



## IDEA Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting August 14, 2025

A. Call to Order

*Meeting called to order at 7:31pm.*

B. Welcome

C. Roll Call

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Mr. Thomas Gallagher	X	
Ms. Dami Kabiawu	X	
Mr. Tom Ogorzalek	X	
Mr. Lonnie Sobel	X	
Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower	X	

*Also Present:*

*Bret Schundler, Lead Person*

*Menachem Bazian, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary*

*Bobby Seetaram, Director of Operations*

D. Approval of July 10, 2025 minutes

<b>Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abs</b>
Mr. Thomas Gallagher			X
Ms. Dami Kabiawu			X
Mr. Tom Ogorzalek <b>(Second)</b>	X		
Mr. Lonnie Sobel	X		
Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower <b>(Motion)</b>	X		

E. Public Comments

F. School Review

1. Educational – Angela Thomas

*Ms. Thomas discussed preparations for the incoming school year and summer institute.*

2. Financial – Menachem Bazian

G. Facilities – Bret Schundler

*Mr. Schundler provided an update on the Canal Crossing project.*

H. HIB Reports

I. Policies, Plans, and Submissions

<b>Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abs</b>
Mr. Thomas Gallagher ( <b>Motion</b> )	X		
Ms. Dami Kabiawu	X		
Mr. Tom Ogorzalek ( <b>Second</b> )	X		
Mr. Lonnie Sobel	X		
Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower	X		

1. **Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees approves the following handbooks:

- a. Employee Handbook
- b. Family Handbook – All Campuses
- c. Emergency and Crisis Management Plan – Elementary School
- d. Emergency and Crisis Management Plan – Middle School
- e. Emergency and Crisis Management Plan – High School
- f. Aftercare Handbook

J. Human Resources

<b>Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abs</b>
Mr. Thomas Gallagher ( <b>Motion</b> )	X		
Ms. Dami Kabiawu	X		
Mr. Tom Ogorzalek ( <b>Second</b> )	X		
Mr. Lonnie Sobel	X		
Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower	X		

1. **25-08-14-01 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees approves of the **SY26** Contracts effective per Start Date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 1.
2. **25-08-14-02 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves of the **SY26** stipends effective per Start Date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 2.
3. **25-08-14-03 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves **SY26**

replacement contracts effective per start date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 3.

4. **25-08-14-04 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the retirements, resignations, and terminations effective per effective date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 4.
5. **25-08-14-05 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the appointment of Hui Xue as the Assistant School Business Administrator effective August 15, 2025.

K. Business

<b>Member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abs</b>
Mr. Thomas Gallagher ( <b>Motion</b> )	X		
Ms. Dami Kabiawu ( <b>Second</b> )	X		
Mr. Tom Ogorzalek	X		
Mr. Lonnie Sobel	X		
Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower	X		

1. **25-08-14-06 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the Payment of Claims in the amount of \$1,017,736.86 for the period August 2 – September 1, 2025.
2. **25-08-14-07 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees approves the POs listed in Appendix B in the amount of \$30,863,404.10.
3. **25-08-14-08 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to fund the Payrolls of September 15, 2025, for \$1,250,000 and September 31, 2025, for \$1,250,000, respectively. Employer Taxes are included in each Payroll.
4. **25-08-14-09 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the Board Secretary Report for July 2025.
5. **25-08-14-10 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the SY25 Treasurer’s Report for July 2025.
6. **25-08-14-11 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves an agreement with Aramark, St. Peter’s University Hospitality for room rental and catering for a teacher PD in the amount of \$6,840.08.
7. **25-08-14-12 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees amends item K17 of the minutes of June 12, 2025 to read as follows:

**2025-06-12-29 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees approves the award of the food service management base year contract with Maschio’s Food Service for the 2025-2026 school year in the amount of \$716,200.79 which includes a management fee of \$40,000. Maschio's Food Services, Inc. guarantees the Empowerment Academy Charter School a guaranteed unlimited profit of \$151,492.81 for the 2025-2026 school year.

8. **25-08-14-13 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees hereby reapproves its Teacher and School Leader Evaluation Instruments and systems for use in SY2025-26.
9. **25-08-14-14 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to enter into an agreement with Sensory Kids & Social Minds for Speech Therapy Services effective July 1, 2025 through term ending at the end of SY26. Billings for Services are at the rate of \$100/Hr.
10. **25-08-14-15 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to participate in the Bergen County Pricing Agreement and to execute a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the County of Bergen. The County of Bergen shall be responsible for complying with the provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.
11. **25-08-14-16 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to participate in the Union County Pricing Agreement and to execute a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the County of Union upon its approval by the Division of Local Government Services. The Lead Agency shall be responsible for complying with the provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey.
12. **25-08-14-17 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes retention of the law firm of Attwood Corlett LLC to deal with a specific legal matter with hourly billing rates of: Partners - \$235/Hr., Associates - \$215/Hr., and Paralegals - \$115/Hr. with a total cost not to exceed \$5,000.
13. **25-08-14-18 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves of accepting and submitting to the NJ DOE the SY26 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Application for the following:

IDEA Basic	\$281,097
IDEA PreSchool	\$ 5,615
14. **25-08-14-19 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the renewal of EA’s Student Learning Bonus Initiative for SY26.

15. **25-08-14-20 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the Personnel Shared Services Agreement with Beloved Community Charter School for SY26.
16. **25-08-14-21 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to reimburse an additional \$43,299 to Saint Paul the Apostle Church for work done by Saint Paul the Apostle Church to prepare the premises for EACS use. The amount covers installation of an access control system, additional wiring, and LED lighting installations and will be offset by a rent reduction in SY26.
17. **25-08-14-22 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the renewal of the following insurance coverage policies with the associated carriers:

<b>Coverage Type</b>	<b>Carrier</b>	<b>Premium</b>	<b>% Inc</b>
General Liability Premium	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$57,383	4.99%
Educators Legal Liability	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$14,150	9.42%
Employee Benefits Liability Premium	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$300	0.00%
Abuse/Molestation Premium	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$20,894	10.36%
Property Premium	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$4,677	8.14%
Business Auto Premium	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$23,752	8.54%
Umbrella Premium	Philadelphia Insurance Companies	\$23,018	19.97%
Workers Compensation	Selective Insurance	\$158,354	-5.77%
<b>Total Premium</b>		<b>\$302,528</b>	<b>0.76%</b>

18. **25-08-14-23 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the renewal of employee health insurance coverage policy with Horizon Healthcare of NJ with a rate increase of 13.5%.
19. **25-08-14-24 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to enter into a Banking Services Agreement with a banking institution offering rates of 3.75% or greater.

L. Field Trips

M. Executive Session