **Email LaNiesha to add or amend future agenda items:** Draft agendas shared with committee; any additions or changes go directly to LaNiesha.
- **Share FTE funding update with the board once numbers are confirmed:** (Alastair) Enrichment and extension program expected to increase state funding; figures pending FTE count window close.
- **Bring AI working group report to the Educational Excellence Committee:** Recommendations on AI policy, procedures, and school philosophy expected in spring.

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
LaNiesha Cobb Sanders