APPROVED

Spokane International Academy

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting

December

Date and Time
Wednesday December 17, 2025 at 4:30 PM

Location
Spokane International Academy, Media Center
777 E Magnesium Rd. Spokane, WA 99208

Directors Present
Cassie Anderson, Charina Carothers (remote), Guillermo Espinosa, Javier Medina, John Pell (remote), Ron Poplawski

Directors Absent
Ashlee Lent, David James, Maureen Rosette

Directors who left before the meeting adjourned
Cassie Anderson

Guests Present
Elisabeth Kraus, Evelyn Caine, Melissa Pettey, Melissa Pettey, Morgen Flowers-Washington, Myra Keast, Peyton Drader, Sam Schweda, Seth Bilesky, Spencer Grainger, Tabatha Copeland

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Cassie Anderson called a meeting of the board of directors of Spokane International Academy to order on Wednesday Dec 17, 2025 at 4:33 PM.

II. Consent Agenda

A. November Minutes

Guillermo Espinosa made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Board Meeting on 11-19-25.
Javier Medina seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. November Financials

C. Superintendent Board Policy

Change the verbiage Superintendent to Head of School

D. Approve Consent Agenda Items

Guillermo Espinosa made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items.
Javier Medina seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Board Vice Chair

A. Ron Poplawski's Nomination

Guillermo Espinosa made a motion to approve Ron Poplawski's nomination as Board Vice Chair.
Javier Medina seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Enrollment

A. Enrollment Update

- December FTE: 840.80
- December Headcount: 851
- Six (6) new students will start on January 6, 2026
- Some Running Start students will be returning to SIA campus
- Priority enrollment starts on January 5th through March 20th
- Current students will need to re-enroll by 5PM on March 20th

- The goal is 80% of current students to return or re-enroll

Advertising:

- Direct Mailers will go out to target zip codes starting the first week of January
- Digital advertising through The Agency, funded by Excellent Schools of Washington through the Gates Foundation (direct email and social media ads)
- SIA presence at local events such as the MLK, Jr. Unity Day, Rally, March & Resource Fair and the Lunar New Year celebration. Both held at the Spokane Convention Center.

School Admissions Events:

- Campus tours in January-March
- Parent Information Nights in January-March

B. Enrollment Window Opening

January 5, 2026 through March 20, 2026

V. Proposed Policy Change (Hair Color)

A. Student Presentation

The Associated Student Body (ASB) representatives were: Payton Drader, Evelyn Caine, and Dylan Wise. The proposed revision to the dress code policy pertains to hair color, initiated by student, Noah Hiatt (not present at today's meeting).

Current Policy:

- A student's hair must be one, natural hair color, worn neatly, and in such a way that does not distract from the educational environment.

Proposed Revision:

- A student's hair must be worn neatly, and in such a way that does not distract from the educational environment. Students may color or dye their hair.

ASB proposes to allow students to color or dye their hair non-natural colors.

Reasons behind the proposal:

- Expression of self-identity
- Change in student culture across the nation; changes in ways students represent themselves

- Hair color has no direct impact on academic performance or achievement
- According to a student poll conducted a year ago, 80% of the student body support this change

B. Board Questions

The board asked the following questions:

- Should the proposed policy revision apply to all grades or older students only?
  - ASB proposes the policy change should apply to all grade levels.
- Is there a limit to the number of hair color a student can have?
  - ASB proposes no limit
- How did this come about?
  - Student, Noah Hiatt, proposed the revision to the Head of School a year ago. Noah was directed to follow protocol, including presenting to the board.
  - Middle School and High School students participated in the survey last year
- Who decides what causes distraction or not?
  - The principal
  - Current disciplinary action is to color their hair back to natural color
- Prior research comparing SIA policy vs. other schools' policy
  - SIA's policy is comparable with a private school's policy. Private schools policy regarding hair color is open-ended and have no limitations.

Notable comments from Morgen Flowers:

- The student survey did not include the primary grades
- Parent survey was conducted this year; 45% responses were received
- Morgen supports the proposed revision for Middle School and High School only; not Kindergarten-5th Grade
- Staff survey favors the revision to apply to Middle School and High School only; they have reservations for the primary grades

C. Vote on Proposed Policy Change

Action:

- ASB is asked to compare policies of other schools in the area (charter and public schools)
- Come up with the correct verbiage; specify policy for K-5 and 6-12
- Re-submit the proposal in the January board meeting

The board acknowledges the students' efforts and great presentation!

VI. Graduate Profile

A. Graduate Profile Work

Melissa Pettey presented.

Background:

- Former SIA Dean of Students, during SIA's early years
- Founding principal of SIA Middle Academy and Lumen High School
- Director of K-12 College and Career Readiness, Spokane Public Schools
- Current Director of Program Development and Student Success at SIA
    - Focuses on K-12 success strategies and program development in partnership with Excellent Schools of Washington (ESWA)
        - ESWA is a non-profit focused on expanding access to high quality, innovative public schools, especially charter schools for underserved students in WA.

Enrollment Analysis/High School Expansion:

- SIA does not accept new students in grades 11-12
- SIA students often return to their neighborhood schools in grades 9-10
- The current 11th–12th grade pathways (RS and NTN) don’t serve all students well.
- We lose all FTE funding for students enrolled in RS and NTN.
- There’s no clear process for students to return to campus if their pathway isn’t working.
- Students miss valuable, developmentally appropriate time on campus that supports our mission.
- Some students leave because they don’t connect with our current high school structure.
- Our high school lacks a distinct identity that attracts and retains students.

SIA Strategy:

- Grow the base at Kindergarten
  Rebuild the High School

What's Next:
1. Redefine our Graduate Profile (December–January) with full stakeholder input.
2.Present and adopt the new Graduate Profile at the January Board meeting.
3.Launch communication and marketing to middle and high school families to strengthen retention and recruitment. (March- May)
4.Align the master schedule with new Graduate Profile values while maintaining current RS/NTN options for upperclassmen. (January - March)

5.Begin reimagining the junior and senior experience for current freshmen and younger students (February - June)

Melissa will present again at the January board meeting.

Notable comments from the Board:

- What is offered at Running Start that SIA cannot offer to students?
- Current building capacity
- Administration capacity
- Parent survey or a task force
- Strategic growth; 5-year plan

VII. Head of School Report

A. HOS November Update

No questions or comments.

B. 25-26 Calendar

Save the date: June 7, 2026 - High School graduation at Spokane Community College auditorium.

VIII. Governance

A. Board Committees Presentation

The Governance Committee will report during the Executive Session.
Academic Excellence committee will report in January.

B. Compliance Training

C. Required: Public Disclosure Form

IX. 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 5:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ron Poplawski
Cassie Anderson left at 5:45 PM.