APPROVED

Excel Academy Massachusetts

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Friday December 13, 2024 at 8:30 AM

Location
Microsoft Teams
Join the meeting now
Meeting ID: 294 849 717 868
Passcode: B7aJ8H

Meeting Notice Posted Publicly: 12/10/24

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

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

Trustees Absent
B. Rodriguez, S. Zrike

Guests Present
A. Kaynor (remote), F. Reyes (remote), N. Keough (remote), O. Stearns (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 Friday Dec 13, 2024 at 8:30 AM.

C. Public Comment

N/A - no members of the public provided comments.

D. Approve Minutes for 11.8.24 Board Meeting

D. Sachs made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 11-08-24.
P. Klein seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Academic Oversight

A. State of the School Update and Report from Academic Oversight Committee & NAT

N. Keough provided an update on the state of the schools, as detailed in the academic oversight committee update slides and quarterly board data dashboard that were provided to the Board in advance of the meeting.

C. Brumme asked for more information about examples of potential areas of ownership gap and for context about the engagement/culture survey framework that we use. D. Sachs also requested more context about the outlook and results so far with our new Heads of School. N. Keough provided additional context about the survey framework and analysis of the results and the ways the staff are responding so far and added that the team is very confident in the new leaders and the trajectory of the schools.

T. Griffith Walker provided additional comments about the quality and thoughtfulness of the academic oversight committee meeting and thanked her colleagues S. Zrike and B. Rodriquez for the productive discussion and detailed data review.

D. Johnson, P. Klein, and C. Brumme asked additional clarifying questions about chronic absenteeism data by campus and subgroup, which N. Keough and F. Reyes provided.

C. Brumme thanked the Academic Oversight Committee and Academic Team for their thoughtful presentation, careful review of the data, and excellent work to support the schools.

III. Finance

A. Update from Finance Committee on 5-Year Strategic Financial Plan

A. Solomon and D. Stolow provided a brief update on the draft 5-year strategic financial plan that was discussed at a joint meeting of Excel's three Finance Committees (Excel MA, Excel RI, Friends of Excel). A. Solomon briefly summarized content that was discussed at the meeting, and which was detailed in a memo and 12.10.24 Finance Committee slides provided to the Board.

D. Stolow shared appreciation for the Finance Team and others who have worked so hard on this project. D. Stolow noted that we are improving our already strong ability to look out multiple years, in addition to managing the 12-month budget cycles. This long-term outlook will require some difficult choices and will put some pressure on the culture of the organization in the coming years as we approach some key debt repayment milestones and enter a less certain financial environment locally and nationally. In addition to finding ways to be financially sound and sustainable, we will need to be unified in moving forward with fewer resources. We are fortunate to have a very strong organization and team, consistent with the presentation we just heard on academics.

B. Fundraising Update

A. Kaynor provided an update on fundraising efforts to meet our goals, including pursuing multiple new grant opportunities. A. Kaynor noted that the school successfully applied for a $100,000 SEL, Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness Grant, which is funding a number of social-emotional learning investments. A. Kaynor noted that the application was very competitive, and that the school's success in securing a fully funded grant is largely in recognition of the excellent work that is happening at our school already, including
- Research-based tier 1 SEL curriculum
- Campus-specific MTSS teams that include an SEL leader
- Partnerships with outside organizations such as Southbay, Home for Little Wanderers, and Gandara Center
- Increased counseling team capacity via the counseling internship program
- New family engagement initiatives, such as the Community Resource Fair in October, where 28 community organizations and vendors offered a wealth of resources to more than 330 attendees at our high school campus

The grant is going to support priorities including:
- Fast and reliable mental health supports for students experiencing acute needs
- Proactive and cost-effective alternatives to 45-day placements

A. Kaynor and O. Stearns provided a brief update and reminder about Board engagement goals and reminded each Board member to schedule 1:1 meetings to discuss potential

connections and to plan to attend and bring a guest to at least one school visit. The next visit is on Dec. 17, and State Representative Adrian Madaro and NeighborHealth VP Ernani DeAraujo will be visiting, along with D. Stolow. The next school visit after the holidays will be in January, with City Councilor Coletta Zapata.

IV. Governance

A. Reminder - April 17th DESE Site Visit: need Board volunteers

A. Kaynor reminded the Board of the need for volunteers for the site visit on April 17th. C. Brumme and D. Sachs volunteer to participate.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

C. Brumme made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
M. Colaylat 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 9:22 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Brumme
List of documents presented at the meeting:

- Nov. 8, 2024 Board Meeting minutes
- Dec. 3, 2024 Academic Oversight Committee Update Slides
- Quarterly Board Academic Data Dashboard
- Newly Implemented Teacher Observation Rubric
- Summary Finance Memo
- Slides from 12.10.24 Finance Committee meeting

The public is welcome to attend 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 akaynor@excelacademy.org 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. If you would like to attend a Board meeting and provide public comment, please sign up 48 hours in advance here: https://forms.gle/7315BJ7v1bHGGh2Q9.

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