APPROVED

The Exploris School

Minutes

The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday March 27, 2025 at 4:30 PM

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

Directors Present
G. Bayo (remote), P. President (remote), S. Darroch, S. Riley, S. Singer, T. Void, W. McLamb

Directors Absent
E. Buchan, E. Grunden, S. Scipione, V. Hicks-Harris

Ex Officio Members Present
D. Brown, E. Burton, J. Corbat

Guests Present
K. Morgan

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

J. Corbat called a meeting of the board of directors of The Exploris School to order on Thursday Mar 27, 2025 at 4:37 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

W. McLamb made a motion to approve the minutes from The Exploris School Board Regular Monthly Meeting on 02-27-25.
S. Singer seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Public Comment

- No public comment was brought to the Board.

E. Board Development: Rosewood Facilities Update

- Autumn Tomlin from Rosewood presented to the Board.
  - We have a meeting scheduled with City staff for our Traffic plans (TIA & TDM) on Monday, March 31st.
  - The development schedule will become more clear following this meeting.
  - Site B: We submitted a third round Letter of Intent (LOI) last week.
  - Moseley Architects has worked on an updated test fit pro bono. They sent the Test Fit today (at about 3:30 p.m.).
  - Autumn details considerations for Site B; she shared that there are a few design complexities to consider.
  - Stephen asked if the TDM plan will be more expedient if ported over to Site B. Autumn responded that Hillsborough is a NCDOT street, so that adds some complexity.
  - Autumn reminded the Board that the Capital Campaign will be of paramount importance to the overall project.
  - Susan asked about the Citrix building. Autumn welcomes further discussion about opportunities.

F. Introduction Of New Board Members

- Deb gave a brief overview of the Board Member selection and induction process.
- New Board Members were asked to share a few facts about themselves.
  - Susan Singer
    - She loves the Exploris concept and is excited to further its mission.
    - Serving as the Foundation Chairperson. Steven gave a few remarks about the importance of a closer relationship between the Foundation and the Board.
  - Sean Riley

        - Owned his own construction company for nearly 30 years and has been in the construction industry for 40 years.
        - He comes to us through a connection with an existing Exploris family.
        - Is excited to help Exploris further its goal of finding a new K-8 facility.
        - Something you wouldn't know from his resume: He's one of nine children in his family.
    - Dr. Valencia Hicks-Harris was welcomed to the Board and is currently traveling abroad.
- Steven gave remarks about some of the challenges that Public Charter Schools face. He also gave a brief history of the Facilities Project. While the project is not moving as quickly as any of us would like, we remain steadfast in making progress.
    - Steven mentioned that he would like to hold a meeting to move forward with having new and existing Board Members lead Committees.

II. Committee Reports

A. Governance

- The Governance Committee meets every other month.
- Deb presented the new Board Meeting schedule for the 2025-26 school year.

W. McLamb made a motion to approve the Board Meeting schedule for 2025-26.
S. Riley seconded the motion.

- Susan would like a note about Committee meetings added to the Board schedule document. Deb added the line immediately.

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

- Susan asked if there are attendance requirements for Board meetings.
    - Board Members must attend 80% of meetings annually (8 out of 10, typically).
    - Susan emphasized the importance of attending in person instead of virtually.
    - Steven remarked about the importance of the onboarding process for new Board Members.
    - Susan mentioned that it is important for each Board Member to lead a Committee.
    - Deb highlighted our ongoing need for a Legal expert on the Board. Susan highlighted that the Governance Committee could benefit from this as well.
- Stacey brought up that many people would not be able to join the Board if they must join the meetings in person. Susan reiterated her view that the leadership of the school would benefit from everyone being in person.
- Susan asked that the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) understand its vital role in school leadership.

B.

Finance

- Koren presented the monthly financial reports. Reports were reviewed asynchronously by the Finance Committee this month.
- The next project of the Committee is this year's budget revision, followed by the drafting of the 2025-26 Budget.
- Steven asked Koren to share about our financial systems, especially our partnership with Charter Success Partners. Koren works with the folks at CSP daily to operate all of the financial systems, including Accounts Payable, Payroll, Budget tracking, Taxes, and Audit preparation.
- Susan asked about the Foundation's accounting. Koren explained that CSP does not handle the accounting of the Foundation (which is done by Morgan Morrow).
    - Susan asked a clarifying question about the funding of things like Field Experiences. The school operates the funding of these, with some support from the Foundation in the form of grants.
    - Susan and Koren (and others) will set a meeting to further detail the financial operations of both the School and the Foundation.
    - Susan asked for the Annual Report. Koren assured that this is being worked on.

C. Educational Excellence

- The Educational Excellence Committee was not able to meet this month because of other commitments (including Ethan traveling to Japan with our annual delegation to Shinonome Junior High School!).

D. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Deb presented a framework for DEI work that she discovered at a recent School Leadership conference. This framework will likely help the DEI Committee frame its ongoing work.
- Membership in the Committee is needed. Interested community members may contact the Board with their interest in joining.

E. Director Evaluation & Support

- Steven outlined plans to further the work of the Director Evaluation and Support Committee.

F. Facilities

- Josh presented short remarks about Bloomerang Volunteer, our new volunteer management system. A group of parents from our PTO has agreed to act as a steering committee of sorts to launch this system.
- Steven mentioned that Facilities needs a Board Member to serve as Chairperson.

G. Kaizen

- Tasha introduced herself. She is the Middle Grade Teacher Leader. She gave a brief outline of what the Kaizen Team is and does (i.e., primarily focuses on school improvement efforts).
    - The Kaizen Team has broken into three working teams:
        - MTSS Team
        - School Improvement Plan team
        - Surveys and Data team
    - The annual Kaizen Retreat will be held on June 10th, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

III. The Exploris Foundation

A. Foundation Update

- Susan has been spending time understanding the structure and dynamics of the school.
- In the last hour-long meeting, 45 minutes were spent discussing the Fun Run. While important, Foundation meetings should be focused on broader issues. She outlined issues that need to be the focus of the Foundation.
    - The Foundation will embrace Committees more integrally in the future.
- Steven brought up that the Capital Campaign can be prepared while we work on making the final decision of where to pursue the Facilities Committee.
    - Susan asserted that we need a location and a strategic plan to move forward.
- Josh gave a Fun Run update.
- Susan asked a question about enrollment numbers. These will be discussed in the next section.

IV. Meeting Items

A. Directors Report

- The Directors present their monthly report. Deb highlighted a few items, including that our German visitors are arriving on Saturday (Tasha is hosting this year!).
    - Deb asked all Board Members to attend at least one Passage Portfolio at the end of this school year. Dates to hold are at the bottom of the Directors Report.
    - Susan asked if Passage Portfolios can be used for marketing purposes.
- Josh presented the latest Lottery and Enrollment numbers.
    - Susan asked about annual benchmarks of this data.
    - Koren remarked that the new Applicant Sibling priority is already helping us enroll new students.

- Ethan highlighted new/existing Explorations partnerships at the Elementary: Cirque du Vol, First Tee Triangle Golf, RootEd Field Guides, YMCA Aquatics (swimming!).
- Ethan presents a brief recap of recent statistics in academic achievement.
    - Math, grades 2-8: 4/7 of our Grade Levels are High Growth AND High Achievement
    - 3rd Grade Reading: 70% are at or above grade level.
    - Reading: 4/5 grade levels have High Growth and High Achievement.

B. Board Business

V. Closed Session

A. Facilities & Legal Items

The Board discussed items related to the Facilities Project in closed session.

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 6:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Corbat