



## ZEST Preparatory Academy Charter School

### Minutes

#### ZEST Preparatory Academy Governance Board Meeting

---

**Date and Time**

Tuesday July 29, 2025 at 6:30 PM

**Location**

3130 Golf Ridge Blvd. Douglasville, GA 30135

---

**Directors Present**

A. Joiner, A. Olugbala, A. Williams (remote), B. Jones, E. Jackson, H. Ridley, R. Palmer, S. Rankin

**Directors Absent**

D. Randolph

**Ex Officio Members Present**

M. Carruthers (remote)

**Non Voting Members Present**

M. Carruthers (remote)

**Guests Present**

A. Parks, R. Davis

---

**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 Tuesday Jul 29, 2025 at 6:51 PM.

### **C. Approve Minutes**

S. Rankin made a motion to approve the minutes from ZEST Preparatory Academy Board June Governance & Retreat Meeting on 06-28-25.

H. Ridley seconded the motion.

Approved at 6:51 pm.

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

### **D. Review & Approve Agenda**

The agenda was motioned to amend to move the Executive Directors' report to the end of the meeting. Motion was made by Horace Ridley and seconded by Elizabeth Jackson.

### **E. Mission and Vision**

The Board Chair opened the meeting by reading the ZEST Prep mission and vision statements.

### **F. Public Comment**

There were no public comment requests.

## **II. Executive Directors Report**

### **A. SY2025-26 Start-up**

RD, Senior Director of Operations, shared that ZEST Prep is fully staffed in all instructional areas for the 2025–2026 school year. The school-based team is in the final stages of filling the remaining vacancies in operations and enrichment roles.

### **B. FYI: FY26 Academic Updates**

Associate Director of Academics, provided an overview of the SY25–26 academic curriculum, highlighting core programs in literacy, math, science, and social studies, as well as enrichment offerings. The presentation included key instructional resources, assessment tools, and supports aligned with student needs and state requirements.

#### **Assessment Calendar**

- Aligned with state and internal benchmarks
- Includes screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring cycles

### **C.**

### **Action: High Quality Curriculum & Instructional Materials**

E. Jackson made a motion to To adopt and approve ZEST Preps High Quality Curriculum & Instructional Materials.

R. Palmer seconded the motion.

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

#### **D. FYI: FY26 Safety Plan**

RD, Senior Director of Operations, reported that ZEST Prep has developed a fire drill schedule to ensure compliance with Georgia Department of Education safety requirements. The emergency response plan will be updated and shared with the Douglas County Emergency Management Agency and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) for coordination and review.

#### **E. FYI: Operational Update**

The administrative team is preparing for SCSC monitoring, which will take place between August and October. Progress is being tracked through an internal portal using FY25 data.

The SCSC website compliance audit was completed in early July to meet the CAP deadline, and the team is continuing to add updated family resources to ensure full compliance regarding FY26 information.

### **III. Governance Report**

#### **A. FYI: Governance Committee Updates**

##### **Committee Assignments**

The Board Chair shared that the ZEST Governing Board has formally identified all committees and their respective officers. The established committees are as follows:

- Governance Committee
- Finance Committee
- Academic Committee
- Ad Hoc Committee for Finance

##### **LEA Leadership Workflow & Calendar Planning**

The board discussed the LEA Leadership workflow as a tool to clarify roles and responsibilities between the ZEST Board and school leadership. The board also reviewed a proposed school calendar framework to monitor progress and implementation milestones monthly.

##### **SCSC Legal Obligations**

Board members were reminded of their legal obligation to attend State Charter Schools Commission (SCSC) governance training. Two options are available:

- **Macon** – November
- **Atlanta** – February

The majority of board members have indicated a preference for the February training in Atlanta.

### **Georgia Law Requirements**

The board acknowledged its ongoing compliance obligations under Georgia.

## **B. Policy Revisions for 2025-26 School Year**

### **1. Senate Bill 340 – Cell Phone Ban (K–8)**

Effective July 2026, this law bans personal device use (phones, smartwatches, headphones, etc.) for K–8 students during the school day.

As an LEA, we have the option to choose how to enforce this policy.

### **2. SB 351 – Protecting Georgia’s Children on Social Media Act**

LEA's must block access to platforms (e.g., YouTube, Instagram) on school devices and networks.

- ZEST has worked with the third-party technology vendor to ensure the identified websites have been blocked and filtered.
- ZEST has received the LEA Parent Pro Tech access to support digital citizenship efforts.

## **C. Action: Policy Adoptions and Revisions**

E. Jackson made a motion to adopt the Student Use of Cellphones and Personal Use of Devices - Senate Bill 395 policy and the Protecting Georgia's Children on Social Media Act Policy.

S. Rankin seconded the motion.

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

## **IV. Finance Report**

### **A. FYI: June Financials & July Forecast**

The June financials have been reviewed, and the July actual forecasts are in progress as we continue to monitor revenue and expenditures.

### **B. Facility Update**

RD provided: Custodial staff completed a full summer deep cleaning of the building. Board members supported efforts by providing referrals and services to assist with floor cleaning and painting. Additional touch-up painting and minor facility needs are still

anticipated. The current short-term facility plan is sufficient to accommodate the projected enrollment of 275 students.

### **C. FY24 Audit Update**

#### **Audit Update:**

The ZEST Prep Board is continuing to work with the Audit and Avolon teams to finalize the FY24 audit.

### **D. FY25 Audit**

#### **ZEST CFO Update:**

The CFO is currently supporting ZEST financials. The preliminary FY25 audit process will begin by mid-August, with the goal of meeting the SCSC submission deadline.

## **V. FY26 Amended Budget Hearing #2**

### **A. FY26 Amended Budget Review**

The FY26 amended budget was presented and shared. The estimated revenue for FY26 is \$3.7 million, with projected expenditures totaling \$3.5 million. The presented budget anticipates a surplus net income by the end of the fiscal year.

### **B. Budget Feedback and Public Comment on the Amended Budget**

No feedback was received on the amended FY26 budget, and there were no public comments.

## **VI. Action Items**

### **A. Adoption of FY26 Amended Budget**

H. Ridley made a motion to adopt the FY26 amended budget.

A. Joiner seconded the motion.

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

## **VII. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

H. Ridley made a motion to Adjourn the July 29, 2025 board meeting.

S. Rankin seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** 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 7:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Davis

---

*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.*