

APPROVED



Explorations Charter School

Minutes

Governing Board Regular Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday June 24, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Location

Governing Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 24 · 5:30 – 6:30pm

Time zone: America/New_York

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/omn-dfek-thd>

Or dial: (US) +1 470-222-8574 PIN: 532 844 824#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/omn-dfek-thd?pin=6434021368330>

Directors Present

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

Directors Absent

Kali Blakeslee

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened

Bryan Raydenbow

Guests Present

Jill Johnson, Joe White (remote)

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 Jun 24, 2025 at 5:39 PM.

C. Approve Minutes - 05/20/2025

Ginni Block made a motion to approve the minutes from Governing Board Regular Meeting on 05-20-25.

Lori Noto seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

II. Financial

A. May Monthly Report

Robert Peterson made a motion to Approve the May Financial Report.

Lori Noto seconded the motion.

- Jill indicated and the Finance Committee acknowledged that there is additional work that needs to be done on the budget for the 2025-2026 school year due to the uncertainty of Title II and Title IV funds, and rollback of the promised per pupil increase. The Finance Committee will have a working session (date TBD) in July to look at the budget and expenditures for next year line by line.
- Impact on this years budget: being under capacity, (77 vs 92) the budget is over 100k short in the per pupil category vs. what was budgeted for the year, also Special Ed receipts were also lower than expected due to the return of some special ed students to district based on PPT decision.
- Jill has done all of the drawdowns for the existing grant funds for the year end.

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

Roll Call

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

B. ERTC Update

Explorations has received 4 of the 5 checks from the IRS. Jill sent a thank you letter to John Larson's office for the help in acquiring the checks. Jill also sent an email to see if we could receive help tracking down the final check.

Bryan Raydenbow arrived at 5:51 PM.

C. Fundraising

- Ginni Block started a discussion about working with an outside professional who searches for and can list grants Explorations is likely to receive. The board acknowledged that an approved vote from last year authorizes the expenditure of up to \$5,000 for these services.
- The board discussed adding a Fundraising Committee. Ginni Block and Lori Noto volunteered to be on the committee. The board discussed various fundraising ideas.

III. Action Items

A. Planning Board Retreat

The Board Retreat is scheduled for August 9th (Saturday) from 9:00 am to 2:00 PM. The retreat will be held at the Torrington LARC Office (314 Main Street).

The agenda will be finalized in the next few weeks. Possible agenda items will include:

- Finalizing the Employee Handbook
- The 2025-2026 school budget
- Fundraising
- Creating staff performance review procedures
- A summary of Jill Johnson's Executive Director Evaluation
- The school renewal/corrective action plan
- Strategic planning
- A look at the Adventure Education and School Internship Manual handbooks
- Reviewing the school electronic device (cell phone) policy

- A review of the end-of-the-year climate surveys

IV. Committee Reports

A. Policy Committee

Ginni Block made a motion to Reaffirm Policy 5141.27.

Robert Peterson seconded the motion.

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

Ginni Block made a motion to Approve updates to policy 5113.2.

Bryan Raydenbow seconded the motion.

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

• 5131.81 - Use of Private Technology Devices by Students

This policy was tabled until the August board retreat.

B. CEO Support & Evaluation Committee

Lori Noto said there are still staff and board members who need to complete the survey on Board on Track. She is going to open up the survey for board members.

C. Personnel Committee

No meeting held

D. Finance Committee

Discussed in Section II.

V. School News

A. General Updates

1. Enrollment - 30 acceptance letters were sent out after the lottery. The letters were due back to Explorations on June 15 and Jill Johnson and Colleen Renzullo will look at what has been returned this week. Explorations has received 8 applications since the lottery was held. The school should be close to capacity by the start of the school year.
2. Attendance - Explorations finished the year with a chronic absenteeism rate of 41.1%. This final number was an improvement from May. In 2023-2024, the school finished with a 37.3% chronic absenteeism rate.
3. Charter School Reporting - We submitted our end of the year report on June 5.
4. Staffing Update - Erin Cunliffe and Erika Santos, both part time art teachers who started this year, passed their Praxis exams. They are eligible for Charter School Educator permits.

5. Graduation - Graduation was held on Thursday, June 12 at the Thomaston Opera House. The ceremony was well attended and Maria Skinner (wife of Greg Skinner & Executive Director of McCall Behavioral Health Network) was the speaker.

B. Year-End Recap & Teacher Report

Teachers reported that Adventure Education was successful this year and that the morning minutes have been a welcome addition. Teachers feel the communication helps them feel more informed. Teachers also noted they felt a strong sense of community.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joe White