MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A meeting of the Explore Knowledge Academy Charter School Board of Trustees was held on March 13, 2025 at 4:00 PM in person and virtually at 5871 Mountain Vista Street, Las Vegas, NV 89120

Board president Michelle Alarie calls the regular meeting to order at 04:00 PM

I - GENERAL

Roll Call and adoption of agenda: A quorum is established with the following board members present:

Michelle Alarie – President
Matthew Fitzgerald – Vice-President
Mario Rezai - Treasurer *Not Present*
Edna Elisabeth Colman - Secretary
Pamela Tarkanian - Trustee Arrived At 4:05pm
Samantha Jorgenson -Trustee
Calvert Webster – Trustee

Ms. Alarie presents a declaration of posting of board meeting agenda.

II - PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Comments I: No public comments are given.

III - AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Adoption of Agenda: Matthew Fitzgerald moves to approve the adoption of agenda as presented without revisions. Samantha Jorgenson seconds the motion. Michelle Alarie calls for a vote. The vote is unanimous and the motion passes.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Alarie noted two revisions to the February 13, 2025, minutes. Firstly, she pointed out an error on page 2, where the amount listed for Watkins Jackson was incorrectly stated as $275,000. The correct amount should be $27,500. Secondly, she highlighted that the approval of the enrollment policy, which occurred during the meeting, was not reflected in the minutes. Calvert Webster moves to approve the board minutes from Feb 13, 2025 as presented**,** with 2 noted revisions. Matthew Fitzgerald seconds the motion. Michelle Alarie calls for a vote. The vote is unanimous and the motion passes.

IV - ORGANIZATIONAL

Community Council: Ms Mattson states the Community Council met last week March 3rd to review the policies that are on the agenda today. All policies were approved by the Community Council.

Administration: The superintendent provided updates on administrative activities, including efforts to address charter authority requests, review legislative bills, and boost enrollment, which has risen to 497 students. Strategies such as farmers market booths, "Bark of the Park" events, and "Kinder roundups" are being used to attract families. The kindergarten program aims to add one more class to improve financial stability. The school performance plans were approved by SPCSA, with contributions from board members and committees. Grants, including Title I and IDEA, were secured for the first time, providing funds for free/reduced lunch-qualifying students and professional development. However, the English Language Learners grant was not approved due to insufficient qualifying population. Overall, there is positive momentum towards growth and financial health.

Finance: Ms. Alarie states Did receive the Feb 2025 check registers. The discussion covered clarification of two lease payments this year, noting the March payment was made early due to check issuance timing. It addressed the Watkins Jackson fee for foundation payments and confirmed that charter school association fees are annual. A reissued check from December was highlighted, and a suggestion was made to include notations in the board packet to prevent confusion about reissued checks and potential double payments.

Advisors: Ms. Mattison provided updates across various grades and subjects. Elementary students are working on topics ranging from the water cycle and forms of energy to decimals, fractions, habitats, and the continents and oceans. Middle schoolers are focusing on chemistry, ecology, Earth science, and argument writing with MLA formatting. Forensic science students concluded their fingerprint unit and are exploring real cases and experiments, while geoscience began studying natural resources and sustainability. High schoolers are preparing for standardized assessments (SA), with subjects including transformations in geometry, sequences in advanced algebra, and sound in honors physics. Across all levels, there's an emphasis on SA test preparation and creative, narrative, and expository writing. Teachers highlighted collaborative and hands-on learning approaches as key themes.

Students: No students Present

Board Members: No reports are given.

V - BUSINESS

Staffing for FY 26: According to our board packet, there is no new staff to approve.

Tentative FY 26 Budget: Ms. Mattson discussed the tentative FY26 budget, which closely mirrors FY25's budget with adjustments like a 2% staff pay increase and changes for rising costs such as electricity. The budget is based on an estimated 633 students, though uncertainties remain regarding enrollment, grant funding, and legislative decisions on per-pupil funding. The board acknowledged potential challenges, including reallocating funds if federal title money is reduced. Finalized numbers and adjustments will be reviewed in late August or early September.Samantha Jorgenson moved to approve the motion as presented. Pamela Tarkanian seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous, and the motion passes.

Special Education Policy: Ms. Mattson g discussed the special education policy, noted as lengthy and filled with legal language, but deemed essential for compliance with SPCSA requirements. Despite its complexity, the team found reassurance in their adherence to the outlined policies, confirming no major procedural changes were needed for their special education programs. A better understanding of Nevada's special education process was achieved, and apart from minor formatting issues in a discipline chart (page 115), the policy was considered comprehensive and satisfactory.. Pamela Tarkanian moved to approve the motion as presented. Matthew Fitzgerald seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous, and the motion passes.

McKinney-Vento/Homeless Policy : Ms. Mattson discussed the mental homeless policy included in the board packet, with board members raising concerns about the school's lack of transportation and a food program, which might impact compliance with program requirements. It was noted that while the policy assumes certain services (like school nutrition programs), the school historically referred students to the Clark County School District's McKinney-Vento program for support, such as clothing and utilities. The discussion explored whether statutory requirements allow exclusions if the school doesn't provide services to anyone, but there was uncertainty about the legal implications. Suggestions included adding adoption dates and links to the questionnaire in the policy, while acknowledging the potential need for adjustments as the school operates independently. Pamela Tarkania moved to approve the motion as presented. Edna Elisabeth Colman seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous, and the motion passes.

Foster Care Policy: Ms Alarie asked the board if there were any questions about this policy. There were none. Samantha Jorgenson moved to approve the motion as presented. Matthew Fitzgerald seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous, and the motion passes.

Health Care Policy : Ms.Mattson states it was written by the Nurses and FASA. Ms. Mattson stated that SPCSA did not have a template for this policy so it was completely new. Matthew Fitzgerald moved to approve the motion as presented. Samantha Jorgenson seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous, and the motion passes.

Superintendent Contract: The board discussed the superintendent's contract, noting that while contract negotiations are exempt from open meeting laws due to being a personnel issue, the final presentation and approval will occur in a public session. The plan is to circulate materials, including feedback requests and questions for the superintendent, over the next few days to prepare for further discussion before the April 17th board meeting. Board members were advised to respond individually to avoid open meeting law violations. This discussion was for planning purposes only, with no votes taken.

Grants: None.

Policies: None

GIfts: None

VI - PUBLIC COMMENTS II

Public Comments II: No comments are given.

VII - ANNOUNCEMENTS/AGENDA PLANNING

- Next Meeting 04/17/2

VIII - ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: Samantha Jorgenson moves to adjourn the meeting. Matthew Fitzgerald seconds the motion. Michelle Alarie calls for a vote. The vote is unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 4:49PM.