



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes October 23, 2025

A. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm.

B. Welcome

C. Roll Call

| Member | Present | Absent |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 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

Angela Thomas, Director of Education

Menachem Bazian, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Bobby Seetaram, Director of Operations

D. Approval of September 11, 2025 minutes

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|---|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher | | | X |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek (Second) | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower (Motion) | X | | |

E. Public Comments

F. School Review

1. Educational – Angela Thomas
2. Financial – Menachem Bazian

G. Facilities – Bret Schundler

H. HIB Reports

I. Policies, Plans, Grants, and Submissions

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher (Second) | X | | |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek (Motion) | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower | | | X |

1. **2025-10-23-01 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the Lead Person or his designee to submit to the NJ DOE for the SY26 Phone Free Grant.
2. **2025-10-23-02 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the submission of the final expenditure reports for the TITLE IA, TITLE II, TITLE III, and TITLE III Immigrant grants.
3. **2025-10-23-03 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the submission of the final expenditure report for the IDEA grants.
4. **2025-10-23-04 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the submission of the final expenditure report for the CSP grant.

J. Human Resources

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher (Motion) | X | | |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek (Second) | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower | | | X |

1. **2025-10-23-05 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees approves of the **SY26** Contracts effective per Start Date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 1.
2. **2025-10-23-06 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves of the **SY26** stipends effective per Start Date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 2.
3. **2025-10-23-07 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves **SY26** replacement contracts effective per start date noted on Appendix A, Schedule

- 3.
4. **2025-10-23-08 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the retirements, resignations, and terminations effective per effective date noted on Appendix A, Schedule 4.
5. **2025-10-23-09 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves a shared services agreement with Beloved Community Charter School for each school to receive services from employees at the other with the following cost structure:

| BCCS Receives | Individual(s) Providing | EA Receives |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Information Technology Consulting and Support | Michael Galarza | \$69/hour |
| Business Office Support | Michael Vacharapanjamas | \$65/hr. |

| EA Receives | BCCS Employee | BCCS Receives |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| Facility Renovation Services | Mark Lenzo | \$65/hr |
| Curriculum & Instruction Consulting Services | Various BCCS Leaders & Teachers | \$65/hr |
| High School Leadership Development and Support | Ken Schultz & HS Leadership Team | Reimbursement of Salary Calculated on an Hourly Basis |

Total EA charges to BelovED shall not exceed \$40,000.
 Total BelovED charges to EA shall not exceed \$40,000.

6. **2025-10-23-10 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees appoints of Mr. Menachem Bazian, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, as the purchasing agent of Empowerment Academy pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:34-5.5 and authorizes him to award contracts in full accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(a), for purchases that do not exceed in the aggregate in the contract year, the total sum of \$39,000.00 (bid threshold) without public advertising for bids. Furthermore, Mr. Bazian is authorized to solicit competitive quotations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37(a) and to award contracts pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37(c). In case of the absence of Mr. Bazian, Hui (Alisha) Xue, Assistant Business Administrator, is authorized to sign and process purchase orders for the school.
7. **2025-10-23-11 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes the Lead Person to execute and submit the Biannual Statement of Assurance Regarding the Use of Paraprofessional Staff.
8. **2025-10-23-12 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes an agreement with Monmouth University (MU) for MU to provide interns to EA. Interns will fulfill their clinical educational experience at EA. Interns will be provided

at no cost to EA.

9. **2025-10-23-13 Resolved**, the EA Board of Trustees authorizes an agreement with Montclair State University (MSU) for MSU to provide interns to EA. Interns will fulfill their clinical educational experience at EA. Interns will be provided at no cost to EA.

K. Business

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|--|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher (Motion) | X | | |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek (Second) | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower | | | X |

1. **2025-10-23-14 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the Payment of Claims in the amount of \$3,179,202.42 for the period October 2 – November 1, 2025.
2. **2025-10-23-15 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to fund the Payrolls of November 15, 2025, and \$1,250,000, November 30, 2025, for \$1,250,000, respectively. Employer Taxes are included in each Payroll.
3. **2025-10-23-16 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the Board Secretary Report for September 2025.
4. **2025-10-23-17 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the SY26 Treasurer’s Report for September 2025.
5. **2025-10-23-18 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the lead person to execute the Memorandum of Understanding with iTeach to provide support and online resources for teachers to earn their certifications. There is no cost to EA.
6. **2025-10-23-19 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to execute a contract with Workable.com, a service used to enhance recruitment efforts for the period 12/1/2025 – 11/30/2026 in the amount of \$15,588. EA will be reimbursed 50% of this cost by BelovED Community Charter School.
7. **2025-10-23-20 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the updated Transportation Shared Services Agreement with BelovED Community Charter School.
8. **2025-10-23-21 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the “Collective Banking Resolutions” from PNC Bank.

9. **2025-10-23-22 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the expenditure of up to \$7,500 for this year's Holiday Party in December.
10. **2025-10-23-23 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves reimbursement of costs related to the demolition of 242 Ege Ave in the amount of \$69,600 to Our Lady of Victories Church.
11. **2025-10-23-24 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves the purchase of a color copy machine/printer with service from Tomorrow's Office. The cost of the copier is \$2,984 and the service contract is \$104.15/month.
12. **2025-10-23-25 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees authorizes the School Business Administrator to reimburse an additional \$2,811 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 a new video doorbell as well as licensing fees for the access control system and will be offset by a rent reduction in SY26.
13. **2025-10-23-26 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves establishment a chapter of the National Honor Society through the National Association of Secondary School Principals for SY26 at the High School at a cost of \$385.
14. **2025-10-23-27 Resolved**, The EA Board of Trustees approves revisions to the Measures of Student Learning metrics that are used in faculty evaluation instruments, as per the proposal of Lauren Golden, Dean of Assessment, moving from MAP Assessment-based metrics to i-Ready Assessment -based metrics.

L. Field Trips

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher (Motion) | X | | |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek (Second) | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower | | | X |

| Date | Grade | Event | Location | Cost |
|-------------|--------------|---|-----------------|-------------|
| TBD | HS | Hudson County Teen Arts Participation – Performing Arts | TBD | \$500.00 |
| TBD | HS | Hudson County Teen Arts Participation – Visual Arts | TBD | \$350.00 |
| 10/29/2025 | 3 | Newark Museum of Art | Newark, NJ | \$2,550 |
| 1/20/2026 | 10 | Spyscape | New York, NY | \$3,788.40 |
| 1/22/2026 | 4 | Power Up Arena | Paramus, NJ | \$2,770.86 |
| 3/24/2026 | 4 | The Sportsplex at Metuchen | Metuchen, NJ | 3,200 |
| 3/25/2026 | 9 | Liberty Science Center | Jersey City, NJ | \$4,212 |
| 6/9/2026 | 4 | Liberty Science Center | Jersey City, NJ | \$2,385 |

M. Executive Session

To go into Executive Session (7:56 pm)

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher (Second) | X | | |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel (Motion) | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower | X | | |

To reconvene (8:43 pm)

| Member | Yes | No | Abs |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Mr. Thomas Gallagher | X | | |
| Ms. Dami Kabiawu | | | X |
| Mr. Tom Ogorzalek (Second) | X | | |
| Mr. Lonnie Sobel (Motion) | X | | |
| Ms. Monica Quiroga Zaslower | | | X |

N. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm.