Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence

Minutes

MLKCSE Board Meeting - Annual Board Retreat

In-Person

Date and Time
Friday July 31, 2026 at 1:00 PM

Location
This meeting will be held in person at the school:

285 DORSET STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01108

Trustees Present
Allison Sullivan, Alton Jones, Caleb Pointdujour, Donna Carroll, Nealon Jaynes-Lewis, Tim Battle

Trustees Absent
Denise Pagan-Vega, Diana Foskett, Sherard Johnson

Guests Present
Kendra Salvador

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Donna Carroll called a meeting of the board of trustees of Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence to order on Friday Jul 31, 2026 at 1:25 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Approve May Minutes

Alton Jones made a motion to approve the minutes from Emergency Board Meeting - Legal Advice on 05-08-26.
Donna Carroll seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Approve June Minutes

Caleb Pointdujour made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees' Meeting on 06-16-26.
Nealon Jaynes-Lewis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Approve Unapproved Minutes

Donna Carroll made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Board Meeting on 08-17-21.
Caleb Pointdujour seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Executive Director's Report to the Board

A. Executive Director's Report to the Board

Executive Director's Report:

Kendra Salvador presented her monthly report to the Board, highlighting key updates across academics, student support, operations, finance, staffing, and preparations for the upcoming school year. Key highlights included:

- Presented year-end academic assessment data and Annual Report updates.
- Reported a **27% reduction in behavioral incidents** and a **63% reduction in overall suspensions**, including an **82% reduction in out-of-school suspensions** compared to the previous school year.
- Shared positive student social-emotional learning (SEL) outcomes and school climate data, with most students demonstrating SEL growth and reporting strong connections to the school community.
- Confirmed the school is **fully enrolled with 360 students** and provided updates on student recruitment efforts for the 2026–2027 school year.
- Reported a final student attendance rate of **92.5%** and discussed planned interventions to address chronic absenteeism.
- Provided updates on summer facility improvements, technology enhancements, transportation initiatives, and the transition to a new food service vendor.

- Reported that the **budget and capital plan have been approved**, the annual audit has commenced, and per-pupil tuition increased in the final budget.
- Shared that staffing for the 2026–2027 school year is nearly complete, with **seven new staff members hired** and **three vacancies remaining**.
- Reviewed preparations for staff professional development and the opening of the 2026–2027 school year.

B. Charter Accountability Plan 2026-2031 - Pre-approval granted

DESE sent this back as pre-approved after reviewing it.

III. Updating Elections, Appointments, and Bylaws

A. Annual Meeting - Elections and Appointments

Elections & Appointments:

Board leadership discussed officer succession in light of the Board transition and current membership. It was noted that the Board will operate with a minimum of **seven (7) and a maximum of fifteen (15) Trustees and this will be included in the bylaws revision. Kendra presented materials from BoardOnTrack that provided guidance and job descriptions of the Officer positions.**

The following trustees indicated their willingness or availability to serve in Board officer roles:

1. **Alton** Jones – Declined consideration for an officer position at this time.
2. **Nealon** Jaynes-Lewis – Declined consideration for an officer position at this time.
3. **Allison Sullivan** – Declined consideration for an officer position at this time.
4. Sherard Johnson – Absent from meeting.
5. Denise Pagan-Vega – Absent from meeting.
6. **Donna Carroll** – Willing to serve as **Board Chair.**
7. **Caleb Pointdujour** – Willing to serve as **Vice Chair/Secretary.**
8. **Tim Battle** – Willing to serve as **Treasurer**, pending approval by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Officer Elections:

- **Vice Chair/Secretary:** Donna Carroll moved to elect **Caleb Pointdujour** as Vice Chair/Secretary. The motion was seconded by Nealon. **Motion passed.** Caleb abstained from voting.
- **Board Chair:** Alton Jones moved to elect **Donna Carroll** as Board Chair. The motion was seconded by Nealon. **Motion passed.** Donna abstained from voting.

Treasurer Vacancy:

The position of **Treasurer** will remain vacant until **Tim Battle** receives formal approval as a Board Trustee by DESE. Upon receipt of DESE approval, the Board will formally vote on his appointment as Treasurer at a future meeting. Other Board Officers will fulfill the requirements/duties of Treasurer until DESE's formal approval of Tim Battle as Trustee.

Board Recruitment:

Cable Pointdujour recommended **Ireland Stevenson** as a potential candidate for the Board of Trustees. Donna Carroll, in her capacity as the newly elected Board Chair and a member of the Governance Committee, will contact Ireland Stevenson to discuss her background, interest in Board service, and the trustee appointment process. Donna will report back to the Board with an update following those discussions.
Donna Carroll made a motion to Approve Caleb Pointdujour at Board Vice Chair/Secretary.
Nealon Jaynes-Lewis seconded the motion.
Caleb abstained from vote.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
Alton Jones made a motion to Approve Donna Carroll as Board Chair.
Nealon Jaynes-Lewis seconded the motion.
Donna abstained from vote.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Policy Approval

Donna Carroll made a motion to Approve Proposed Changes to the 2026-2027 Employee Handbook.
Nealon Jaynes-Lewis seconded the motion.
Discussion & Approval of Proposed Changes to Employee Handbook:

- Applicant Disclosures
- Educator Licensing and Certification Programs
- Tuition Reimbursement Policy
- Paid Time Off
- Employee Dress Code and Appearance Policy
- PPE/Safety Shoe & Reimbursement Policy
- No Tolerance Policy for Toxic Work Environment
- Professional Training and Development
- Employee Technology and Device Agreement

All proposed changes were discussed, revised, and agreed upon by the Board.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Board Chair Updates

A.

Approve Meeting Schedule for 2026 - 2027

Donna Carroll made a motion to Approve Meeting Schedule for 2026-2027.
Alton Jones seconded the motion.
Kendra drafted the following Schedule for 2026-2027 Meetings:

- Tuesday, September 15, 2026, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, October 20, 2026, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, November 17, 2026, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, December 15, 2026, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, January 19, 2027, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, February 23, 2027, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, March 16, 2027, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, April 27, 2027, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, May 18, 2027, from 5:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, June 15, 2027, from 5:30-6:30pm

All meetings are remote and will be held virtually via Zoom.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OVERSIGHT AND EVALUATION

Excutive Director Oversight:

The Board reviewed its historical process for evaluating the Executive Director and acknowledged the need for a more timely and consistent approach in response to feedback received from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) during the charter renewal process. The Board established the following approach:

- The Executive Director evaluation will be completed during the first quarter of each school year, with the prior year’s performance evaluation approved and goals for the current year established within the same fall timeframe.
- The evaluation will be based on the academic, operational, and organizational performance data available throughout the year, including DIBELS, i-Ready, and other relevant measures. The process will no longer be delayed pending the release of MCAS results.
- When MCAS results become available, the Board may add a brief data addendum (if desired) to the evaluation record without reopening the completed evaluation or related compensation decision.
- The Board will establish a consistent policy governing the effective date of any approved salary adjustment, with July 1 identified as the proposed effective date regardless of when the formal evaluation vote occurs.

- The Executive Director's performance for the 2025–2026 school year, including leadership of the successful charter renewal process, will be evaluated during fall 2026 as the first evaluation conducted under the revised annual schedule.

This approach is intended to ensure that the Executive Director receives timely feedback, works toward current and clearly established goals, and is evaluated through a predictable and consistently documented annual process.

NEXT STEP:

- Donna Carroll will initiate the 2025–2026 Evaluation process in BoardOnTrack.

Executive Session and Documentation Clarification:

The Board acknowledged that it had previously understood discussion of the Executive Director's performance evaluation to be a personnel matter permissible for executive session. DESE subsequently clarified that the evaluation of a school leader must be discussed in open session and is not, by itself, a permissible basis for entering executive session under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. The Board will apply this clarification to future evaluation discussions and procedures.

The Board Secretary attempted to upload the minutes from the applicable executive session into BoardOnTrack. Due to the Board leadership transition and the departure of the individual who previously managed the minutes record, the Secretary was unable to place the minutes under the meeting's **Minutes** tab. The minutes were therefore uploaded under the **Documents** tab for that meeting so they would be preserved and accessible within BoardOnTrack. A copy will also be submitted to DESE in response to its request.

C. BYLAWS REVISION

Bylaws Discussion & Revision:

DESE requested a comprehensive bylaws revision, and outlined a multi-step approval process:

1. Board prepares a draft.
2. Board submits draft to DESE for provisional review.
3. DESE provides comments.
4. Draft gets revised as necessary.
5. Board apporves/adopts revised bylaws.
6. Board submits Charter amendment request.
7. Commissioner grants final approval.

The Board conducted a comprehensive review of the bylaws and discussed proposed revisions during the Annual Retreat.

NEXT STEPS:

- Present final draft for Board consideration in September 2026.
- Complete legal review during the revision process.
- Submit the draft to DESE before October 1, 2026.

In the future, bylaws will be reviewed annually for any necessary revisions.

D. RETREAT SESSION — STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

Strategic Discussion – Board Structure, Standing Committees, and Committee Appointments

Kendra Salvador presented governance resources from BoardOnTrack outlining recommended Board committee structures, including the purpose, composition, and responsibilities of standing committees.

The Board engaged in a strategic discussion regarding its current size, member engagement, meeting attendance, and committee structure. Trustees agreed that the existing committee structure included more committees than were necessary and that several committee responsibilities could be more effectively managed by the full Board or incorporated into other standing committees. The Board reached consensus to streamline its committee structure to improve efficiency, reduce duplication of effort, and better align committee work with the Board's governance priorities.

The Board established the following standing committees and meeting frequencies:

- **Finance Committee** – Monthly
- **Development (Fundraising) Committee** – Quarterly
- **Governance Committee** – Quarterly
- **Academic Excellence Committee** – Monthly
- **Executive Committee (Board Officers)** – Ad hoc, as needed

The Board also agreed to dissolve the following committees, with their responsibilities to be incorporated into the indicated committees or assumed by the full Board:

- Friends of MLKCSE --> Development Committee
- Strategic Planning --> Development Committee
- Human Resources --> Governance Committee
- Executive Director Support & Evaluation --> Full Board

The following committee appointments were made.

Finance Committee:

- Caleb Pointdujour
- Nealon Jaynes-Lewis
- Tim Battle *(pending DESE approval)*
- Megan Garnett *(non-voting advisor)*

Development (Fundraising) Committee:

- Alton Jones
- Denise Pagan-Vega
- Caleb Pointdujour

Governance Committee:

- Donna Carroll
- Sherard Johnson
- Tim Battle *(pending DESE approval)*

Academic Excellence Committee:

- Nealon Jaynes-Lewis
- Denise Pagan-Vega
- Allison Sullivan *(pending DESE approval)*

Executive Committee (Board Officers):

- Donna Carroll
- Caleb Pointdujour
- Tim Battle *(pending DESE approval)*

NEXT STEPS:
The Board agreed that the following items will be addressed at the **September Board of Trustees meeting**:

- **Reevaluate committee membership** to ensure that each standing committee has sufficient membership to conduct business and maintain quorum in the event of member absences.
- **Assign Committee Chair** for each active committee.
- **Deactivate non-active (dissolving) committees**. Need to make sure we don't lose access to historical data (agendas, minutes, etc.) if committees are deactivated.
- **Establish goals and priorities** for each standing committee to guide its work during the upcoming year.

- Direct **each committee to determine its meeting schedule**, including the frequency and proposed meeting dates, consistent with the cadence established by the Board.

V. Other Business

A. Approve Signature of Audit Engagement Letter and Conditions of Assurance by Alternate Board Officer

Alton Jones made a motion to Approve Signature of Audit Engagement Letter and Conditions of Assurance by Alternate Board Officer.
Nealon Jaynes-Lewis seconded the motion.
Approval for Board Secretary to sign the Audit Engagement Letter and Conditions of Assurance
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Caleb Pointdujour 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 5:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Carroll

Documents used during the meeting

- Executive Director’s Report to the Board July 2026.pdf
- MLKCSE Budget & Spending Plan 26-27.pdf
- MLKCSE Capital Plan FY27_Last updated 7.28.26 - Proposed revision.pdf
- MLKCSE Employee Handbook 2026_2027.docx.pdf
- Proposal - Board of Trustees Annual Calendar 26-27.pdf