APPROVED

Excel Academy Rhode Island

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday September 26, 2024 at 5:30 PM

Location
CCRI
1 Hilton Street
Providence, RI 02905

Meeting Notice Posted Publicly: 9/24/24

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

Trustees Present
B. Smiley, C. Heng, F. Rojas, I. Blake, J. Greenthal, L. Cariaga-Lo, L. Giordano

Trustees Absent
C. Chhay, C. Lombardi, G. Goldberg, M. Rivera

Guests Present
A. Kaynor, A. Solomon, C. Reed, O. Stearns

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Smiley called a meeting of the board of trustees of Excel Academy Rhode Island to order on Thursday Sep 26, 2024 at 5:39 PM.

C. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comments at this meeting.

D. Approve Minutes for 6.27.24 Board Meeting

L. Cariaga-Lo made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 06-27-24.
C. Heng seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Academic Oversight

A. State of the School Updates

O. Stearns presented updates on the State of the School, including the following highlights:

- The new modular units are up and running and look great.
- Classrooms are calm and safe, and there is consistency across classrooms
    - Students understand clear and purposeful expectations.
    - Routines and procedures allow for calm and safe transitions.
- Student Culture indicators:
    - Attendance: 95.3% in September (up from 93% this time last year)
    - Chronic absenteeism: 19.8% (down from 20.3% this time last year)
    - Suspensions: 0
- Hiring:
    - 100% of core teaching and leadership roles are filled
    - 100% of staff who completed SY23-24 returned in SY24-25, which is a testament to the excellent work of the leadership team
- We are fully enrolled with a healthy waitlist (320 as of 9/24/24).
- The school and network academic leadership teams have been working heavily on the implementation of a new instructional observation rubric, which we will have a chance to learn more about at the November Board and Academic Oversight Committee meeting.

F. Rojas shared her perspective as a parent, and noted that orientation went very smoothly, kids are excited to be back, and Back to School nights are coming up soon.

A. Kaynor reminded the Board that the Academic Oversight Committee will meet on Nov. 7 and that the Board will have an opportunity to meet with Dr. Ring and her team then.

L. Cariaga-Lo asked a clarifying question about the modular units, and O. Stearns clarified that our 5th grade classes are using the modulars currently.

L. Giordano asked a clarifying question regarding whether dismissal still occurs through front office. C. Reed noted that it does, and that we re-ran the fencing so that you can't enter the modulars except through the school, and that this also allowed us to increase space for the playground.

J. Greenthal asked how neighbors have responded to the school. O. Stearns noted that we have received no complaints from neighbors, and that staff park on-site and parent drop-off occurs across the street at the church, and that pick-up and drop-off are well staffed and supervised to minimize any disruption for neighbors.

C. Heng asked a clarifying question regarding how many students take the bus vs. rely on parent drop-off, and C. Reed clarified that the majority of students take the bus, which has been reliable. F. Rojas noted that her daughter takes the bus and that the app. notifies her when the bus will be arriving and has been working very well. Parents are please with the way it is working from her observations and experience.

III. Real Estate

A. Real Estate Search Updates & Votes

C. Reed and A. Solomon presented updates on real estate.

C. Reed presented lessons learned from the modulars construction, and the Board asked clarifying questions which C. Reed was able to answer.

O. Stearns presented an update on the school's ongoing efforts following our advocacy related to the Carl G. Lauro building last spring.

L. Giordano made a motion to approve the SY25-26 enrollment scenarios as presented, pending the outcome of the RIC RFP process.
J. Greenthal seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
L. Cariaga-Lo made a motion to approve the 9/26/24 real estate resolutions regarding the RIC property as presented.
J. Greenthal seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

J. Greenthal made a motion to approve closing the 9/18/23 Promissory Note with Friends of Excel Academy for up to $500k, intended for the Baker St. project; draws against this Note to-date: $0.
C. Heng seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Governance

A. Authorize Treasurer to submit annual report filing

L. Giordano made a motion to authorize the Treasurer to submit the annual report filing on behalf of the school reflecting its current information and membership between Feb. 1, 2025 and May 1, 2025.
L. Cariaga-Lo seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Title IX Policy Approval and Training

A. Kaynor and A. Solomon presented the Board with a summary of updates to the Title IX policy and provided the Board with a training on the policy and the Board's role.
L. Cariaga-Lo made a motion to approve the updates to Excel Academy's Title IX policy for the SY24-25 School Year.
B. Smiley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Ratify SY24-25 Student & Family Handbook and SY24-25 Employee Policy Manual

C. Heng made a motion to ratify the SY24-25 Student & Family Handbook, the SY24-25 Employee Policy Manual, and the additional policies and manuals outlined and linked in the Board packet, as presented.
B. Smiley seconded the motion.
A. Kaynor provided the Board with a summary of updates to school policies, manuals, and handbooks, which were provided to the Board in advance, and answered clarifying questions from the Board about the policies.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Approve SY24-25 Board Goals

I. Blake made a motion to approve the SY24-25 Board goals, as presented.
C. Heng seconded the motion.
O. Stearns and B. Smiley presented and summarized the SY24-25 Board Goals that were provided to the Board in advance. B. Smiley highlighted the goals related to fundraising and advocacy in particular and outlined the vision for successful Board engagement with these goals.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E.

Approve updates to SY24-25 Committee Assignments

I. Blake made a motion to approve adding Jamie Greenthal to the Finance Committe and the Governance & Nominating Committee.
C. Heng seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Finance

A. FYI - Reminder about FY24 Annual Audit

A. Kaynor provided an update and reminder about the FY24 annual audit meeting schedule, as summarized on the agenda.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

L. Cariaga-Lo made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
L. Giordano 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 6:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
B. Smiley

Documents used during the meeting

- XLRI Resolutions for 9.26.24 Meeting.pdf
- Excel Academy Title IX Policy - Sept. 2024 Update - Final.pdf
- XLRI-Middle-School-Student-Family-Handbook-2024-2025-English.pdf
- Excel RI Employee Handbook 2024-2025.Final.8.4.24.docx.pdf
- Summary of Governing Handbooks & Manuals - Sept. 2024.pdf
- RI Board Goals - 9.26.24.pdf
- RI Board Committee Summary - 9.26.24.pdf

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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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