

APPROVED



# Explorations Charter School

## Minutes

### Governing Board Regular Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday February 25, 2025 at 5:30 PM

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#### Directors Present

Bryan Raydenbow (remote), Ginni Block (remote), Greg Skinner (remote), Hilary Paden (remote), Kali Blakeslee (remote), Lori Noto (remote), Robert Peterson (remote), Sarah Annis Haynes (remote)

#### Directors Absent

Julie Luby

#### Directors who arrived after the meeting opened

Greg Skinner, Hilary Paden

#### Guests Present

Cat Raydenbow (remote), Jill Johnson (remote), Kaelynn Woodtke (remote), Susan O'Rourke (remote)

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#### I. Opening Items

##### A. Record Attendance

##### B. Call the Meeting to Order

Robert Peterson called a meeting of the board of directors of Explorations Charter School to order on Tuesday Feb 25, 2025 at 5:34 PM.

**C. Approve Minutes - 1/21/2025**

Bryan Raydenbow made a motion to approve the minutes from Governing Board Regular Meeting on 01-21-25.

Ginni Block seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Lori Noto	Aye
Bryan Raydenbow	Aye
Ginni Block	Aye
Robert Peterson	Aye
Kali Blakeslee	Aye
Greg Skinner	Absent
Sarah Annis Haynes	Aye
Hilary Paden	Absent
Julie Luby	Absent

**II. Student Representative Introductions**

**A. Board member introductions**

**B. Student representative introductions**

1. CR (11), Winsted
  1. "Welcoming community."
2. KW (10), Winsted
  1. "Attentive, patient staff."

Joseph White arrived at 5:52.

**III. Financial**

**A. January Monthly Report**

Susan O'Rourke

- January 2025 report
- 58% into the school year
- March 29: Next check from CT
- Personnel line item work pending
- Insurance check pending paperwork

Bryan Raydenbow made a motion to Approve Financial Report.

Robert Peterson seconded the motion.

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

## **B. ERTC Financing Discussion**

Jill Johnson:

- Update on financing committee
- November 2024 Johanna Hayes communication
- Follow up with John Larson's office
- Email this week from Johanna Hayes office: case ID issues
- Referral included in priority IRS processing
- March 10 or before status update

## **IV. Committee Reports**

### **A. Policy Committee**

Joseph White

- Electronic Devices policy

Greg Skinner arrived at 6:06 PM.

Hilary Paden arrived at 6:06 PM.

### **B. Finance Committee**

Ginni Block made a motion to To approve the Electronic Policy as written.

Lori Noto seconded the motion.

Sarah Haynes asked a clarifying question.

Kali Blakeslee spoke.

Joseph White reminded us that the current CTSTE policy is to "limit use and teach responsible use of..." (Our policy can stand until a state mandate comes down.) Board to reconvene to discuss at 2025 Board Retreat.

Ginni Block spoke.

Lori Noto spoke.

Jill Johnson spoke.

Bob Peterson spoke.

Kali Blakeslee spoke.

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

Jill Johnson:

- Recap of finance committee meeting
- NW Community Bank bridge loan per finance committee. Board approval needed to accept a \$200,000 loan, interest only, to be paid in full when tax credit checks received from IRS.

Lori Noto made a motion to Accept a bridge loan from NW Community Bank for \$200,000 (interest only) be paid off by pending federal employee retention tax credit monies.

Robert Peterson seconded the motion.

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

### **C. By-Law Revision Committee**

Sarah Haynes:

- By-law revision work done by committee

Robert Peterson made a motion to Approve by-laws.

Sarah Annis Haynes seconded the motion.

Lori Noto:

- Spacing/formatting to be corrected before final draft published.

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

### **D. Personnel Committee**

Sarah Haynes:

- Employee handbook
- The goal is to send it to the lawyer, and then vote on it during the March Board meeting
- Posted to Board on Track
- Sick leave: January 1, 2026 exemption ends pending legislation
- Push for public school exemption re: notice of leave
- Policy will have to be amended when/if that becomes law

## **V. School News**

### **A. General Updates**

Jill Johnson:

- Enrollment is 75 students
- Open house March 26 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm
- January: Chronic Absenteeism (CA) rate: 47.3% (51.4% at the end of December)
- The attendance team is working hard to address the CA rate

- After 19 absences, a student is considered CA for the year

Bob Peterson:

- Expresses gratitude for the work done to combat student chronic absenteeism

Charter School Reporting

Jill Johnson

- Accountability and Support Subcommittee in January
- In March, the commissioner will review the data presented and decide if Explorations will be put on probation.
- Phone meeting with state contact Shakira on 2/24/2025.
- Meeting Wednesday, March 5 with State.
- Documents to be sent for review by 2/26/2025.

Joseph White provided clarification.

## **B. School Climate Survey**

Joseph White:

- Summary of the school climate survey.
- Student, parents, and staff numbers.
- Goal to pick what we can address effectively.
- Social interactions and connections were highlighted in the survey.
- Website: Thought Exchange

Ginni Block expressed gratitude to Joseph White for his work in creating, compiling, and analyzing the results of the survey.

2/26/2025 "Pizza and Presentation" night with Scott Rossignol.

Bob Peterson asked a clarifying question.

Greg Skinner:

- "Handle with Care" protocol.
- Rolled out at the staff meeting on 2/26/2025.
- School climate and connection with communication and school climate.
- Comes from a state initiative in partnership with McCall Behavior Health and local PDs.
- Upcoming staff development.

## **VI. Closing Items**

### **A.**

### **Adjourn Meeting**

Robert Peterson made a motion to Adjourn the meeting.

Sarah Annis Haynes 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 7:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kali Blakeslee

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### **Documents used during the meeting**

- Monthly Report January 2025.pdf