APPROVED

Excel Academy Massachusetts

Minutes

Board of Trustees

Academic Oversight Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Monday June 10, 2024 at 1:30 PM

Location
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 210 600 254 683
Passcode: LEseQs

Meeting Notice Posted Publicly: 3/28/24

Please note: All items listed on the agenda are subject to a possible vote by the Board of Trustees or its subcommittees.

Committee Members Present
B. Rodriguez (remote), F. Reyes (remote), N. Keough (remote), O. Stearns (remote), S. Zrike (remote)

Committee Members Absent
C. Brumme, S. Patton, T. Griffith Walker

Guests Present
A. Kaynor (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

S. Zrike called a meeting of the Academic Oversight Committee of Excel Academy Massachusetts to order on Monday Jun 10, 2024 at 1:31 PM.

C. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comments.

D. Approve Minutes for 4.1.24 Committee Meeting

B. Rodriguez made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Oversight Committee Meeting on 04-01-24.
S. Zrike seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Academic Oversight

A. Update on Academics & Priorities

N. Keough provided framing on the goals of this meeting. N. Keough noted that we have learned a lot in our first year of this new Academic Oversight Committee structure being fully in place. This includes having a better understanding of the timeliness of certain topics throughout the year. The June Academic Committee meeting is a good time to take a step back and discuss the state of the schools and our priorities for the upcoming year. It is also too soon to have a complete discussion of EOY academic data, which will be the focus of the first Committee meeting in the new school year once that data is fully available.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the latest quarterly data dashboard with available data, and the Academic Team shared a few key highlights, including:

- The high school notably improved with attendance. Chronic absenteeism is around 26%, down from 36.5% last year, with improvements for SWD and MLLs as well. ADA is up (91.4 from 90.6).
- Middle school attendance is roughly the same.
- Suspensions are down across our schools from 12% last year to 9% this year. But differentials and suspensions for SWD & MLLs are up.
- MAP Data shows strong growth in Math in the 2 out of 3 middle schools that tested and 50th percentile in ELA. We look forward to seeing more when preliminary MCAS data is available.

- Teacher retention is at 80% overall, but varying by campus. We are seeing significant turnover at XLC and more limited turnover at the high school.

S. Zrike asked a clarifying question regarding whether the school is using attendance buy-backs. The school is not. Rodriguez asked a clarifying question regarding which curricula are in use at the high school and which are internally or externally developed, which Keough clarified.

N. Keough introduced the team's work on developing an organizational priority setting framework and draft foundational pillars. As context for this work, the school and network has worked through a number of significant changes and challenges over the past three years, including:

- returning to fully in-person learning from COVID-19
- clarifying our academic vision and infrastructure with respect to
    - curriculum and assessment
    - goals, metrics, and data systems
    - leadership - ensuring the right team and right staff culture to advance our mission successfully

At this time, as we close out SY23-24 and look ahead to SY24-25, we are at a pivotal moment and strong position to drive our growth and improvement at Excel and to return to being one of the top schools and districts in the state, and this organizational priority framework will anchor the critical work in the years ahead. Keough shared the team's deep investment and excitement about the next phase of work to invest in and build the capacity of our senior leadership and admin. teams, continuing to build key academic infrastructure and foundation, and establishing Foundational Clarity for the upcoming year, with implications for academics, culture, operations, leadership development, and codification. We are excited to share this draft priorities framework with the Committee for initial feedback and will share with the full Board later this month, and we will continue revisit and refine this framework in the coming weeks and months. This priority framework will help guide our work over the summer to ensure a strong start to the new school year, and we hope that it will become a long-lasting anchor and resource for this next stage of our school's growth.

Committee members provided comments and edits live in the draft priorities framework. S. Verónica Cardona asked a clarifying question about how we're thinking about KPIs aligned to each foundational goal and commented that the framework is very robust and helpful.

S. Zrike noted that his school district utilizes similar pillars and that they are working now on how to manage monitoring throughout the year. Reyes and Keough mentioned that they are developing dynamic data dashboards to track and monitor our trending against key metrics tied to this framework.

N. Keough noted that one of the benefits of being a multi-state network is being able to learn together. As an example, we are thinking about how to launch a high school in Rhode Island and have an exciting opportunity to reflect on our Massachusetts high school model and consider what we want to improve and replicate from that model and for our colleagues in MA and RI to collaborate and share best practices and thought partnership in this endeavor.

T. Griffith Walker noted that the framework is helpful and that her school is also very focused on how to make the most progress with MLLs and Students with Disabilities.

S. Zrike commented that it might be helpful if there is a way to pare down the presentation of the information to be more quickly digestible but felt it is a very strong start and looks forward to continuing to engage in this work together.

A. Kaynor reminded the Committee of the anticipated SY24-25 Committee meeting schedule - with meetings anticipated in September, December, April, and June and noted that the Board will approve the schedule at their upcoming meeting on June 13.

O. Stearns thanked the Committee for their partnership and B. Rodriguez and S. Zrike noted that they look forward to regrouping and hearing about the start of the new year, the roll-out of the priorities framework, and the complete SY23-24 EOY data in the fall.

III. 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 2:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Zrike
List of documents used in the meeting:

- Updated Academic Data Dashboard with Q3/4 data
- Draft Organizational Priority Planning Framework

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