

APPROVED



Excel Academy Massachusetts

Minutes

Board of Trustees - Academic Oversight Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Monday March 23, 2026 at 1:30 PM

Location

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Meeting ID: 256 494 988 022 0

Passcode: Z6ut9ov3

Meeting Notice Posted Publicly on 3/12/26.

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), T. Griffith Walker (remote)

Committee Members Absent

S. Zrike

Guests Present

A. Kaynor (remote), F. Reyes (remote), N. Keough (remote), O. Stearns (remote), Seth Reynolds (Friends of Excel board member and observer) (remote), Shirley Verónica Cardona (Friends of Excel board member and observer) (remote), Y. Dubon (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

T. Griffith Walker called a meeting of the Academic Oversight Committee of Excel Academy Massachusetts to order on Monday Mar 23, 2026 at 1:32 PM.

C. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comments at this meeting.

A. Kaynor noted that Shirley Verónica Cardona and Seth Reynolds, members of the Friends of Excel Academy Board, joined as observers, and T. Griffith Walker and B. Rodriguez welcomed them to participate in the Committee's discussion.

D. Approve Minutes for prior Academic Oversight Committee Meeting

T. Griffith Walker made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees - Academic Oversight Committee Meeting on 12-08-25.

B. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Oversight

A. Update on State of the Schools, Academic Data, and Priorities

N. Keough presented updates on the state of the schools, academic data, and progress towards our goals, as detailed in the Academic Update Slides and Board Academic Data Dashboard that were provided to the Committee.

S. Verónica Cardona asked a clarifying question about whether the relative flatness from IA1 to IA2 to IA3 ELA scores is consistent with our historical trending in past years, which N. Keough and F. Reyes confirmed.

S. Verónica Cardona asked for more context about what happens between IA3 and the MCAS that contributes to the typical increase in scores and whether there are lessons we could apply earlier in the year. F. Reyes commented that Excel teachers tend to set a higher grading bar than MCAS scorers. N. Keough added that teachers and coaches use this time to run very tight data and improvement cycles which can result in rapid, targeted proficiency boosts, and noted that we are learning some lessons about tactics that work and which coaches may be able to bring into their work earlier in the school year in the future.

S. Reynolds asked whether a change in curriculum contributed to the improvements in middle school Math performance that we're seeing, and N. Keough noted that we have

not changed the curriculum but that we have seen benefits from targeted work the network director of math has been able to do to improve the sequence and build in more clarity and precision to get the most out of our curriculum. N. Keough added that we have also seen benefits from our investments in grade level content leads.

S. Reynolds asked for context about whether we supplement conceptual math with procedural content, and N. Keough provided additional information about our targeted approach to numeracy.

T. Griffith Walker provided additional context about the curricular and academic intervention strategies her team uses to improve Math outcomes.

Members of the Committee congratulated the team for incredible work that is resulting in positive stability outcomes, including no suspension disparities by subgroup, no attendance disparities for students with disabilities, and a reduction in the disparity in chronic absenteeism for multilingual learners from prior years.

B. Rodriguez asked whether the suspension rate includes students being suspended multiple times, and N. Keough and F. Reyes clarified that the metric is whether a student has been suspended in a school year. F. Reyes added that the majority of students are only suspended once in a year.

B. Rodriguez asked a clarifying question about whether Excel still does in-school suspensions. N. Keough noted that we do not.

S. Verónica Cardona asked for more context about the reasons for mid-year transitions, which N. Keough provided.

S. Reynolds asked what our phone policy is, which N. Keough provided.

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

T. Griffith Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, having completed the business of the Committee.

B. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

The committee **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 2:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

T. Griffith Walker

List of documents used in the meeting:

- Agenda
 - Prior meeting minutes
 - Academic Update Slides
 - Board Academic Data Dashboard
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