



The School District of Philadelphia

Board of Education Public Meeting Minutes February 27, 2025

A public meeting of the Board of Education was held in hybrid format on February 27, 2025. Some Board Members, select staff, and some registered speakers participated in-person, while others participated remotely. Members of the general public who did not attend in-person participated via the Zoom meeting platform.

The meeting was convened at 4:00 p.m by Reginald Streater, President.

Opening Remarks

President Streater reported and commented on the following:

- Acknowledgement of Board Members visit to Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School and Math, Science, and Technology (MaST) Community Charter School
- Recognition of Vice President Andrews attendance at the Fund for the School District of Philadelphia's 10th Anniversary celebration, and the Philadelphia Public League Championship at LaSalle University
- Announcement of Project RISE
- Cultural Recognitions
 - National Freedom Day
 - World Day of Social Justice
 - Ramadan
- February as Black History Month
- Recognition of January Senior and Teachers of the Month
 - Tore James - a senior at Lankenau Environmental Magnet High School
 - Gianna Tran - Academy at Palumbo
 - Mrs. Kristi Schwartz - a Math teacher at Edwin Forrest Elementary School
- Recognition of Board Policy 006 titled 'Meetings' and its operating guidelines, and for the public to see and hear the Board deliberate and take official action
 - President Streater shared the Board's request that all individuals here with us tonight be respectful of every participant's time and attendance noting that When we reach each speaker portion of the agenda we will no longer be calling individuals in groups of five (5) and we will be following the speaker's list in the order in which individuals have registered.
 - President Streater also noted that in order to follow proper fire safety protocols we will be ensuring all aisles remain clear, including the center aisle during the meeting.

Announcements

Vice President Andrews made announcements concerning recording, copyright, participation in, and viewing of the meeting.



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Advocacy Announcements

President Streater invited Board Member Wilkerson to provide additional remarks.

Board Member Wilkerson shared that the Board remains committed to advocating for policies and investments that support student success and that they are closely monitoring the federal budget and impact of executive orders from the President and working with our legislative teams and partners to assess their potential impact on our students and families. Board Member Wilkerson asked those in attendance to help in advocating for our students by contacting their legislators to express their opposition to education cuts in the FY 2025 Budget proposal that would reduce funding for K-12 schools and programs that serve children.

Roll Call and Minutes

The Board met in Executive Session on February 13th to discuss confidential, privileged, quasi-judicial charter school matters; on February 20th to discuss confidential, privileged labor matters, and today to discuss confidential, privileged, personnel, investigation matters.

Ms. Rauch conducted Roll Call.

Members Present: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 8

Members Absent: Ms. Harper - 1

Attending: Tony B. Watlington, Ed.D, Superintendent

The minutes from the January 30, 2025 Board of Education Action Meeting were presented for approval.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern,, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 8

No: 0



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Committee Reports

Student Board Representatives

Student Board Representative Charles Rinker shared work that the Student Board Representatives have been engaging in over the past few weeks. Student Board Representative Rinker shared the following activities:

- February 9th and 11th Student Board Representative Ahmed and Rinker continued their participation in the Facilities Planning process
- On February 13th Student Board Representative Benny attended the Goals and Guardrails meeting where goals 1 and 2 were the focus

Student Board Representative Charles Rinker also announced that applications for the 2025-2026 Non Voting Student Board Representative positions will open on March 6, 2025 and strongly recommended that any student who is currently in 9th or 10th grade in a District or Charter High School to take some time to review the application and consider applying for the role

Parent and Community Advisory Council

Vice President Andrews shared that the Parent and Community Advisory Council convened for the first time last week to learn more about expectations and their responsibilities, as well as how they will provide feedback to the Board on policies that are up for review.

Registered Student Speakers

The meeting was opened to the public for presentation of statements by registered student speakers. Ms. Rauch provided the applicable provisions of the speakers' policy for the meeting. Ms. Rauch called general speakers:

Hidaia Ali, student, spoke about the impact of Early Charter High School, necessary resources that they will have available for students and urged the Board of Education to approve Action Item 27 Application for New Charter School: Early College Charter School of Philadelphia –Added 2.25.2025:

The following students expressed great concern regarding the District's lack of reassurance for families and students of immigrant/undocumented backgrounds and demanded that the District do more to ensure that all students and their families feel safe and supported in schools:



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- Luis Ojeda, student,
- Nina Chen, student
- Dajana Qoshlli, student

The following student spoke about their experience at Pan American Academy Charter School and urged the Board to vote to approve Action Item 28 Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School – Pathways High School – Added 2.25.25:

- Yediel Huertas, student
- Yailynett Berrios, student
- Destiny Adames, students

Hazel Heiko, student, demanded that the District reinstate Keziah Ridgeway and pledge to have sanctuary schools and keep students safe.

Kennidi Baynes, student, spoke about her positive and supportive experience as a student of WP-ACES and shared her excitement about the possibility of Early College Charter School of Philadelphia.

Superintendent Remarks

President Streater invited Dr. Watlington to provide remarks. Dr. Watlington reported/commented on the following:

- District Recognitions
 - February as Black History Month and American Heart Month
- Conditions for Success
 - Student Attendance - 1 percentage point increase from January 2024
 - Teacher Attendance - 3 percentage point decrease from January 2024
- Safe and Welcoming Schools Protocol and Resources
 - Overview of Protocol for Responding to ICE on School Grounds and Training available for all staff
- Family Engagement Initiatives
 - Launch of Parent & Family University Kickoff Tour
 - Parent and Guardian Advisory Council application process to open March 6, 2025
- School Selection Update
 - Overview of the Find Your Fit School Selection Process that launched this past fall

Board Members asked clarifying questions related to the protocol for responding to ICE on school grounds and training available for all staff to better understand the work that the District is doing to



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support these students and their families. Board Members also asked questions to understand resources that are available for immigrant families and if the District is providing more targeted training for BACs in schools with large immigrant communities. Lastly, Board Members asked clarifying questions to understand how the new Parent Engagement App was being rolled out to families who do not speak English and what families can expect from the Superintendent's Parent and Guardian Council.

Dr. Watlington responded to questions raised by Board Members and invited the following individuals to respond to questions raised:

- Alexandra Coppadge, Chief Communications and Customer Service
- Sarah Galbally, Chief of Staff
- Lynn Rauch, General Counsel

Copies of presentations are included within the meeting agenda.

Presentation

President Streater invited Peng Chao, Chief Charter Schools to provide presentations on Action Items 27 and 28 which are this year's New Charter Applications from Early College Charter School of Philadelphia and Pan American Academy Charter School - Pathways High School. President Streater noted that public hearings were held in December 2024 and January 2025 before the Board's hearing officer. As part of the process, the Board accepted and reviewed oral and written public comment.

Mr. Chao provided a presentation related to Action Items 27 and 28 which are this year's New Charter Applications from Early College Charter School of Philadelphia and Pan American Academy Charter School - Pathways High School.

Board Members asked clarifying questions related to Action Item 27 Application for New Charter School: Early College Charter School of Philadelphia –Added 2.25.2025 and Action Item 28 Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School – Pathways High School – Added 2.25.25 on topics related to school budget, partnerships, governance structure, implementation plans and curriculum.

Public Testimony and General Speakers

Board Member Jones acknowledged the receipt of and summarized forty two (42) pieces of written testimony submitted to the Board from:

- Regina Valentino
- Fifteen members of the Bridesburg Elementary community voiced their support for Regina Valentino
- Jillian Waldman, Lane Waldman, and Elliott Miller



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- Hanna Pylvainen
- Freda Anderson and Katie Miller
- Karla Resendiz
- Beth Tissenbaum
- Akira Rodriguez, Parisa Khoshnood and Maritza De Savornin Lohman
- Ava Foster
- Cynthia Figueroa and Molly Schmader
- Maria Carambo
- Jordan Kardasz
- Barbara Dowdall
- Sophia Thompson
- Charlie McGeehan
- Mara Imms
- Dana Espinosa
- Aileene Halligan Cantiello
- Sarah Pincus
- Cheryl Micheau
- Caroline Ramsey and Dan Urevick-Ackelsberg

Complete copies of the written testimony are included within the meeting agenda.

The meeting was opened to the public for presentation of statements by registered general speakers. Ms. Rauch provided the applicable provisions of the speakers' policy for the meeting. Ms. Rauch called general speakers:

The following individuals spoke and expressed concerns regarding the lack of training and resources available for students and families and urged the District to amend that safe and welcoming schools protocol and taking active steps to help families know their right and protect immigrant and undocumented families:

- Kurt Ostrow, district staff member
- Laura Petty, community member
- Kristina Moon, parent/guardian
- Cybil Yakira, district staff member
- Guadalupe Mendez, community member
- Lily Cavanagh, charter school staff member

Regina Valentino, district staff member, called upon the Board to help protect school nurses as they do their jobs to keep students safe.



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Sanjana Bandi, community member, spoke about the need for a school library in every school and demanded full time library access.

The following individuals spoke in support of Action 27 Application for New Charter School: Early College Charter School of Philadelphia –Added 2.25.2025 and urged the Board of Education to approve the new charter school application:

- Natasha Labbe, community member
- Keshema Davidson, community member
- Rebecca Benarroch, community member
- Lianna Meskun, community member
- Will Irons, community member
- David Rossi, community member
- Kristi Littell, community member
- Molly Schmader, community member
- Rod Henkels, community member

The following individuals spoke about their children and families experience at Frederick Douglass Mastery and the community that the school has created:

- Sydia Bagley, parent/guardian,
- Nikki Hampton, parent/guardian

Keziah Ridgeway, parent/guardian, spoke about the importance of being brave and the lack of protection being offered to black and brown students and teachers. Mrs. Ridgeway spoke about the importance of being brave when it is not popular and adequately preparing students and teachers to uphold policies such as policy 249 as well as working with community organizations such as Juntos.

Katherine Riley, district staff member, expressed disappointment in the board for not apologizing to students who were censored last year and asked the Board to uphold their sanctuary school policy.

Mercedes Mason de Gómez, charter school staff member, spoke in support of Action Item 28 Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School - Pathways High School and urged the Board of Education to approve the new charter school application.

Deborah Grill, community member, questioned if the Board intends to shut the public out of the upcoming meetings related to Project Rise and charter schools. Ms. Grill also urged the Board to deny Action Items 27 and 28.



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Hannah Myers, district staff member, urged that the Board hire more BACS, paying them a livable wage and bridge the gap in supporting immigrant students and families to ensure that schools are truly a sanctuary.

Joanna Gallagher, district staff member, spoke about the implementation of the new ELA curriculum and asked the District to consider adjusting for schools with multilingual learners.

Darrell Wyatt, parent/guardian, shared and spoke about the incredible work taking place at Mastery Prep elementary school and the high standards that they have for their students in and out of the classroom.

Board Member Harper joined the meeting at 7:12pm

Samirah Rahman, community member, emphasized the importance of having access to a library and their transformative power and asked the Board to make school libraries a budget priority.

Betty Jean Thompson, parent/guardian, expressed her support for WP-ACES and concerns that the school may need to close unless the District can work with them to settle financial challenges that currently exist.

Lynda Rubin, community member, urged the Board to deny Action Item 28 Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School - Pathways High School.

The Board of Education voted to go into executive session at 7:25pm. The Board of Education meeting resumed at 8:07pm

Consideration of Action Items

President Streater described the process of how Action Items would be presented for consideration:

- Action Item 3, Submission of Comprehensive Plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Education has been withdrawn by staff
- Action Item 6, Administration's Recommendation for Termination of Professional Employees has been withdrawn by staff
- Action Item 29, Opposing Proposed Federal Cuts to Reduce Funding for K-12 Schools and The Programs That Serve Our Most Vulnerable Children
- Action Item 27, Application for New Charter School: Early College Charter School of Philadelphia
- Action Item 28, Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School – Pathways High School



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- Consent agenda for the remaining Action Items, which are Action Items 1-2, 4-5 and 7-26 .

Lisa Haver, on behalf of the Alliance of Philadelphia Public Schools, stated an objection under the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act on Action Item 27 - Application for New Charter School: Early College Charter School of Philadelphia –Added 2.25.2025 and Action Item 28 - Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School – Pathways High School – Added 2.25.25.

Item No. 1 - Acceptance of Donation from Lovefutbol for Exterior Playground Improvements at the Avery D. Harrington Elementary School (\$75,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cabbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 2 - Amendment of Contract with ANRO for Printing Services (\$40,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cabbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 3 - Submission of Comprehensive Plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (2025-2028) – Updated 2.18.2025/ **WITHDRAWN BY STAFF 2.26.2025**

Item No. 4 - Approval of Personnel Hires – Updated 2.20.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cabbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0



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Item No. 5 - Approval of Personnel Terminations – Updated 2.27.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 6. - Administration's Recommendation for Termination of Professional Employees –
WITHDRAWN BY STAFF 02.24.2025

Item No. 7 -Approval of Resignations and Retirements – Updated 2.27.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 8. - Contract with Razor Technology, LLC for Data Center Infrastructure (\$4,000,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 9. - Amendment of Contract with Tetra Tech, Inc. for AHERA Program Development Management (\$ 27,940,442.26)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0



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Item No. 10. - Ratification of Contract Amendment for Square Button for OEMS IT Needs Assessment (No Cost Time Extension)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 11. - Capital Award for Fire Alarm Replacement at Gilbert Spruance Elementary School (\$850,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 12. - Capital Award for Elevator Modernization at Thomas G. Morton School (\$627,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 13. - Contract with CDW Government, LLC for Software Licensing (\$1,500,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0



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Item No. 14. - . Capital Award for Elevator Modernization at Horatio B. Hackett School (\$908,800)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 15. - Amendments to the Stormwater Management Incentives Program (SMIP) Grant Acceptance and Subgrant Agreements for W. D Kelley Elementary School

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 16. - . Amendment of Contracts with Various Firms for Supplemental Professional Architectural Services - No Cost Time Extension

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 17. - Ratification of Contract with Modular Genius for Modular Classroom Trailers at William M. Meredith Elementary School (\$21,660.05)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0



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Item No. 18. - Change Orders at Various Locations (\$8,411,930)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 19. - Contract with Insparisk, LLC and ATIS Elevator Inspection, LLC for Elevator Inspections (\$180,000) – Updated 2.18.25

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 20. - Amendment of a Contract with J.P. Mascaro & Sons, Inc. - Waste Management, Trash Removal and Recycling Services (\$15,972,471)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

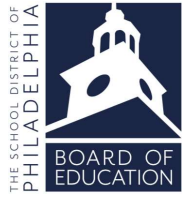
Item No. 21. - Adoption of Academic Calendars for SY 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 (Updated 2.11.25/2.18.25)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 22. - Adoption of Board Policy 248 – Added 2.18.2025/Updated 2.20.2025/Updated 2.27.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9



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Item No. 23. - Waiver of Consideration by Policy Committee and First Reading; Adoption of Board Finance Policies - Added 2.18.2025/Updated 2.20.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 24. - Authorization to Apply for and, if Awarded, Accept Six Solar for Schools Program Grants (\$2,137,596) – Added 02.20.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 25. - Contract with Kane Communications, LLC for School Cabling Enhancements (\$2,250,000) - Added 2.20.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 26. - Contract w/ Various Vendors - Youth Mentoring and Engagement (\$3,000,000) – Added 2.21.2025

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cubbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0



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Item No. 27. - Application for New Charter School: Early College Charter School of Philadelphia –Added 2.25.2025

The vote on the motion to deny the new charter application and adopt the adjudication for Early College Charter School of Philadelphia was:

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Harper, Ms. Lam, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 6

No: Ms. Cabbage, Mr. Jones, Ms. Novales - 3

Item No. 28. - Application for New Charter School: Pan American Academy Charter School – Pathways High School – Added 2.25.25

The vote on the motion to deny the new charter application and adopt the adjudication for Pan American Academy Charter High School was:

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cabbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 8

No: 0

Abstention - Ms. Novales - 1

Item No. 29. - . Opposing Proposed Federal Cuts to Reduce Funding For K-12 Schools and The Programs That Serve Our Most Vulnerable Children – Added 2.25.2025/Updated 2.27.2025

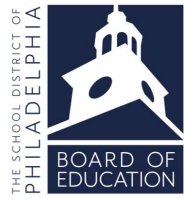
Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Cabbage, Ms. Harper, Mr. Jones, Ms. Lam, Ms. Novales, Ms. Stern, President Streater, Ms. Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Adjournment

President Streater announced that the Board will hold its next Goals and Guardrails Committee Meeting on March 13, 2025 at 4:00 p.m., via hybrid format.

ADOPTED



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President Streater announced that the Board will hold its next public business on March 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m., via hybrid format.

On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Reginald L. Streater, Esq., President
Board of Education

Tony Watlington, Ed.D.
Superintendent