



**The Laboratory Charter School**  
of Communication and Languages

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

**November 15, 2023**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Zoom Video Conference Meeting**

**Meeting Link:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2314020168?pwd=bVAvaVlVVV1E1cFFHWGY5NTArSVVGQT09>**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm.

Board Member Role Call

- A. Present: Dr. Veronica Florence-McPherson, President; Norris Bennis, Esq.- Vice President, Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary, Pinkey Lucas, Member, Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member, Elbert Sampson, Treasurer, Karen Slade, Member
- B. Absent: N/A
- C. Non-Board Members: Dr. Andréa Coleman-Hill, CEO; Alan Epstein, Attorney, Joan Belynda Brown, Director of Human Resources, Jesse Bean, Charter Choices
- D. Others Present: Jovan Goldstein, Independent Audit Firm, Deanna Brooks, Independent Audit Firm, Grace d'Entremont, CSO, M. Evengeline Berube, CSO

Announcement of Executive Session

An executive session was held on November 15, 2023 to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Nomination Committee Recommendation

None

Approval of Minutes:

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the October 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion: Norris Bennis, Esq., Vice-President, Second, Elbert Sampson, Treasurer

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes

Norris Benns Esq., Vice President – Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes  
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Finance Report

- Cash has increased to \$1.35M
- Receipt of \$657K in federal grant funds.
- Current A/P: 458,000

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the finance report.

Motion: Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member Second: Tiffany Ferrell,  
Secretary

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes  
Norris Benns Esq., Vice President – Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes  
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Budget Update (Vote taken with the Common Consent Agenda)

- Adjustments of 20% have been made to the budget that supports the school and gives the students what they need.
- All larger line items have been reduced.
- All Food Service costs have been updated.
- The updated budget is balanced.

Audit Update

The independent auditors provided an update on the process and metrics used to conduct the independent audit, the timelines for submission of information, a summary of information received, and a summary of the work that has been completed thus far. The Board received projected dates for the draft audit as well as a projected date for the final audit completion.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the audit update.

Motion: Norris Benns, Esq. Vice-President Second: Tiffany Ferrell,  
Secretary

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes  
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President – Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes  
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

### CEO Report

### **CHARTER SCHOOL ADVOCACY**

Thursday October 19, 2023 Students and Families held a rally in front of the School District of Philadelphia building to protest the inequitable treatment and systemic bias and discrimination of Black founded and led Charter Schools in Philadelphia. The rally was well attended and received news coverage.

In addition to this advocacy, the African American Charter Schools Coalition Executive Committee, for which I am a part of, had a second meeting with Reginal Streater, Esq., members of the SDP Board and other staff in response to the Independent Investigation. The impasse has not been reduced after two meetings.

### **EQUITABLE FUNDING TESTIMONY**

In response to the court decision deeming school funding inequitable and unconstitutional in Pennsylvania, the State Legislature held statewide meetings in order to collect testimony from stakeholders. Dr. Coleman-Hill delivered testimony to the members of the State Legislature in support of equitable funding for ALL.

### **CHARTER RENEWAL**

As a part of the renewal cohort meetings with the Charter Schools, a statement was made that Board Members would be expected to speak to the mission, vision, and core values with the CSO. This was questioned by Dr. Coleman-Hill and others at the meeting as Board Members are not expected to delve into day-to-day operations, but to govern. The CSO responded with the following after researching the issue:

*The CSO team appreciates the chance to engage with you, and we are looking forward to working with you throughout the renewal process. We are committed to collaborating with you to fulfill the renewal requirements in an equitable, timely, and transparent manner.*

*During our session, there was a question about whether Charter School Board members should be able to speak to a school's curriculum and day-to-day operations of the School. The CSO did not state that Board members must speak on curriculum or day-to-day operations. Rather, the CSO stated that stakeholder conversations, including a conversation with Board members, will be one of three sources of evidence for the evaluation of Mission Elements. As part of the RSV stakeholder conversations, Board members should, minimally,*

*be able to speak at a high-level about the three Mission Elements that the school describes as key components of the school.*

*A Board of Trustees is expected to govern with a purpose to fulfill the mission of the school and charter. The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Act 55 of 2017 training materials expand on this. You can find more information [here](#).*

**Below is the LAB Charter Alignment with the Mission, Vision, and Core Values based on the template received by the CSO.**

### **2023-2024 Mission and Educational Plan's Alignment With Mission Statement, Vision, and Core Values**

**Mission:** Our mission is that ALL students from ALL backgrounds deserve and will have a quality public education that includes equal and equitable access to academics, social-emotional learning, technology, and student agency.

**Vision:** Our vision is to develop well-rounded students by providing equal and equitable access to a quality education as we prepare them to lead in society with a positive voice.

#### **Core Values:**

- Together, we are dedicated to providing an outstanding education for our students!
- We believe through positive parental involvement, a collaborative staff, academically enriched student engagement and administrative support, our students can become anything that they aspire to be.
- Education takes a village.
- Accountability is for EVERYONE (staff, students, teachers, parents, and the community).
- We should provide a consistent, fair, and nurturing environment for our school community.
- With proper planning, and a positive attitude, anything is possible.

To analyze how Laboratory Charter School's Mission Statement, Vision, and Core Values align with Section 1, Section 2, and Section 3 of the provided document, we can examine each section individually:

**Mission Statement:** Laboratory Charter School's mission statement emphasizes academic success, personalized learning, and student agency. It mentions the importance of providing students with choices in their learning process and ensuring they are prepared to compete globally. This mission statement aligns with several aspects of the document:

#### **Alignment with Section 1 (Academic Success):**

- The emphasis on academic success in the mission statement aligns with the content of Section 1, which discusses the school's efforts to improve academic outcomes through

strategies such as the use of diagnostic data, small group interventions, and a focus on planning and preparation.

**Alignment with Section 2 (Climate and Culture):**

- The mission statement's focus on preparing students for global competition aligns with the school's commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive school culture, as discussed in Section 2. The emphasis on student agency and choice also relates to creating a positive climate where students feel engaged and successful.

**Alignment with Section 3 (Financial Health and Sustainability):**

- While the mission statement primarily focuses on educational goals, it indirectly supports the school's long-term sustainability by emphasizing the importance of academic success, which can lead to continued enrollment and community support.

**Vision:** The vision statement underscores the importance of preparing students to compete globally and emphasizes choices, high-quality information, and students' ability to make quality decisions aligned with their learning needs. This vision statement aligns with various sections of the document:

**Alignment with Section 1 (Academic Success):**

- The vision aligns with Section 1 by emphasizing the importance of academic competitiveness and the need for high-quality information and skills. These elements support the school's academic success initiatives.

**Alignment with Section 2 (Climate and Culture):**

- The vision's focus on preparing students for global competition aligns with the school's efforts to create a positive and inclusive climate and culture, as discussed in Section 2. A global perspective can contribute to a diverse and inclusive school community.

**Alignment with Section 3 (Financial Health and Sustainability):**

- The vision indirectly supports the school's financial health and sustainability by emphasizing the importance of providing students with the skills and knowledge needed for success, which can attract and retain students and community support.

**Core Values:** Laboratory Charter School's core values include Student Agency, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and Restorative Practices. These core values align with various sections of the document:

**Alignment with Section 1 (Academic Success):**

- Student Agency aligns with Section 1's focus on personalized learning and strategies to improve academic success. Giving students choices and opportunities to make decisions about their learning supports academic achievement.

**Alignment with Section 2 (Climate and Culture):**

- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Restorative Practices align with Section 2's discussions about creating a positive school climate and culture. SEL supports students'

emotional well-being, and Restorative Practices contribute to building strong relationships within the school community.

**Alignment with Section 3 (Financial Health and Sustainability):**

- While core values are primarily focused on educational principles, the emphasis on student well-being through SEL and Restorative Practices indirectly contributes to the overall positive image of the school, which can impact its long-term financial health and sustainability.

In summary, Laboratory Charter School's Mission Statement, Vision, and Core Values align with the content of Section 1 (Academic Success), Section 2 (Climate and Culture), and Section 3 (Financial Health and Sustainability) by emphasizing academic success, student agency, social emotional learning, and creating a positive and inclusive school environment. These elements collectively contribute to the school's commitment to academic excellence and overall success.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the CEO report.

Motion: Karen Slade, Member Second: Elbert Sampson, Treasurer

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes  
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President – Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes  
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary -Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Board Resolutions

Common Consent Agenda

1. 111520231

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve the Federal Programs Schoolwide Title 1 School Plan 2023-2024 as presented.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the Federal Programs Schoolwide Title 1 School Plan 2023-2024 as presented.

Motion: Dr. Veronica Florence-McPherson, President Second: Mr.

Norris Bennis, Esq. Vice President

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes  
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President – Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes

Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member - Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

2. 111520232

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees ("Board") hereby resolves to approve the amended 2023-2024 budget as presented.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the amended 2023-2024 budget as presented.

Motion: Dr. Veronica Florence-McPherson, President Second: Mrs. Pinkey Lucas, Member

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes  
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President - Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes  
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member - Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Public Participation: None

Adjournment

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to adjourn.

Motion: Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member, Second: Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes  
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President - Yes  
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes  
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes  
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes  
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member - Yes  
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Secretary Signature

1/26/2024  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date