APPROVED

Excel Academy Massachusetts

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday April 4, 2024 at 8:30 AM

Location
Microsoft Teams: Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 220 330 751 253
Passcode: 7NwUoy

Meeting Notice Posted Publicly: 4/1/24

Please note: All items listed on the agenda are subject to a possibly vote by the Board of Trustees.

Trustees Present
B. Rodriguez (remote), C. Brumme (remote), D. Petersmeyer Johnson (remote), D. Sachs (remote), D. Stolow (remote), M. Colaylat (remote), N. Castro (remote), R. Lytle (remote), T. Griffith Walker (remote)

Trustees Absent
P. Klein, S. Zrike

Guests Present
A. Kaynor (remote), E. Matson (remote), O. Stearns (remote), S. Patton (remote), Timothy Weller (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Brumme called a meeting of the board of trustees of Excel Academy Massachusetts to order on Thursday Apr 4, 2024 at 8:30 AM.
Brumme called the meeting to order at 8:32 am and presided over the meeting. Stearns, Matson, and Kaynor kept the minutes. Brumme welcomed the group and noted that this is a public meeting and that members of the Friends of Excel Academy Board are attending today, as members of the public, to participate in the Academic Oversight Committee Update agenda topic.

C. Public Comment

No comments provided by members of the public

D. Approve Minutes for 2.2.24 Board Meeting

D. Stolow made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2.2.24 Board meeting.
D. Sachs seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Academic Oversight

A. Approve XLC Head of School Hiring Recommendation

C. Brumme made a motion to approve the Excel Academy Chelsea hiring recommendation, as presented.
D. Petersmeyer Johnson seconded the motion.
Patton and Sachs summarized the hiring process and recommendation to hire Emily Lupo as the new Head of School for the Excel Academy Chelsea (XLC) campus, which was provided to the Board in advance via email, and recommended a start date of April 4, 2024. The Board asked clarifying questions, which Patton and Sachs were able to answer.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. State of the School/NAT Update & Report from Academic Oversight Committee

Patton and Rodriguez provided a summary update to the Board on the Academic Oversight Committee meeting on April 1 and the latest quarterly academic data, which was provided to the Board. Rodriguez noted that high school and middle school math scores are a current area of concern. Patton shared that the school has been following a much more data-driven approach this year, which is helping to reveal more clearly where there are potential curricular and/or assessment gaps. This data-driven approach also

provides the leadership team with more clarity about how to prioritize and plan interventions where they are needed. Patton also noted that attendance has improved this year, particularly at the high school. Additionally, Patton noted that suspension rates are lower but that there are gaps for certain sub-populations, which the school and network leadership teams are analyzing and tracking closely. The Board indicated interest in continuing to monitor discipline and math data and asked the Academic Oversight Committee to review again at the next Committee meeting in June and provide the Board with further updates.

III. Team Builder

A. Team Builder Discussion

The Board agreed to skip the team-building discussion today due to time constraints.

IV. Finance

A. FY25 Budget Process - Update & Reminder

Brumme reminded the Board that, after discussing FY25 budget parameters with the Excel - MA Finance Committee in January, we decided to move forward with an increase of $500K in compensation for next year, knowing that we are likely to be close to break-even for FY25. In recent years, our budgets have tended to include a larger margin than what we are forecasting for FY25. The Finance Committee felt that this investment in compensation was important to prioritize, and we have sufficient funds to make this possible.

Brumme also reminded the Board what to expect for the FY25 budget planning process and encouraged the Board to engage and ask questions:

- April 26th, 10am – Our Finance Committee will do a deep-dive review of the FY25 draft budget.
    - Please feel free to share questions and thoughts with our Finance Committee (David, Dave, and Rob) in advance, and they can consider these questions with the Finance Team on our behalf.
    - If you would like access to the same materials that the Finance Committee will be reviewing on 4/26, or if you would like to attend the 4/26 budget review meeting, please just let Aaron (astelson@excelacademy.org) and Arthur (akaynor@excelacademy.org) know!
- In May, the Finance Team will provide a consolidated FY25 budget memo to all of Excel's Boards, for us to review and ask questions.
- At our meeting in June, the Board will vote to approve the FY25 budget.

V. Governance

A.

CMO Agreement Update

Brumme and Kaynor updated the Board that we recently heard back from DESE regarding the updated FY24-28 CMO agreement that was approved by the Board and submitted to DESE in June. DESE's review took longer than expected due to an extended process to approve a different CMO agreement for another school that took place prior to DESE's review of Excel's agreement. DESE provided Excel with feedback and required edits that are informed by their review and approval of the other school's agreement. DESE communicated eagerness to work with us to wrap up the approval process quickly. Brumme is reviewing DESE's comments and edits with Friends of Excel Academy and the school's legal counsel. Brumme will report back and consult with the Board if any matters of material concern arise in the process to review and incorporate DESE's comments and finalize the agreement.

As a reminder, once any required edits are incorporated, the anticipated process is that then DESE will grant provisional approval, after which point the agreement can be signed by both parties and resubmitted to DESE and the Commissioner as an amendment request for final approval. For efficiency, we also intend to submit the previously approved amendment to remove the Administrative Committee as a standing committee in the Board's by-laws as part of the same amendment request that will be submitted to finalize the CMO agreement approval process. We will keep the Board apprised of any developments.

B. Reminder: Annual Ethics Disclosures

Stearns and Kaynor reminded the Board that annual disclosure paperwork will be distributed to each Board member via email from the BMMS (Board management system), likely some time in May. If Board members don't receive their paperwork by the end of May, please let Arthur know, and he will be happy to follow up. We are asking that everyone submit their disclosure paperwork back by June 30, well in advance of when our auditors will request it.

C. Approve Public Comment Policy

D. Stolow made a motion to approve the Public Comment Policy, as presented.
R. Lytle seconded the motion.
Stearns and Kaynor summarized the proposed draft Public Comment Policy presented to the Board. The policy was developed based on several strong examples from other schools. The Board always includes "Public Comment" on its agendas but does not currently have a written protocol for public comment. The proposed protocol is intended to provide the Board with a helpful structure that it can reference to the extent that it is helpful, if/when members of the public want to provide comments at future Board meetings. The Board still retains authority via majority vote in any meeting to override the protocol and extend the length of public comment and/or allow comments from members of the public who did not sign up in advance.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Update regarding BoardOnTrack

Stearns and Kaynor provided the Board with an update on a new software called BoardOnTrack and asked the Board to sign in and provide feedback on the platform as we work to implement it fully. Kaynor will send invite emails. The platform will facilitate meeting planning and access to meeting materials for Board members.

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 9:12 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Lytle
List of documents used in the meeting:

- 2.2.24 MA Board Meeting Minutes
- 3.23.24 XLC Head of School Hiring Recommendation (sent by David Sachs via email in advance)
- 4.4.24 Draft XLMA Public Comment Policy
- 4.1.24 Academic Update Slides and Academic Data Dashboard

The public is welcome to any meeting of the Board of Trustees or its subcommittees. If communication assistance (readers/interpreters/captions) or any other accommodations are needed to ensure equal participation, please contact Arthur Kaynor at (781) 526-6927 at least two (2) business days prior to the meeting. Any changes in the agenda will be posted on Excel Academy Charter School's website, Excel's principal place of business, and will be electronically filed with the secretary of state at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.

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