APPROVED

Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday May 19, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting
https://mlkcs-org.zoom.us/j/82537804521?pwd=LeiIE5szVgpvK5xYH4GcRsPznQ5qna.1

Meeting ID: 825 3780 4521
Passcode: 405480

One tap mobile
+13126266799,,82537804521#,,,,*405480# US (Chicago)
+16469313860,,82537804521#,,,,*405480# US

Dial by your location
• +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
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• +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
• +1 305 224 1968 US
• +1 309 205 3325 US
• +1 386 347 5053 US
• +1 507 473 4847 US
• +1 564 217 2000 US
• +1 669 444 9171 US
• +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

• +1 689 278 1000 US
• +1 719 359 4580 US
• +1 253 205 0468 US
• +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
• +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
• +1 360 209 5623 US
Meeting ID: 825 3780 4521
Passcode: 405480
Find your local number: https://mlkcs-org.zoom.us/u/kcWDOMhnV5

Trustees Present
Alton Jones (remote), Denise Pagan-Vega (remote), Diana Foskett (remote), Donna Carroll (remote), Nealon Jaynes-Lewis (remote), Teremar Rodriguez-Vazquez (remote)

Trustees Absent
Caleb Pointdujour, Sherard Johnson

Guests Present
Alena Mudry (remote), Kendra Salvador (remote), OShane Thorpe (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Diana Foskett called a meeting of the board of trustees of Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence to order on Tuesday May 19, 2026 at 5:38 PM.

C. Public Comment

No public in attendance.

D. Approve Minutes from April 14, 2026

Clerk (Donna) was unable to access the Zoom account to download the recording to do comprehensive minutes. We will troubleshoot the account to determine issue, make sure Donna is able to access the recording, and then complete the minutes. We will vote on the minutes at the next Board meeting.

II. Executive Director's Report to the Board

A. Executive Director's Report to the Board

Kendra provided a comprehensive end-of-year update covering academics, operations, student support, food services, and upcoming priorities.

Academic Updates:

- Kendra: Math MCAS was completed last week for grades 3, 4, and 5. Science MCAS was rescheduled from today and tomorrow to tomorrow and Thursday due to a district-wide heat wave day called by Springfield Public Schools (SPS), driven by bus safety concerns related to lack of air conditioning.
- Kendra: ACCESS scores have returned, but DESE has implemented an entirely new scoring system aligned to WIDA 2020 Standards. Scores are not comparable to prior years. The school did not meet its accountability target of approximately 74.9%, but maintained the same number of students meeting exit criteria as last year. DESE will set new benchmarks after this year.
- Kendra: SPED Tier Monitoring is ongoing today and tomorrow; approximately 80% of files have been reviewed. Over 40 documents were submitted including civil rights review materials, curriculum selection rationale, and early literacy screening data. Some areas needing improvement were identified, and some follow-up questions were received.

Student Support and Attendance:

- Kendra: MTSS data continues to show significant positive progress. Attendance is holding. Deeper analysis is being conducted on students trending toward chronic absenteeism, including identifying primary, secondary, and tertiary challenges and exploring community agency partnerships.

Nursing / Health Visits:

- Alton Jones, CHD: Noted approximately 34 nurse visits per day, equating to roughly 10% of the student population, and asked whether this was illness-related or behavioral.
- Kendra: Explained it is a mix — recent illnesses included a stomach bug and the flu, while some visits are work-avoidance behavior. The nurse monitors repeat visitors and contacts families.
- Diana: Noted her pediatrician confirmed an unusually severe flu season continuing into May, with whooping cough also circulating at local schools.

Operational Updates:

- Kendra: Teach for America is consolidating its Massachusetts practicum to Boston; summer school this year will be staffed solely by school staff.

- Kendra: SPS is transitioning food service from Sodexo (which was found to be overcharging) to Chartwell Schools.
- Kendra: The school van has been acquired after a long wait.
- Kendra: Technology acquisition for next year is underway; a grant was applied for, and the PA system upgrade (listed in the capital plan) is being explored.
- Kendra: State reporting is upcoming, including sibling verification and end-of-year reports.

Board Giving / Fundraising Link:
Oshane shared a fundraising link for board giving purposes.

- Oshane: Shared the link https://secure.qgiv.com/for/fomlkjcs/ via chat for board members to review.
- Diana: Read the link aloud for the official record.
- Alton Jones, CHD: Suggested distributing the link via email; Diana clarified that substantive board communications outside of meetings may violate open meeting law.
- Kendra: Suggested including the link in the meeting minutes for future reference.

B. FY 2026–2027 Budget and Spending Plan

The board reviewed and voted on the proposed budget and spending plan for the upcoming school year.

- Diana: Noted that revenue projections are intentionally conservative on per-pupil tuition to generate a year-end surplus.
- Kendra: Highlighted that the budget reflects only a 3% per-pupil tuition increase, though the maximum proposed increase could be as high as 7.9%, potentially adding approximately $400,000 in revenue. Title I funding was reduced by 7%, which is now considered official. Items in yellow under revenue are TBD (grants and in-kind contributions from SPS for food and transportation). Insurance figures are estimated pending June renewal numbers; a preliminary call with the medical insurance broker indicated a potential 13% increase.
- Teremar: Provided context on insurance rate increases, noting regulatory pressure from the Division of Insurance and a push to remove prior authorizations, which drives up premiums. Suggested the final rate increase may be somewhat lower than 13%.
- Teremar, Alton Jones, CHD, Denise: All confirmed no concerns with the budget.

Denise Pagan-Vega made a motion to Approve the FY27 Budget & Spending Plan.
Teremar Rodriguez-Vazquez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C.

RFP for Independent Financial Audit

The board reviewed and voted on the draft RFP for selecting a new independent auditing firm.

- Kendra: Explained the rationale for issuing an RFP — the previous auditing firm (a former firm of a prior board member) performed poorly in both years of engagement: incomplete initial work, repeated requests for additional materials, and significantly inflated billing (estimated 2–3x the original projected cost). The final disputed bill was ultimately waived after pushback.
- Diana: Confirmed the finance committee had discussed the firm's performance extensively.
- Kendra: Noted the RFP timeline allows sufficient time to receive proposals and bring a recommendation with pros and cons to the board for a vote.
- Denise, Teremar: Expressed no concerns with the RFP as drafted.

Teremar Rodriguez-Vazquez made a motion to Approve RFP for New Auditor.
Denise Pagan-Vega seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Academic Calendar for FY 2026–2027

Kendra shared the upcoming academic calendar for informational purposes; no vote was required.

- Kendra: The school will not take as long a holiday break as SPS, as the charter requires four additional instructional days. Three Kings Day will be observed as a school holiday for the first time. The calendar was built by analyzing dates of historically lowest attendance and proactively scheduling days off to improve overall attendance.

III. Committee Updates

A. Academic Excellence

Committee Meeting Calendar Adjustments:

- Diana: Noted she will be on an airplane on June 4th and proposed moving the Academic Excellence Committee meeting from June 4th to June 11th to align with the Finance Committee meeting.
- Kendra: Confirmed via chat the request to move Finance and Academic Excellence meetings to June 11th.

B.

Finance Committee

Diana provided an update on the Finance Committee's recent activities.

- Diana: The Finance Committee met but did not have a quorum; those present discussed finances, which are in good shape. The balance sheet, budget, and actual summaries are attached to the agenda.
- Diana: A recent litigation settlement was reached, described as a great outcome for the school. The amount is confidential.
- Kendra: Confirmed that the settlement agreement was executed by both parties and is now officially effective as of today.
- Diana: Funds have been moved to Monston Savings Bank, which is now fully set up.
- Diana: The parking lot project, which escalated from $90,000 to over $1 million in scope, is being addressed by engaging the school's land use attorney to insert him between the contractor and the city to control scope and costs.

C. HR Committee

HR Committee did not meet as it meets quarterly.

May 22nd HR (and Governance) Committee meeting has been cancelled.

D. Governance Committee

Diana reported on two governance matters raised by DESE.

- Diana: DESE has requested the board strengthen its process for evaluating the Executive Director and ensuring appropriate oversight, rather than rubber-stamping decisions. Diana will meet with DESE in the coming weeks (noted as June 12th per Kendra's chat) to discuss their recommendations.
- Diana: DESE also contacted Diana this morning requesting a comprehensive review and revision of the board's bylaws, which have not been updated in a long time. The target deadline for substantial revision is mid-November of this year. Diana will meet with DESE about this as well.
- Diana: The board's small size relative to the number of committees makes it difficult to fulfill all responsibilities. Bylaws revisions may address committee structure.
- Teremar: Was not previously aware of the DESE meeting and agreed to wait for the update.
- Donna: Confirmed she cancelled the Governance (and HR) Committee meeting scheduled for May 22nd in Board on Track, as both Diana and Kendra are out of town.

- Donna: Mentioned that someone has expressed interest in joining the board (noted in chat as a finance professional).
- Diana: Confirmed she has been in contact with another prospective board member suggested by Donna, who had a family emergency but plans to reconnect soon.
- Diana: Flagged that the board currently lacks a Treasurer, which is a significant concern for DESE compliance.

IV. Board Chair Updates

A. Update on transition and discuss roles

B. Board Retreat Planning

The board discussed scheduling the annual board retreat.

- Diana: Emphasized the importance of in-person attendance and noted that late July is likely the best window, avoiding early July due to the July 4th 250th anniversary events.
- Alton Jones, CHD: Requested the retreat not be held on a Saturday if possible.
- Kendra: Suggested a two-round Google survey approach — first to identify preferred day of week and time of day, then to narrow down specific dates.
- Diana: Suggested board members email their availability/blackout dates to her or alena, and the board can finalize a date at the June meeting.
- **Conclusion:** Kendra will create a Google survey to gather day/time preferences. Board members should send availability to Diana or Alena. Date to be finalized at the June board meeting.

V. Other Business

A. Open Meeting Law Education and Training

Reminders about Open Meeting Law.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Teremar Rodriguez-Vazquez made a motion to Adjourn Meeting.
Nealon Jaynes-Lewis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Carroll

Documents used during the meeting

- Executive Director’s Report to the Board May 2026.pdf
- MLKCSE Auditor RFP 2026.pdf
- MLKCSE Budget & Spending Plan 26-27.pdf
- MLKCSE Annual Calendar 26-27.pdf
- Academic Committee Report May 2026.pdf
- MLK April 2026 Balance Sheet.pdf
- Budget vs. Actual Summary April.pdf