

APPROVED



The New American Academy Charter School

Minutes

TNAACS Board Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday March 19, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Directors Present

C. Cuellar-Lezcano (remote), C. Kelly (remote), D. Dula (remote), F. Monroe (remote), H. Hunt (remote), V. McDonald (remote)

Directors Absent

None

Guests Present

J. Trani (remote), L. Parquette Silva

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Kelly called a meeting of the board of directors of The New American Academy Charter School to order on Thursday Mar 19, 2026 at 5:00 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

H. Hunt made a motion to approve the minutes from TNAACS Board Meeting on 02-26-26.

D. Dula seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Finance & Data

A. Monthly Financials

Elaine Schmiedeshoff shared the monthly financials for February 2026. Overall there were no changes in revenue for February. March investment income is expected to increase. When our CD was renewed, interest income was just over \$20,000. The CD was renewed for two more months.

The budget is in good shape overall. There were some changes to expenses; The SPED teacher projection was removed, the long term sub budget was increased and an unemployment bill was added as an expense.

Once depreciation is removed, there is a predicted net loss of, \$124,000. That could change, depending on usage of the Human Fund and other line item expenses. There is a small decrease in net income compared to last year. There is no big change to the school's cash on hand, which is currently around 103 days.

B. TNAACS Mid-Year Assessment Data

Jennifer Trani reviewed the most recent K-5 ELA data to inform instructional needs and targeted development. She shared that:

- Students scored lowest in Informational text
- Students score lowest in the Maze assessment
- Students scored high in accuracy
- Some students take multiple days to complete the assessment
- Some students take all day to complete the NYS ELA exam

A needs analysis of the domains tested by iReady showed that grades were below 50% proficiency in the following domains:

- Kindergarten - Phonological Awareness, Phonics, High Frequency Words, and Vocabulary
- 1st - All domains
- 2nd - Vocabulary, Literature, Informational Text
- 3rd - none
- 4th - Informational text
- 5th - Literature

Similar to previous years, Informational texts and vocabulary continue to be areas of concern.

The teacher shared concerns, including:

- Students struggle with timed Maze assessment
- Amplify does not support fluency
- No time to add additional materials to lessons
- Student testing fatigue
- lack of engagement
- Struggles with writing about reading, especially the lower loop
- student effort/work habits
- iReady close-reading lessons are too long
- Tutoring and small group instruction help

. Ms. Trani then shared the flow of the iReady Diagnostic assessment test by domain. In grades k, 1 and 2 informational comprehension is the last domain to be assessed. In grades 3 to 5, informational text is assessed third and last, unless they score below grade level, in which case the assessment switches back to phonics and then high-frequency words.

Ms. Trani then shared current research on the strong correlation between fluency and effective reading comprehension, and how we, as a school, can incorporate more opportunities to practice and improve fluency.

III. Governance

A. NYSED Mid Year Check-In Site Visit Debrief

L. Silva shared feedback about our NYSED Mid-Year Site Visit. Jennifer M. Marshall visited TNAACS for a 1/2 day site visit on March 5th. Ms. Marshall said that the progress towards goals report prepared by L. Silva in preparation for her visit was comprehensive and answered most, if not all, of her questions. Ms. Marshall stated that what impressed her the most was that, despite achieving a 5-year renewal, TNAACS was still working toward making specific, incremental, and systematic changes designed to achieve consistent and constant school improvement.

B. Executive Session

H. Hunt made a motion to Go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

C. Kelly seconded the motion.

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

IV. Other

A. Travel Proposal

Lisa shared a proposal from a staff member about a potential opportunity for parents and students to travel to London with EF Travel.

The Board discussed the proposed partnership with EF Tours and shared the following feedback and considerations:

Familiarity with EF Tours: Several board members are familiar with EF Tours. One member had a relative participate in a tour, and the Board Chair noted that his son's school district has used EF Tours. In both cases, cost was not a concern for those families or districts; however, the Board emphasized that affordability could be a concern for TNAACS families. Board members also noted that these tours are typically designed for middle and high school students.

Cost Concerns: The Board expressed significant concern about the trip's overall cost. The requirement for a parent to attend further increases the financial burden on families.

Length and Timing of Payment Commitment: The proposed payment plan (18–22 months) was seen as problematic. Families would need to begin paying well in advance—potentially as early as 3rd grade—for a trip scheduled for 5th grade. The long-term financial commitment may not be realistic for many families.

Refund Policy: The limited refund window (7 days) raised concerns. Families who experience changes in circumstances after that period could risk losing a significant amount of money.

Fundraising and Financial Support: The Board strongly recommended identifying external fundraising opportunities to make the trip more accessible. School funds will not be used to support this trip. The Board suggested that a future PTO could play a role in fundraising efforts. The board suggested that the staff member leading the initiative should research grants and other funding sources.

Consideration of a Local Trip First: Several board members strongly recommended starting with a more local trip or domestic trip (e.g., Washington, D.C.) before planning an international experience. They suggested exploring whether EF Tours offers domestic trip options as a more feasible starting point.

Need for Further Research: The Board emphasized that while EF Tours offers a convenient option, the school should not rush into a decision. Additional research into domestic trips, costs, and funding strategies is needed before moving forward.

Gauging Family Interest: The Board is open to a parent presentation or parent forum to assess interest and feasibility. The goal of 30 student participants was viewed as ambitious.

B.

Board Professional Development Resources

Lisa shared professional development opportunities offered by Board On Track

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 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
L. Parquette Silva

Documents used during the meeting

None