

APPROVED



## The Exploris School

# Minutes

## The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting

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### **Date and Time**

Thursday December 19, 2024 at 4:30 PM

### **Location**

The Exploris School: Elementary Campus  
17 S Swain St, Raleigh, NC 27601, USA  
5th Grade Classroom

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### **Directors Present**

E. Grunden, G. Bayo (remote), S. Carothers (remote), S. Darroch, S. Scipione, T. Void (remote)

### **Directors Absent**

E. Buchan, W. McLamb

### **Ex Officio Members Present**

D. Brown, J. Corbat

### **Non Voting Members Present**

D. Brown, J. Corbat

### **Guests Present**

K. Morgan (remote)

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## **I. Opening Items**

**A.**

## **Record Attendance**

### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

S. Darroch called a meeting of the board of directors of The Exploris School to order on Thursday Dec 19, 2024 at 4:38 PM.

### **C. Approve Minutes**

E. Grunden made a motion to approve the minutes from The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting on 10-24-24.

S. Scipione seconded the motion.

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

### **D. Public Comment**

### **E. Board Development: CapDev Capital Campaign Update**

- Ann Thomas, Senior Counsel with CapDev, presented the Readiness Report to the Board.
  - CapDev is cautiously optimistic about Capital Campaigns for all Charter schools, as there is a bias that current families should be (and often are) the primary drivers of all fundraising for a school.
  - Campaigns are hard work; much of the work is in person and takes ample planning.
  - The best advice is to start with those who have the most to gain right now (our current families and their extended families).
  - Finalizing a site in the near term is paramount to the success of the Capital Campaign.
  - Recommendations:
    - Donor identification and research is going to be important.
    - A full-time staff member for fundraising and development is a necessity. This will allow our leadership team to continue in their roles while still striving for success with the Capital Campaign.
- Susan Singer asked about making a different type of case in which giving is more a value proposition for businesses and corporations.
  - Ann Thomas mentioned that very little philanthropy happens at the corporate level; individuals are responsible for a vast majority of philanthropy in the US.
  - Susan thanked CapDev for a thorough report, and laid out a case for shifting our mindset on giving when we approach businesses and individuals.
  - Susan made a case for offering her skills as the staff member mentioned in the Readiness Report.
  - Steven Darroch mentioned the disparate Boards (School and Foundation) and the need to build more synchronicity.

- Susan agrees with the need to add a seat to the School Board for the Foundation Chair.
- Steven tasked the Governance Committee with considering adding the Board position for the Foundation.

## **II. Committee Reports**

### **A. Governance**

- Deb: Governance is meeting on an as-needed basis.
- Actively reaching out to potential Board members.
  - A few offers were made, but declined. Other names were given through this process.

### **B. Finance**

- Koren: William sent an email that summarized the activities of the Committee.
- Our audit is finalized with no findings.
- Amanda Habich will present the audit; should we do this in January?
- Raises were implemented in December to align with the new State Salary Scale for Teachers.

### **C. Educational Excellence**

- Eric and Ethan: We have made great progress in growth for early literacy over the past few years. We are now also looking at math instruction through the same lens.
  - PD is being explored for math instruction.
- Vertical alignment in teaching practices is being explored for math.
- Stacey mentioned that she is still willing to help with the Committee.
- Steven asked about the latest US News and World Report rankings and whether Exploris is interested in pursuing higher rankings in reports like this.
  - Deb: Often, the data on these sites is outdated, which makes it difficult to pursue this with any efficacy.
  - Ethan: We have worked with SchoolUp Wake to gain more visibility in the area.
- We will need to ensure we are on the appropriate sites when it comes time to launch the Capital Campaign.

### **D. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

### **E. Director Evaluation & Support**

- Steven outlined a plan to move forward with Director Evaluation process in the new year.

- Ethan, Deb, and Steven discussed incorporating the latest Trust Survey data point into the evaluation process.
- Stacey would like to review the survey that was sent to teachers and staff members in conjunction with Kaizen and Leadership.
- Deb reminded the Board that BoardOnTrack's surveys tend to focus on a single Director. Stacey mentioned that BoT has improved the tool.

## F. Facilities

- Josh: Our Traffic Impact Analysis and Traffic Demand Management plans have both been delivered to the City. The City has agreed to a January 15th deadline for first comments to be delivered to us.
- Emily Vlkogan-Reece has done an excellent job of mustering volunteerism to support and improve our campuses.

## G. Kaizen

- Shawna: We didn't have a Kaizen meeting in November or December.
- In our October meeting, the main topic was on how the team is spending their time.
- The School Improvement Plan (SIP) was discussed, as well as the FAM-S survey and how it fits into the overall structure of the SIP.
- Working Groups were discussed as a structure to drive more focused work through Kaizen.
- Steven thanked Shawna and Tasha for working with Stacey on the Director Evaluation survey.

## III. Meeting Items

### A. Directors Report

- Deb: Margie Fowler is up for Board approval. Margie comes to us with a storied career in Education. She most recently was a Wake County administrator and wanted to step back into the classroom. Margie has seamlessly integrated into the team.

E. Grunden made a motion to accept Margie Fowler's hire.

S. Scipione seconded the motion.

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

- Deb invited the Board to tomorrow's Elementary Community Circle.
- The Board Retreat will be 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. on January 25th.
- Steven asked about our current 9 open seats.
  - Deb: Two students moved out of the area. A number of students' families identified the need for a different type of placement due to student needs.

Two families received Opportunity Scholarships to transfer to private schools.

- Steven: Do we open the available seats to those on the waitlist?
- Josh: The Leadership team has decided to make it a part of our process to continue enrolling through the end of Trimester 1.
- Leadership has discussed and will move forward with more on-the-ground strategies for recruitment.
- Susan re: Marketing: Search Engine Optimization will be imperative to the overall recruitment strategy.
- The Governance Committee will set the agenda for the Board Retreat.
- Leadership updated the Board on the latest Indoor Air Quality efforts at both campuses.
  - The Elementary is undergoing a large project to fix legacy issues and improve our bathrooms.

## **B. Board Business**

### **IV. Closed Session**

#### **A. Facilities & Legal Items**

E. Grunden made a motion to enter closed session.

S. Scipione seconded the motion.

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

E. Grunden made a motion to come out of closed session.

S. Carothers seconded the motion.

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

### **V. 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 6:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Corbat