



ZEST Preparatory Academy Charter School

Minutes

Called Board Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday April 3, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Location

3130 Golf Ridge Blvd. Douglasville, GA 30135

Directors Present

A. Joiner, B. Jones, E. Jackson, H. Ridley, T. Stevens

Directors Absent

None

Ex Officio Members Present

M. Carruthers

Non Voting Members Present

M. Carruthers

Guests Present

L. McDonald, M. Felts

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

B. Jones called a meeting of the board of directors of ZEST Preparatory Academy Charter School to order on Thursday Apr 3, 2025 at 7:13 PM.

C. Review & Approve Agenda

H. Ridley made a motion to approve the agenda for the special called meeting.

T. Stevens seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Mission and Vision

B. Jones read the Mission and Vision of ZEST Preparatory Academy.

E. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

F. FY24 Governing Board Minutes Approval

B. Jones noted that this is an Item for Information and will be voted on at the regularly scheduled meeting.

II. Finance Report

A. FY25 Amended Funding Update

- The AFY25 budget for ZEST showed an unexpected and significant decrease in state funding.
- To close the gap, ZEST has instituted the following cuts and cost-savings measures:
 - Freeze all non-essential spending
 - Lease deferral for May and June (estimated cost savings of \$80K)
 - Personnel cuts - identified carefully with the priority to preserve the integrity of the academic program. Job roles were re-allocated to ensure continuity of critical functions.
 - Reduced budget line items for non mission-critical expenditures that will not impact student experience/academic program
- Additional revenue solutions:
 - Fundraising
 - Bridge Loan
 - SCSC Emergency Grant
 - Reduction In Force (only if necessary)

B. January & February Financials & Forecast

- EdTec staff presented the January & February financials revised to reflect the cut in state funding. Presentation included forecast through the end of the fiscal year.
- Prior to cost cutting measures, ZEST was anticipating -\$250K in net income. Following the cuts, ZEST is projecting -\$59K in net income. However, the school is cash positive through the end of the fiscal year.
- Ended Feb with \$329K or 38 days of COH; projected to end FY with \$38K or 4 days of COH (through June 30th)

C. Facility Update

M. Carruthers shared a facility update given the funding changes.

- Current Plan
 - Renovation to add 3 classrooms
 - Pros: allowed for higher student enrollment (290 students), playground was included
 - Cons: the renovation substantially adds to the expenses for FY26
- Contingency Plan
 - Suite 120 would become the cafeteria and the cafeteria would become 2 classroom. These changes can be made with minimal renovations.
 - Pros: substantial cost savings for FY26
 - Cons: impacts revenue for FY26 due to lower student enrollment (270 students), enrollment strategy would have to be adjusted

D. SCSC Emergency Grant Update

B. Jones provided an update on ZEST's intention to apply for the SCSC Emergency Grant. ZEST is cautiously optimistic; however, he emphasized that ZEST could not rely on the grant as a guarantee.

M. Carruthers stated that the grant will be submitted tomorrow with the most up-to-date financials.

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

E. Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

H. Ridley 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 7:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

B. Jones

ZEST Preparatory Academy Charter School is a K-5 elementary school community that provides an academically rigorous, supportive, and joyful learning environment to develop the leader inside every student for lifelong educational achievement and impactful community service.