MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A meeting of the Explore Knowledge Academy Charter School Board of Trustees was held on May 19, at 4:00 PM, in person and virtually, at 5871 Mountain Vista Street, Las Vegas, NV 89120.

Board President Matthew Fitzgerald called the regular meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

OPENING

Call to Order and Flag Salute and Roll Call (For possible action) (Matthew Fitzgerald, Chair)

A quorum was established with the following board members present:

- Matthew Fitzgerald – President
- Michelle Alarie- Vice President
- Mario Rezai– Treasurer
- Elisabeth Nyang-Coleman– Secretary Arrived at 4:03PM
- Calvert Webster – Trustee Arrived at 4:05PM
- Jodie Pisciotti - Trustee
- Matt Gromlich - Trustee Arrived 5:05PM

Matthew Fitzgerald presented a declaration of posting of the board meeting agenda.
The meeting was called to order by President Matt Fitzgerald, who confirmed a quorum was present.

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1 - PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was noted that no members of the public were present in person or via the teleconference link provided at ekacademy.org/teleconference.

ADMIN UPDATES

2. Financial Update

A financial update was provided which included the check register from April. It was noted that the report format from the new accounting software was different and did not include dates for the transactions. It was determined that for future meetings, a supplemental report with dates will be provided alongside the detailed register to ensure clarity. The submitted register was confirmed to accurately reflect the checks that were issued during the month of April. No questions were raised by the board regarding the financial update.

3. Superintendent's Update (Abbe Mattson, Superintendent) (Information, Discussion, For Possible Action)

Superintendent Abbe Mattson delivered her update, reporting that enrollment for the upcoming school year had reached five hundred and thirty students, with thirty-six of those being in kindergarten. She noted that steady tours on Mondays were promising for continued enrollment. Ms. Mattson confirmed that the SPCSA had approved the school's request for a reduction in its enrollment cap, which means the current enrollment of five hundred and thirty students would satisfy the contractual requirements if the school year were to start with that number.

Ms. Mattson also announced that an additional board meeting would be required in June to approve a list of courses intended for dual enrollment. This list must be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education for approval, which is a new requirement for all schools this year. The submission deadline is the end of August, and holding the meeting in June would allow sufficient time to have the minutes approved before the deadline. After discussion, the board tentatively scheduled a special one-item meeting for June 11, 2026, at 4:00 PM.

The board was informed that Ms. Mattson had received a resignation notice from Board Secretary Elisabeth Nyang-Coleman, effective June 1, 2026, and from Assistant Principal Donna Childers, who is moving to Chicago. An advertisement for new board members is being distributed to the public. Ms. Mattson shared that current science teacher Kara Donnelly, a licensed administrator, will step into the Assistant Principal role, training with Ms. Childers over the summer and assuming duties in August. Board members expressed sadness over Ms. Childers's departure but were pleased the position was filled internally. Ms. Mattson mentioned that both Matthew Fitzgerald and Jodie Pisciotti have formally expressed interest in returning to the board and will be on the ballot in late July. She has not yet received confirmation from Calvert Webster regarding his term but expected to discuss it with him at the upcoming graduation ceremony.

Finally, Ms. Mattson reported that the community council met to review and discuss the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). With the board's input, the plan is now ready to be finalized before its official due date of August 1, 2026.

4. Staff/Teacher's Update (Joanne Sanders, Student Support Advocate):

Joanne Sanders, Student Support Advocate, provided highlights from both elementary and secondary levels. In distance learning, all testing has been completed, and preparations are underway for the next school year pending state approval to switch back to a previously used program for kindergarten through eighth grade. Elementary highlights included a successful kindergarten promotion ceremony. First-grade students completed all units in their ELA and math curricula. Fifth graders presented biography book reports using creative cereal box projects and also read the novel *Hatchet*. In writing, fifth graders created "squiggle stories" based on random lines.

For the secondary highlights, Ms. Sanders reported that sixth and eighth-grade science classes concluded their units on weather patterns, climate change, and evolution. Eighth-grade English students completed a unit on human intelligence and finished their end-of-year skill assessments. High school pre-algebra and algebra one classes have finished their final exams, having completed all chapters in their respective textbooks for the school year.

5. Description of Special Education Facilitator Duties and Job Requirements (Maureen Turnbull, Front Office Staff) (Information, Discussion)

Maureen Turnbull, the Special Education Facilitator, presented a comprehensive overview of her role and the special education department at the academy. She detailed her extensive background, including thirty years with the Clark County School District and licensure as a special education teacher, general education teacher, and school administrator. Ms. Turnbull outlined the staff structure, which includes three dually certified elementary teachers, a secondary resource teacher for English, and a secondary resource teacher for math. The team also includes a speech-language pathologist, a school nurse, and a part-time school psychologist, all of whom are returning for the next school year.

Ms. Turnbull explained the process for student evaluations, both for initial assessments and triennial re-evaluations. She described how the school psychologist, Mr. Stephen Innings, conducts comprehensive assessments covering cognitive and academic areas. The results are compiled into a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) report, which is reviewed in detail with the student’s team, including parents, teachers, and specialists. This process determines a student's eligibility for special education services. Ms. Turnbull also detailed the procedures for managing parent requests, obtaining consent, gathering required information, and scheduling meetings. While meetings are typically held virtually on Mondays, accommodations are made to meet parents' scheduling needs. The presentation concluded without any questions from the board.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Adoption of May 19, 2026 Agenda (Matthew Fitzgerald, Chair) (Information, Discussion, For Possible Action)

7. Approval of April 16 and April 23 Board Minutes (Matthew Fitzgerald, Chair) (Information, Discussion, For Possible Action)

8. Acknowledgment of Current Enrollment FY 26 as of May 12, 2026 (Abbe Mattson, Superintendent) (Information, Discussion, for Possible Action)

9. Acknowledgement of Projected Enrollment FY 27 as of May 12, 2026 (Abbe Mattson, Superintendent) (Information, Discussion, for Possible Action)

10. Approval of new Teaching Staff FY 27 (Information, Discussion, for Possible Action)

The board addressed the consent agenda, which encompassed items six through ten. Prior to the vote, Michelle Alarie requested a correction to the April 16 and April 23 meeting minutes to reflect that she was not present at those meetings. With that amendment noted, Mario Rezai moved to approve all items on the consent agenda. Michelle Alarie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous among the board members present, and the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

11. Approval of FY 27 Final Budget (Abbe Mattson, Superintendent) (Information, Discussion, for Possible Action)

Superintendent Abbe Mattson presented the final budget for fiscal year 2027. She explained that the budget remained unchanged since its initial presentation in March. Necessary adjustments related to final wage rates, student counts, and teacher numbers will be made as the information becomes available. She confirmed that overall school expenditures are expected to remain relatively stable. Ms. Mattson notified the board members that they would receive a document via email to electronically sign, confirming their approval of the budget. Following the presentation, Michelle Alarie moved to approve the FY 27 Final Budget as presented. Mario Rezai seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously in favor, and the motion passed.

12. Approval of SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework Self-Certification Form (Information, Discussion, For Possible Action)

Superintendent Abbe Mattson guided the board through a line-by-line review of the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework Self-Certification Form. She confirmed the school's compliance on all points under the Governance section, including no violations of the open meeting law, no substantiated governance complaints, and completion of all required board member training, disclosure forms, and fingerprinting within the mandated timelines. For Federal and State Statutes, she affirmed that all employees and volunteers are properly fingerprinted and that the school has no outstanding financial obligations. The school was also confirmed to be compliant in the areas of Language and Culture, and Special Education, with all staff appropriately licensed and all student evaluations and IEPs managed within legal timelines.

Ms. Mattson continued by confirming compliance with all Health and Safety requirements, noting the school has passed all inspections. She also verified that the school has completed over ninety-seven percent of its required submissions in Epicenter, with no past-due tasks remaining. After reviewing all items and receiving no objections or requests for further discussion from the board, Mario Rezai moved to approve the SPCSA Organizational Performance Framework Self-Certification Form. Michelle Alarie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed. President Fitzgerald will sign the completed form on behalf of the board.

13. Approval of Superintendent Evaluation for FY 26. (Matt Fitzgerald, Board President) (Information, Discussion, For Possible Action)

Board President Matthew Fitzgerald presented his formal evaluation of Superintendent Abbe Mattson for the 2025-2026 school year. He noted that he had consulted with Trustee Jodie Pisciotti to incorporate a new perspective and plans to involve more board members in the future. In his summary, Mr. Fitzgerald stated that Superintendent Mattson has met all expectations of her duties, highlighting her successful management of the transition to the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), extensive policy work, and keeping the board well-informed. He commended her for engaging with staff and students to ensure comprehensive policy development and for taking on an additional teaching role, which provided both financial savings and direct interaction with students. The evaluation also referenced positive stakeholder surveys, successful school events, and the improved star rating for the elementary school as indicators of strong leadership.

The evaluation also addressed the ongoing challenge of student enrollment and its potential financial limitations, but commended the administration for keeping the board aware and adapting accordingly. Mr. Fitzgerald concluded by expressing his confidence in the school's path forward. Following the presentation, board members added their own commendations. Mario Rezai praised Ms. Mattson's close relationship with students. Elisabeth Nyang-Coleman highlighted Ms. Mattson's genuine care for the students and her selflessness. Calvert Webster and Jodie Pisciotti also expressed their strong support. Following the discussion, Jodie Pisciotti moved to approve the Superintendent Evaluation for Fiscal Year 2026. Matt Gromlich seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, and the motion passed.

14. Approval of Superintendent Wage Changes for FY 27 (Matt Fitzgerald, Board President) (Information, Discussion, For Possible Action)

President Matthew Fitzgerald introduced the proposed wage changes for the superintendent for the upcoming fiscal year. He explained that Superintendent Mattson's contract includes a guaranteed two percent salary increase, provided that teachers receive an equitable raise. The board also has the discretion to approve an increase of up to five percent based on performance. During the discussion, it was clarified that the standard procedure is to approve the base two percent now. Any additional performance-based increase would be considered later in the year, likely in November or December, after final financial reports are available, and would be retroactive. The board confirmed its intent to place this item on a future agenda for consideration at that time.

Following this clarification, Mario Rezai moved to approve the two percent superintendent wage increase for Fiscal Year 2027 as it was presented. Elisabeth Nyang-Coleman seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously in favor of the motion, and the motion passed.

15. Administration notification of any gifts or donations since the last board meeting.(Abbe Mattson, Superintendent) (Information, Discussion, Acknowledgement)

Superintendent Abbe Mattson reported that there had been no new gifts or donations received since the last board meeting, but also noted that the school had received various gifts and donations for its end-of-year activities. These included items such as water, chips, and cookies, as well as monetary donations from parents to support the events. She shared that the students greatly enjoyed the activities, including a successful field trip and field day. The board acknowledged the information.

CLOSING

16. Public Comment

A second opportunity for public comment was offered. It was confirmed that no members of the public were present in person or had joined the meeting via the teleconference call.

16. Board Reflection Period

During the reflection period, Treasurer Mario Rezai announced that while he intends to remain on the board as a member, he will not be seeking re-election as Treasurer for the next term. He explained that he will be moving to Chicago and, while he plans to attend meetings online and travel back to Las Vegas for business, he feels someone else should take on the role. This led to a brief discussion about board residency requirements, and Superintendent Mattson agreed to verify the percentage of board members required to reside in Clark County. Board President Matthew Fitzgerald also took a moment to express his appreciation for Assistant Principal Donna Childers.

17. Upcoming Calendar Events (Abbe Mattson, Superintendent) (Information, Discussion, Acknowledgement)

Superintendent Abbe Mattson reminded the board of upcoming school events. A special board meeting was tentatively scheduled for June 11, 2026. The annual board retreat is scheduled for July 25, 2026, and will be held in person at DragonRidge Country Club. It was explained that the retreat serves as a full day of training on topics like the open meeting law and is also when the first board meeting of the new fiscal year is held, including the election of board officers.

18. Adjournment (Action)

With no further business to discuss, Michelle Alarie moved to adjourn the meeting. Jodie Pisciotti seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.