



Innovation Charter High School
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BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 17, 2024
6:00 PM

1. **Roll call/sign in** – The meeting was called to order at 6:11 pm by Ms. Massey. Latoya Massey, Callie Hull, Jen Gowers, Monique Francis, and Eric Reyes were present. Tavannie Perez joined late (6:21 pm). Board candidate, Leda Nereida, was also present. Elsie Encarnación and Yani Peña were absent. Innovation staff present were: Stephen Falla Riff, Kezena Brown, Tereena Somayya, Atiba Fraser, and Emily Bierwirth. The meeting was accessible in person at all of the locations listed on the notice of meeting, in accordance with Innovation's [Procedures Governing Public and Member Participation at Board Meetings](#) and was also accessible via a Zoom video conference link.

2. **Filing of Notice of Meeting** – A notice of the meeting was sent to the NY Times and posted publicly at the school and on its website.

3. **Consent Agenda (Secretary) Approval of board minutes** – Ms. Massey motioned to approve the November meeting Minutes. Ms. Gowers seconded.

4. North Star Data Team (Dean of Student Affairs) -

a. **Enrollment Update** – Currently, there are 397 students enrolled. Recruitment materials are being updated. 140 applications have been received, which is a significant increase from last year.

b. **Credit Projections** – Ms. Bierwirth reviewed Innovation's charter goals and credit projections. We are currently below our charter goal for credit projections for each cohort. [70.10% - Cohort 2025, 71.88% - Cohort 2026, 68.04% - Cohort 2027, and 64.84% - Cohort 2028.] Ms. Bierwirth reviewed support systems and incentives being implemented by the school to improve these numbers and student achievement. Ms. Bierwirth also highlighted some of the content areas in which students are lacking. 9th grade: ELA, Biology, Algebra I; 10th grade: Geometry, Global II, Earth and Space Science; 11th grade: Algebra II, Conceptual Chemistry; 12th grade: American Government, Senior Literature, Environmental Science. A point was raised about the possibility for students to earn an increased number of credits beginning in 9th grade. Ms. Perez asked if there is data relating poor performance to a lack of comprehension or lack of motivation. Ms. Bierwirth responded that more investigation and review of data would be required to try to answer that question but did state that incentives, particularly food and trips, cause students to positively respond and become motivated to achieve.

c. **Graduation: Progress & Pathways** – Ms. Bierwirth reviewed the projections for Cohort 2025, comparing data gathered at the beginning of the beginning of the school year, post Progress Report 2, and post Marking Period 2. Greater detail is available for review in the North Star tracker.

d. **Attendance, At-Risk, and LTA Updates** – The Innovation team continues to conduct home visits and offer supports as part of its intervention strategies. Ms. Bierwirth reviewed data and advised on the movement of LTA's. Ms. Bierwirth also advised that attendance percentages lower when student transfers out are delayed.

e. **SPED and ELL Updates** – SPED: We are now in need of 1 more provider. There have been 7 total referrals for the current school year. Principal Brown advised that this data signals that teachers are paying close attention to student needs and flagging the need for services earlier. Parent No Show's to IEP meetings are down by 50%. ELL support: Office hours are offered daily; 8 ELL students are receiving extra support because of Innovation's PUSH program. 8 of 10 students are passing English.

f. **Restorative Update/SEL - (Restorative Action Department)** The number of Tier 2 and 3 incidents (i.e., Suspensions, Expulsions, In-school incidents) is less. The upcoming SEL topic focus will be Conflict Resolution & Self-awareness.

g. **Family & Community Engagement** – Parents donated dishes for Innovation's 3rd Annual Friendsgiving celebration. Parents engaged in the two Title 1 Informational Meetings held on Nov. 26. 50 families received a 15 lb. turkey during the Turkey Giveaway. Ms. Perez recommended the City Harvest Program for food vouchers to distribute to families.

h. **Staffing Update** – The leadership team is actively recruiting for an Interim Music teacher. A few staff are out on leave; coverage is being provided in their absence.

i. **Board Calendar** - Cocoa for Counseling - Dec. 20.

5. Committee Reports (Committee Chairs) –

PRC – There have been no issues; the committee has not convened.

EXECUTIVE - There have been no issues; the committee has not convened.

AEC - The committee met at 5:00 pm, prior to the Board meeting, and discussed students' track towards graduation and reviewed grade level data. Conversation also included giving more attention to 9th graders to support academic achievement and to prevent credit jeopardy as they move closer to graduation. The committee also discussed efforts to secure consultants to assist with our charter renewal. The committee has established its schedule, which will be bi-weekly meetings.

FINANCE – The committee continues to meet bi-weekly to review budget-to-actuals. Ms. Hull encouraged Trustees to review financial documents (i.e., budget-to-actuals) and submit questions to be forwarded to Mr. Falla Riff and Mr. Fraser to answer at the next meeting. In January, the committee will be reviewing the budget, Profits and Losses, and will also start preparing for the Title 1 application.

6. Other Business - NONE

7. **Public speaking** - Ms. Francis thanked the parents who accepted her invitation during the

December PTO meeting and attended tonight's meeting. Mr. Falla Riff reported that the staff Christmas bonus was included in the Dec. 15th paycheck. Principal Brown asked for suggestions on how we can support students and adults suffering from Winter Blues. Ms. Perez suggested EAP support and partnership opportunities for staff to connect outside of work. Mr. Reyes suggested using the Calm app.

8. PRC update (Executive Session, Chair & Trustees) – Ms. Massey motioned to enter Executive Session at 7:19 pm; seconded by Ms. Perez.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (REDACTED)

There were no formal votes taken during this Executive Session. The Board exited Executive Session at 7:36 pm.

9. Voting for Board Candidate (Executive Session, Chair & Trustees) – The Trustees entered Executive Session at 7:36 pm. Ms. Massey presented the vote. Six Trustees voted affirmatively to accept Ms. Leda Nereida to the Board. There were no abstentions, and none opposed. The Trustees unanimously approved Ms. Nereida. In accordance with a majority of affirmative votes, the Board Chair, Ms. Massey, will proceed with the authorization process for Ms. Nereida to become a full-fledged member of the Board. The Board exited Executive Session at 7:39 pm.

10. Board Updates – Committees, Membership, Advisory Board (Executive Session, Chair & Trustees) - The Board entered the Executive Session at 7:40 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (REDACTED)

There were no formal votes taken during this Executive Session. The Board exited Executive Session at 8:07 pm.

11. Adjournment – Ms. Massey adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.