



Explorations Charter School

Minutes

Governing Board Regular Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday October 21, 2025 at 5:00 PM

Directors Present

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

Directors Absent

None

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened

Ginni Block, Greg Skinner, Julie Luby

Directors who left before the meeting adjourned

Robert Peterson

Guests Present

Jill Johnson (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 Oct 21, 2025 at 5:04 PM.

C. Approve Minutes - 09/23/2025

Sarah Annis Haynes made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 09-23-25.

Lori Noto seconded the motion.

Adjournment time missing - will be added.

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

II. Financial

A. July-September Monthly Report

Susan O'Rourke provided the following update:

- Final numbers for consolidated and SRSA grants to be finalized.
- 25% into the school year
- Received 2 checks from State of CT
- Interest income from last ERC check
- Repair and maintenance - over-budget due to required repairs to HVAC unit
- DRIP funds will be available, per Education Commissioner. Available funding figures unknown.
- Jill to submit a proposal for how ECS will spend our allocated DRIP funds.
- The lunch/school store will be updated to "Kitchen Service Fee"

Robert Peterson made a motion to approve the minutes from July - September Monthly Report.

Bryan Raydenbow seconded the motion.

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

III. Action Items

A. Planning Board Retreat

Board Retreat Planning:

- Saturday, January 24 - A balmy 41% is in the forecast.
- Snow Date: TBD (Virtual meeting an option is needed)
- 9:00 - 1:00 pm
- LARC, Main Street, Torrington, CT

Goal: Before the State Board of Education Meeting on February 11, 2026

Ginni Block arrived.

Greg Skinner arrived.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Policy Committee

Joseph White & Jill Johnson met re: policies

No new policies for review.

B. CEO Support & Evaluation Committee

Lori Noto

- Goals need to be written
- Jill and Lori will be attending a training in January re: administrator training.

Julie Luby arrived.

C. Personnel Committee

Sarah Haynes

- Employee handbook to be finalized at Board Retreat
- Awaiting approval/feedback from lawyer.

D. Finance Committee

Jill Johnson

- Susan, Joe, Ginny, Sarah, Jill met
- Re: renewal/site visit
- Yellow/Highlighter = Items added
- Other changes are formatting related
- Request for plan for findings in the audit added, per state request
- Added fundraising re: cash/checks collected
- Changed item #3: "All contracts or purchases over \$5,000..."
- Changed item #10: "...business contracts involving a direct relationship..." (re: anti-nepotism rules)
- Salaries
- Policy #3000

Date approved: 10/21/2025

Robert Peterson made a motion to Approve Policy #300.

Ginni Block seconded the motion.

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

Bob Peterson

- Short term investment 7 month CD (NW Community Bank)
- Kali Blakeslee recommends OpenBank by Santander 4.2% APR

Robert Peterson made a motion to Motion to investigate short term savings rates and up to 7 months investment rates pending research and full vote of the Board at November regular meeting.

Bryan Raydenbow seconded the motion.

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

Jill Johnson

- 1.5% cash back on every purchase we make (Capital One)
- 2% cash back on gas or office supplies (American Express)

Susan recommends closing American Express account per high fees.

Lori Noto made a motion to Motion to authorize Bill Hallam to close the American Express account and report back at the next Board meeting.

Robert Peterson seconded the motion.

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

V. School News

A. General Updates

Jill Johnson:

- October 1: 82 students
- October 21: 81 students

Jill and Joe to follow up re: enrollment of withdrawn student.

- Attendance: CA 9/2025: 40.2% (9/2024: 46.8%) = 15.2% improvement.
- Letters sent, 3 parent meetings conducted

Renewal/State Visit:

- Public Hearing conducted 10/9/2025
- Letters from Julie Luby and 4 other parents/community members sent
- Improvement noted

No official additional feedback received.

Continuous improvement is ongoing.

Van update:

- Replacement needed.
- Bill and Rich have been looking.
- Private school donation>
- Martel vans?
- Outdoor Perspectives van?
- Continued conversations about vans
- Follow up next Board meeting

Robert Peterson left.

B. Teacher Report

Can/Bottle drive - give us your cans and bottles! Proceeds to GSA

Adventure going well re: Wilderness School

Bringing in quest speakers for health from Susan B. Anthony

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Julie Luby made a motion to Authorize Jill working in conjunction with school and community partners to craft a stipulated agreement for student discipline issue.

Sarah Annis Haynes seconded the motion.

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

Lori Noto 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 6:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kali Blakeslee