

## **VOICE Charter School of New York Minutes of July 26, 2023, Board Meeting**

- Trustees in Attendance:** Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Sheila Durant (via Zoom), Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom), (via Zoom), Rick Grassey (via Zoom), Karen Valbrun (via Zoom).
- Absent Trustees:** Sari Biddelman, Casey Lamb, Susheel Kurien.
- Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Jim Ford, Dwayne Andrews.
- Date and Time:** July 26, 2023, 4:38 pm to 6:03 pm
- Location:** Zoom

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:38 pm.
2. Mr. Doyle attended the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation and said it was a touching and moving ceremony. He thanked Mr. Headley for the end of the year and for developing plans for moving forward.
3. The school was fully closed the first two weeks of July for a short summer break. Mr. Headley and the Strategy team, made up of the school's directors, returned to the school following the break and traveled to San Diego for a retreat.
4. Mr. Doyle introduced Dwayne Andrews, a lobbyist who will be working with VOICE. Jim Ford also joined the board meeting to discuss the final drafts of the action plans.
5. After a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the June 14 board meeting were approved.



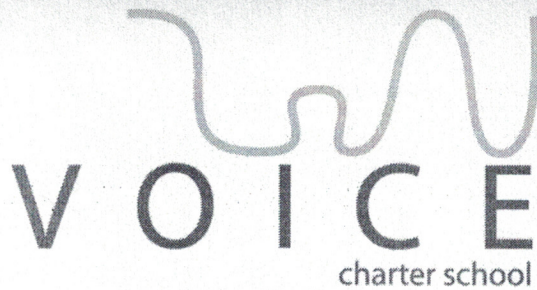
All students will learn. All students will sing.

6. Mr. Andrews has been brought on to help navigate the renewal process, among other things. With the changing times and changing personnel in the mayor's office, it was time for VOICE to bring on a new lobbyist team to assist with the next renewal. Mr. Headley and Mr. Doyle have both met with Mr. Andrews, and it was suggested to meet on a regular basis to keep the involvement and deep connections with the various offices. Mr. Andrews submitted a comprehensive proposal.
7. Mr. Andrews introduced himself and gave background on his renewal work over the years. He explained how he builds up a rapport leading up to renewals with officials and their staff members due to term limits often become officials down the line. Mr. Andrews expressed his hope to work with VOICE, stating the school is doing interesting and innovative things.
8. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley gave an update on the facilities timeline for the DiMarco building. He explained that the timeline is moving quickly, and we are ahead of schedule on certain tasks. Mr. Headley is excited about the laundry room we'll be able to provide for families in the DiMarco building.
9. Mr. Headley also gave an update on the turnaround happening in the labor market. He said VOICE's recruiter, Liz Blair, has been doing a great job reaching out to people on LinkedIn, encouraging people to apply, and creating profiles for the job openings. He gave a hiring update, stating that Lower Elementary is currently over-hired. Upper Elementary and Middle School have a few positions left to fill but are in good shape. Mr. Headley explained the transition plan in place for the Middle School high school placement role, stating the Daniel Powel will take over the role. Mr. Powel also works in the summer program, which will make this a good transition plan. The board asked which key positions the school has left to fill – we're still short on social workers. We're looking to hire Spanish speakers because children need the support from social workers. Mr. Headley gave an update on the search for a Data Manager, stating it will be more challenging to find. It is an unusual position that requires other pieces of consulting work.
10. There have been conversations about the accountability action plan and the systems going in place for the board to be confident about fulfilling responsibilities to get a full renewal. VOICE is currently looking for a consultant to help gain clarity around how the EAC can help the board and assist with managing up. Mr. Ford and Mr. Headley have focused the action plan on grades K-5 since they use a published curriculum and the performance in grades 3-5 has been historically low. The Middle School plan is a bit vaguer because they don't use a published curriculum. There's also discussion about bringing Amy D'Angelo formally with Achievement First to work with the Middle School.



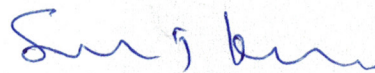
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11. Mr. Headley gave an update on the strategy retreat in San Diego. During the trip, the directors visited three year-round schools that are in close proximity to the Mexico border. The team felt very welcome at the schools and explained how each school was different. They were all in a process of change. The Strategy team asked each school about their best support for their ELLs and how to hold them responsible for their grade levels. There were also discussions about parent engagement.
12. There has been discussion about the process of developing and implementing the action plans and having the board more involved in the oversight of the action plans. Mr. Headley thanked Mr. Ford and his team for spending a lot of time on the action plans and strategic plan, spending time deeply thinking through the issues. The board members self-reflected on the process and mentioned that the strategic plan will be an evolving document as the times change. The current draft of the action plans went to the board members to review for feedback. The goal is for the school to collectively hit the ground running with a well thought out action plan that defines metrics and goals that we are implementing, achieving, and making progress on. At the board level, committees and task forces will need to be formed with respect to individual action plans. This will require some board members to be more deeply invested. The board members continued to give their initial reactions to the action plans, such as having a clear understanding of the roles within the various plans, clarifying what the inputs are, and who is accountability. There was a suggestion to have Ms. D'Angelo help with transitioning the action plans to a workable document that the board can assign responsibilities. The board also mentioned wanting to get a monthly dashboard as early as September, as well as find volunteers to look through the academic action plan more deeply. Mr. Doyle will also be meeting with Ms. D'Angelo to discuss her role in this review process.
13. Mr. Headley assigned the Strategy team to read *Designing Your Life* over the summer, which is about finding your dream job. The Strategy team worked through the exercises in the book with the purpose of transforming each role. The teams will have to be agile to increase student scores and the book relates to working with a team to make the school better.
14. Mr. Ford gave his thoughts on the conversation about the action plans, reiterating that they will continue to evolve. He likes the idea of an individual review of the plans and making it more digestible for the board for them to assign board committees. There are still some outstanding pieces, such as defining the board related issues in the action plan. The strategic plan also links to the action plans, mentioning we can't lose sight of where the challenges originally steamed. The narrative was developed first, which became the driver for the action plans. Overall, Mr. Headley is accountable for the strategic plan results.
15. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:03 pm.



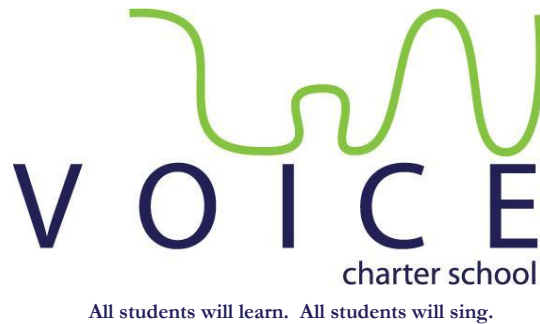
**V O I C E**  
charter school

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Susheel Kurien, Secretary



## **VOICE Charter School of New York Notes of August 23, 2023, Board Meeting**

The August 23, 2023 VOICE Board of Trustees met with these board members present:

**Trustees in Attendance:** Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Sachin Gujral (via Zoom), Susheel Kurien (via Zoom)

**Absent Trustees:** Sari Biddelman, Sheila Durant, Rick Grasse, Michael Karp, Casey Lamb, Karen Valbrun.

**Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco.

**Date and Time:** August 23, 2023, 4:43 pm to 5:56 pm

**Location:** Zoom

Since this is not a majority of the Board, the quorum was not met and as such no actions were taken. Below are notes of what was discussed at this meeting.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:43 pm.
2. Mr. Doyle explained that this is an unofficial meeting due to not meeting quorum. This meeting time was used to provide updates – the July meeting minutes are not able to be approved during this meeting. We currently have 10 board members and outreach for new people is a continued effort, with a focus on adding people to the finance committee.
3. An update was given on the status of the action plans and strategic plan. Overall, the board would like the information to be presented in a more digestible matter where responsibilities are clearly assigned. Through this process, we were able to put direct focus on important metrics, now we're hoping to engage with someone to support the school



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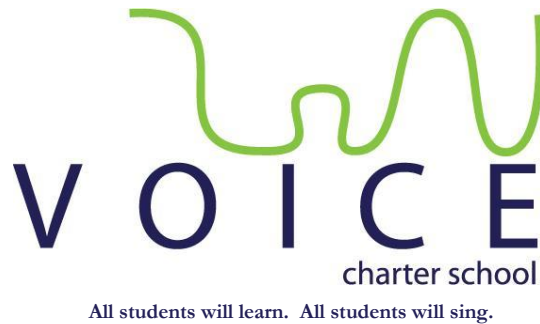
team in monitoring them throughout the year. There have been a few external candidates considered for this role.

4. In connection with implementing the strategic and action plans, VOICE has retained three important people – two consultants and a new Dean. Amy D’Angelo was brought on as a consultant to work with the Middle School, which includes a refresh of reevaluating teachers and administration and introducing metrics of student performance. Dana Clark from Gravity Goldberg’s firm was brought on as an ELA consultant, addressing the needs in K-5 ELA, including improving the teaching of ELA with the use of the curriculum. Lastly, VOICE hired a Dean of Data, Dominic van Bussel, who will be working with the school and EAC committee to define the use of data and develop dashboards. Mr. van Bussel interviewed for a teaching role but has experience in data and giving feedback to teachers on data systems. He will also be transitioning the strategic plan and action plans to PowerPoints to make the information more digestible for the board. There is also a development of a time/responsibility chart to show the specific set of actions that will be taken from the strategic plan and the timeline of these key milestones.
5. David Frank will be attending September’s board meeting. He knows the process of authorization and wants to join to answer any questions.
6. During the finance committee meeting, the closing accounts for the year were discussed and good news came from exceeding our target.
7. During the Principal’s report, Mr. Headley gave an update on hiring, stating that it has been volatile. We have had new hires not show up on the first day without any communication. We are a little behind on hiring due to this, but we have enough staff to open the doors. We have been hiring temps to fill some positions, as well. Mr. Headley also explained that enrollment has been volatile, stating the school has been getting new families moving around in the shelters. Enrollment numbers for kindergarten are lower than expected and will continue into the year. Some other trends we’re noticing are more children coming from the food bank are from Russia, rather than South America, which was more common last school year.
8. Mr. Headley also gave an update on the progress of the DiMarco building. During phase one of the project, there were some complications with the plumbing work and flooding with the rain, but the asbestos process went faster than expected. Some construction was added during this phase, as well, for the culture aspect. For example, to value collaboration, the architecture of some of the doorways was changed to allow for easy access for teachers in between rooms. Additional space for small groups was also given to the ENL teacher. It was decided not to remove the lockers from the building. The walkway between the buildings will not be completed in phase one of the project.



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9. The board had a few questions about the additional work in phase one, such as why it was not included in the initial estimates. Mr. Headley explained some of these things could not have been thought of beforehand without simulating the teachers' experience. The board would like to have a construction subcommittee and a process that allows any changes in the project to be reported to the finance committee or construction subcommittee for approval. The board would also like monthly construction reports to make sure the project is on track with the budget. When reviewing contracts and change orders, the finance committee would like to set a threshold of 10% change for their approval. Mr. Ficeto will also schedule Special Finance committee meetings to discuss the status of this project.
  
10. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 5:56 pm.



## **VOICE Charter School of New York Minutes of September 20, 2023, Board Meeting**

- Trustees in Attendance:** Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Sheila Durant, Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Sachin Gujral, Michael Karp (via Zoom), Susheel Kurien, Rick Grasse (via Zoom).
- Absent Trustees:** Sari Biddelman, Casey Lamb.
- Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Charlene Martinez, Matthew Kolman, Patricia Davis.
- Date and Time:** September 20, 2023, 4:40 pm to 6:40 pm
- Location:** VOICE Charter School and Zoom

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:40 pm.
2. The board was notified that Ms. Karen Valbrun will be resigning from the board. Mr. Doyle reminded the board that will now have 9 board members and that recruitment for new candidates is still ongoing.
3. On behalf of the PA, co-chair Patricia Davis, provided a parent report. The PA was scheduled to meet later this week with our after-school vendor, Legacy, to discuss the program offerings and determine interest in signing up. Ms. Davis said the PA's goal is to get more parents involved this year and that they would like to conduct surveys for parent feedback. Ms. Davis also expressed she is happy with the new Upper Elementary wing building and is interested in seeing how all the buildings will co-exist. Her son, Braceson, who was also present at the meeting, is in the Middle School building and he informed the Board that hallways are less crowded and there is more space. He also noticed the Science





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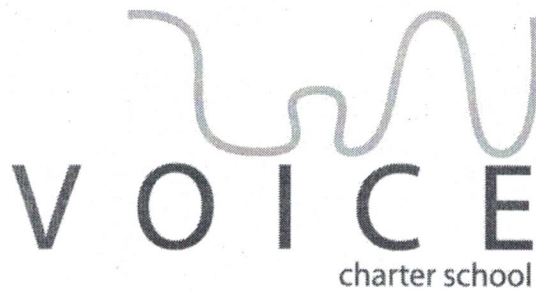
rooms added new tables and “looks more like a science lab”. Ms. Davis also inquired about the budget for the PA – Mr. Headley explained that there is funding that goes towards students’ overnight trips and other student-oriented events.

4. After a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the unofficial August 23 board meeting were approved.
5. During the Principal’s report, Mr. Headley gave an update on the construction timeline for the Upper Elementary wing. Mr. Headley communicated the good news that within 7 weeks, they were able to prepare the building for children and were able to open the building on time. However, since we were not able to get into the building until the summer, some things were only discovered in the limited time available, such as the drainage issues for the parking lot. Mr. Headley updated the Board on the originally proposed construction project to expand the cafeteria. The anticipated construction costs do not support continuing with this part of the construction. The current focus is to observe how the relationship between the two buildings, with regard to parallel food service (i.e cafeterias in both buildings) will impact the children. The primary necessity is to get the egress between the two buildings in place and operational – currently, students are traveling down the sidewalk or walk through the parking lot. The last part of the egress needs to be surveyed by ground radar to determine any critical impediments. Once that is completed, Mr. Headley will report back – the hope is to have the egress completed by early November.
6. Mr. Grassey gave a finance committee update. Combined finance and construction committee meetings have been scheduled. We are currently over the number of students budgeted. Our budget calls for 810 students, and we currently have over that number. Newcomers make up about 300 of those students over the course of the school year – this revolving door of newcomers impacts on morale and resources. The strategy to frontload and overbook is something VOICE has done in past years – we will stop enrolling in the second week of school. We are also currently understaffed, but coverage has been provided by temps. Last month we saw a surplus. The question was brought up how the budget surplus affects education. Mr. Headley brought up VOICE staffing in relation to this and the trends we are seeing with teachers leaving and filling vacancies. Hiring teachers is our recruitment priority.
7. Mr. Headley gave some background on Amy D’Angelo’s work this summer and how it relates to the EAC. VOICE’s Dean of Data met with Ms. D’Angelo and has been working on mapping out EAC meetings based on when data is available over the course of the year. Ms. D’Angelo’s work also focused on delivering on the goals of the academic improvement plan and a Middle School improvement plan. Mr. Headley thanked Ms. D’Angelo for all her good work this summer.



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8. Mr. Headley gave some background on Jacob Michaelman's upcoming work with the school. Mr. Michaelman will be visiting the school to observe the in-person evaluations in its current state. He will be working on items for the performance reviews.
9. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley gave an update on bussing. It's been a great start to bussing this year, there haven't been problems with the routes. The buses are now coming to the Upper Elementary wing, which has been a good experience so far. There is a bus strike looming – if this happens and affects our routes, we will do our best to support families and lessen the disruption. Mr. Headley also notified the board that a Japanese TV network, NHK, filmed at the school for story coverage on newcomers' experiences in NY schools. The NHK team was very happy to be at the school and we expect some good coverage from the story. A reporter from a local newspaper, The 74, will also be visiting the school in early October to do a story on us. This positive media reporting becomes a part of who we are and is a highlight in terms of renewal.
10. Mr. Headley presented on the strategic plan highlights, the purpose being to digest the findings. A master timeline for the action plans was also created. The presentation also highlighted the 80/20 work that will be done in classrooms, which stemmed from the Strategy team's deep retreat work over the summer. It was also explained that a new baseline for September's iReady data will be determined given that we have a new student population in front of us, differing from what was represented in the spring data. With the large ENL population, we can see this as an opportunity to develop better instruction for all children. Recognizing previous curriculum misalignments we are now getting back to the core of VOICE. There will be clear priorities that will flow into the teacher evaluation. One of the priorities being student attendance and monitoring it daily and having a family communication process in place to chronic absent students. The other part is also celebrating those who are present in school. There will also be reading groups and targeted interventions for newcomers. Mr. Headley will be attending divisional leadership meetings and will join a sampling of walkthroughs and observations. The work with Mr. Michaelmen will focus on the principal's evaluation, as well as the leadership/governance portion of the action plans.
11. During the August PD training for teachers, the academic action plan was communicated to staff on a macro level. In order to get feedback from students and teachers, pulse surveys are distributed and the data from the results is reviewed. Mr. Headley also holds office hours and gathers informal data in the main office.
12. The board meeting went into closed session at 6:21 pm to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken.



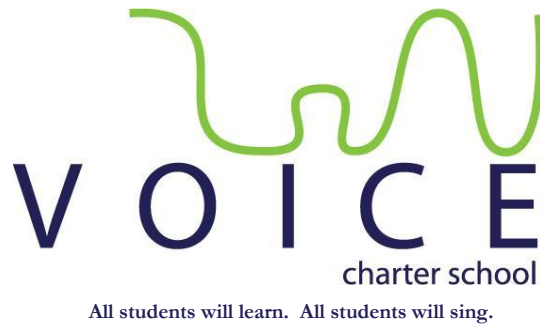
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11. During the August PD training for teachers, the academic action plan was communicated to staff on a macro level. In order to get feedback from students and teachers, pulse surveys are distributed and the data from the results is reviewed. Mr. Headley also holds office hours and gathers informal data in the main office.
12. The board meeting went into closed session at 6:21 pm to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken.
13. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:40 pm.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Susheel Kurien", is written over a horizontal line.

Susheel Kurien, Secretary



## **VOICE Charter School of New York Notes of October 18, 2023, Board Meeting**

The October 18, 2023 VOICE Board of Trustees met with these board members present:

**Trustees in Attendance:** Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Rick Grasse (via Zoom), Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom), Susheel Kurien (via Zoom).

**Absent Trustees:** Sari Biddelman, Sheila Durant, Sachin Gujral, Casey Lamb.

**Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Juan Vasquez.

**Date and Time:** October 18, 2023, 4:35 pm to 6:10 pm

**Location:** Zoom

Since this is not a majority of the Board, the quorum was not met and as such no actions were taken. Below are notes of what was discussed at this meeting.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:35 pm.
2. Mr. Doyle explained that this is an unofficial meeting due to not meeting quorum. The purpose of the meeting to provide updates – the September meeting minutes are not able to be approved during this meeting.
3. During the finance committee meeting, Mr. Grasse reported they reviewed the budget and discussed how it was impacted by understaffing. Solutions as to resources for understaffing were discussed, including tutoring agencies, to address the needs of raising student academic performance. They also reviewed variances in the budget, such as the addition of the changed curriculum and unanticipated labor expenses.



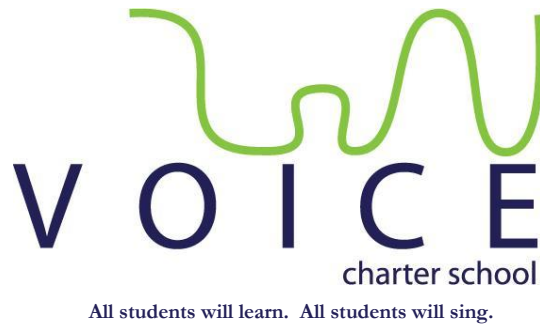
All students will learn. All students will sing.

4. Mr. Headley also gave an update on the progress of the DiMarco building. There have been no surprises, and the authorized work is set to continue roughly on schedule, with an aim to complete work in January. The city asked for a soil sample, which we will share the results once they are received.
5. Mr. Headley gave an update on the flooding that occurred at the school at the end of September. The school has been working with an adjustor for the insurance. The flood caused damage to machines, computers, books, and the gym floor. The photocopiers have been moved upstairs from the basement to the main office at the Lena Horne campus. We had a team that worked through the weekend to pump the water out and sanitize the building. On the day of the flooding, we temporarily lost the use of the kitchen, so the students had a pizza party. In about 4-6 weeks, we'll have the school inspected for mold before doing any repainting.
6. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley gave highlights on the data dashboard. He explained the board will be receiving this dashboard every month and he explained what information will be given through it. The dashboard includes iReady online assessment scores on reading comprehension and math skills, which a larger percentage of students are taking, as well as baseline measurement and assessment results for music. It includes data for student satisfaction and teacher satisfaction, which show there is good morale right now. During the next finance committee meeting, a goal for cash reserves will need to be discussed and set.
7. Mr. Headley gave a presentation on our data launch. This data was presented to the staff, and it was the first time they saw the state results and the cohort analysis. The ELA state test results showed we were behind the district, but a positive narrative can be seen in the returning students because they are closer to the district and the growth is trending positively. The Math state results are much closer to the district and the rate of growth was higher than the district. For returning students, growth almost doubled the district. This data has given us an action plan on how to help the high percentage of ELLs in their ELA skills. In the enrollment data by demographic, we also beat the district in almost every category, including unhoused students and students with disabilities.
8. Now that we have the state proficiency results, we can set goals for the year. We need to get the students to grade level so we can meet the district. Our constant that we've had over the years is our music program, which is most likely a reason our math scores are stronger because there is a correlation between music and math skills. Music also helps with language acquisition – this year, we have a full capacity music department. In order to reach the goals we set, we need to focus on a theory of action, which is more narrow aspect of the academic action plan.



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9. During our work with Amy D'Angelo, we talked through a schedule and cycle for Mr. Headley to observe classrooms firsthand and unfiltered, as well as attending grade meetings and teacher check-ins. Mr. Headley also discussed the low hanging fruit to put our efforts in, such as student attendance. For example, there is a procedure in place for calling parents if a student is frequently absent. As we set these goals, progress is being shared with staff in the form of percentages daily in an effort of data transparency. The other low hanging fruit data we're tracking revolves around direct instruction, time on task, and classroom transitions.
10. During the Parent report, PA co-chair Juan Vasquez expressed he has seen more attentiveness to communication from teachers via Talking Points. He said it's been a great start to the school year. He wants to sit down with parents and get more feedback from them. He mentioned the annual Parade of Nations event is next month and there's an upcoming Scholastic book fair. There was a question if there is a library in the school – only the classrooms have libraries. There are also field trips to the public library to ensure students have a library card.
11. Mr. Headley gave an update on the recent press that has been at the school. Part of the renewal responsibility is ensuring a fair narrative of our school is understood, therefore a relationship with the media is important. The Japanese news television station, NHK, visited the school to do a live broadcast and included some great clips of the school during their coverage. We also had a reporter visit from The 74, a publication that covers education news. Mr. Headley was also quoted in a Chalkbeat article about the mayor's 60 day eviction notice. In his quote, he said this would be disruptive to families. We are tracking this story and figuring out how it would affect our families and how we can help.
12. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:10 pm.



**VOICE Charter School of New York  
Minutes of November 28, 2023, Board Meeting**

- Trustees in Attendance:** Sari Biddleman (via Zoom), Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Sheila Durant (via Zoom), Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom), Susheel Kurien.
- Absent Trustees:** Rick Grasseley, Sachin Gujral, Casey Lamb.
- Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Dominic Van Bussel, Patrick Ford (via Zoom).
- Date and Time:** November 28, 2023, 4:40 pm to 6:30 pm
- Location:** VOICE Charter School and Zoom

**AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

**BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:40 pm.
2. After a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the unofficial October 18 board meeting were approved.
3. Mr. Headley provided an update on the soil sample from the construction site – the results were as expected and confirmed that it is safe for the school. Additionally, the mold check conducted after the flooding returned a negative result
4. Mr. Headley provided a finance committee update. The variances remain the same and we are budgeted to have a deficit due to the additional funds reserved for academic improvement. Hiring teachers continues to be our recruitment priority as we work to fill vacancies with the support of recruitment agencies and contracted teachers. A discussion



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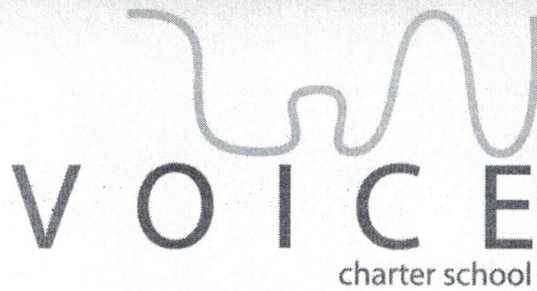
ensued on cash balances related to the construction of the last stages of the Upper Elementary wing building.

5. Mr. Headley provided an EAC committee update. He presented a PowerPoint on the data dashboard and the academic achievement plan, which included updates on teacher quality, test prep starting in January, certification progress, the new sick day accrual policy that started this year, and teacher vacancies. Mr. Headley also provided an update on the 60-day eviction notice that was provided by the city to the shelters -there is uncertainty as to how this will impact our newcomer families due to the various issues impacting how they would follow-through with this plan. Additional data that was presented included student attendance, ELA IAs and how we're predicting if we're on track to meet our goals, cohort analysis based on the ELA IAs, and the employee pulse survey. During the next EAC meeting, there will be a presentation on grades K-2 data to see how the foundational learning affects testing grades as the students move into the upper grades. Tutoring interventions that have already been implemented in Middle school were also discussed, as the team collects data to determine which interventions are most effective.
6. During next month's meeting, Jacob Michaelman will be joining to report on his findings from his classroom walkthroughs. Dominic Van Bussell will also be joining to review the action plan timeline that came from our strategic planning work and to adjust deadlines for the board-related items.
7. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley gave an update on the construction for the Upper Elementary wing. The work on the walkway is progressing and there have been no significant changes on costs. The construction is expected to end in February. Mr. Headley also gave an update on the insurance adjuster visit to assess the flood damage – the claim will be honored and a plan for fixes to the damage is in place and bids to contractors are being collected.
8. The board meeting went into closed session at 5:50 pm to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken.
9. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

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Susheel Kurien, Secretary





All students will learn. All students will sing.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Susheel Kurien".

Susheel Kurien, Secretary



## **VOICE Charter School of New York Minutes of December 20, 2023, Board Meeting**

**Trustees in Attendance:** Sari Biddleman (via Zoom), Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Rick Grasse (via Zoom), Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Sachin Gujral (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom).

**Absent Trustees:** Sheila Durant, Susheel Kurien, Casey Lamb.

**Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Dominic Van Bussel, Jacob Michelman, Patricia Davis, Juan Vasquez.

**Date and Time:** December 20, 2023, 4:41 pm to 5:54 pm

**Location:** Zoom

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:41 pm.
2. Since this month's meeting met virtually, the board did not officially meet quorum. The board will vote to approve the meeting minutes, district safety plan, and the emergency remote plan during January's meeting.
3. Mr. Headley shared with the board a video from the winter concerts. The concerts went very well, and the seats were packed.
4. Mr. Grasse provided a finance committee update, including the enrollment update. There were only minor changes in the variances from prior periods. VOICE is on track to hit the budgeted target. In the new year, decisions will be made on additional expenditures needed in the classrooms, including outside tutoring and additional assistants. We are currently on budget with these additional expenditures but may need to additional spend in the spring



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based on the result of our targeted tutoring. There was also discussion about the cash balances related to the construction of the Upper Elementary wing building and the academic improvement plan and its impact in the following year.

5. Mr. Headley informed the board that he has attended meetings with Mr. Ficeto about the changes in the city SPED funding and what the new formula might mean for us.
6. PA co-chair, Patricia Davis, gave a parent report which focused on updates from the latest in-person PA parent meeting. The parent meeting had a good turnout, and they discussed the parent teacher conferences. Parents were happy about the winter concerts and are looking forward to more events.
7. Mr. Headley provided an EAC committee update. Ms. Durant will visit the school to observe our literacy consultant work with teachers. We also will be partnering with GO Foundation next year to help with our recruitment efforts.
8. Jacob Michelman joined the meeting to report on his findings from his classroom walkthroughs. Mr. Michelman has been working with the school since September, helping with the action plan implementation. He also previously worked with VOICE in 2020 on a school assessment during COVID. He presented the vision for his support for the school and how his work stems from the strategy plan developed by Jim Ford. He reported on his findings from his classroom walkthroughs, stating there are strong leaders in the divisions and strong routines, protocols, and systems in place. He saw opportunities to build out tier 1 instruction and for more student discourse. He also shared his reflections with the leadership team during their debriefs after each division's classroom walkthroughs, crafting key questions to focus on. These reflections on what clear instruction looks like and key steps to meet this vision will also be shared with the EAC committee. Mr. Michelman will also support the review of the principal evaluation tool.
9. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley reviewed the data dashboard. Mr. Headley and Mr. Van Bussell are evaluating the different tutoring pilot programs being used for tier 3 to decide which to expand on in January. The board also discussed the monthly reporting on enrollment and an update on the city's eviction notice announcement to shelter housing. This announcement affects about 30 of our students and VOICE is reaching out to these families to see how we can help. Mr. Headley provided an update on attendance, teacher vacancies, and teacher certifications. He also updated the board on the ERC credit and our decision to not pursue it.
10. The board meeting went into closed session at 5:54 pm to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken.

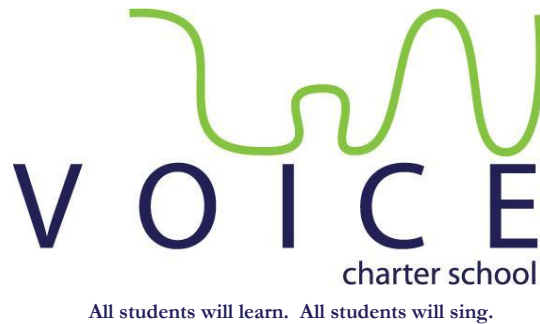


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11. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

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Susheel Kurien, Secretary



## **VOICE Charter School of New York Minutes of January 17, 2024, Board Meeting**

- Trustees in Attendance:** Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Sheila Durant (via Zoom), Rick Grasse (via Zoom), Sachin Gujral (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom), Susheel Kurien (via Zoom), Casey Lamb (via Zoom).
- Absent Trustees:** Sari Biddleman, Michael Guarini.
- Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Thomas Ficeto.
- Date and Time:** January 17, 2024, 4:35 pm to 6:05 pm
- Location:** Zoom – remote locations for all Zoom participants were posted on meeting notice.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:35 pm.
2. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley reviewed the data dashboard. Enrollment is following the trend we expected to see mid-year and we have reached the target enrollment. In terms of our newcomer families, we didn't see as many of them leave over the holiday break compared to last year. A small percentage of our families are also affected by the city's eviction threat. Mr. Headley provided an update on teacher vacancies and attendance.
3. Ms. Durant provided an EAC committee update. She conducted a visit to VOICE to observe our ELA consultant's work with the teachers. Ms. Durant noted that the data is clear and she can see the progress of the students, as well as the development of the teachers. The ELA consultant has a strong knowledge of instruction and was able to



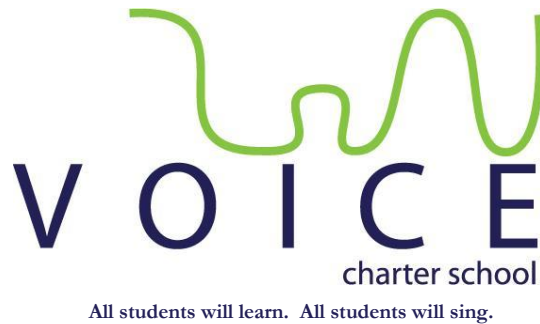
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provide modeling for the teachers. She is hopeful that we will see great results from this support in the classrooms.

4. During the EAC committee meeting, each school director presented their part of the academic improvement plan, initiated by our work with Jim Ford. The presentations reflected on what has happened so far, what is working, what is not working, and what mid-year adjustments will be made. Our goals for each division are not entirely fixed since our renewal goals are based on our scores compared to the city's performance. We do believe we will still meet the goals we set for our divisions. Some examples from the academic improvement plans include piloting our tutoring programs and how we will expand on them based on the results we've seen so far, as well as an expansion of our summer programming. School directors will also be more involved in the recruitment process, ensuring quality teachers are brought on board.
5. Mr. Headley explained how we are preparing for the computer-based testing in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Teachers have participated in professional development sessions with Performance Matters, a data system that allows students to practice computer-based tests with our interim assessments. VOICE's Dean of Data, Dominic Van Bussel, will give a presentation on Performance Matters during next month's board meeting.
6. The board reviewed the district safety plan and the emergency remote instruction plan. During the discussion, a question regarding an assessment of our technology and cyber security was asked – Mr. Gujral and Mr. Kurien will meet with our staff to further investigate our cyber security framework. After a motion duly made and seconded, the district safety plan and emergency remote instruction plan were approved.
7. Mr. Ficeto provided a finance committee update. The variances remain similar to last month and we are pacing ahead of our budgeted target. Mr. Ficeto gave an update on SPED funding, enrollment, and how teacher vacancies are affecting the financials. We are planning to allocate the budget towards teacher recruitment to find quality teachers, similar to what we did for student recruitment. The board would like to create a task force to focus on teacher recruitment efforts and find resources to track and measure applications. We will also be ramping up student recruitment. Mr. Ficeto gave an update on the balance sheet, cash flow, bond portfolio, and cash projections over the next six months.
8. The board meeting went into closed session at 6:05 pm to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken.
9. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.



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Susheel Kurien, Secretary



## **VOICE Charter School of New York Minutes of February 14, 2024, Board Meeting**

**Trustees in Attendance:** Sari Biddleman (via Zoom), Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Michael Guarini (via Zoom), Rick Grassey (via Zoom), Sachin Gujral (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom), Casey Lamb (via Zoom).

**Absent Trustees:** Sheila Durant, Susheel Kurien.

**Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Thomas Ficeto, Dominic Van Bussel.

**Date and Time:** February 14, 2024, 4:34 pm to 6:02 pm

**Location:** Zoom – remote locations for all Zoom participants were posted on the meeting notice.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:34 pm.
2. Michael Guarini announced he will be resigning from the board effective at the end of this meeting.
3. Mr. Ficeto provided a finance committee update. The variances remain similar to last month with some more money coming in federal funding for summer programming. Mr. Ficeto gave an update on maximizing yields in the bond market, PTO payout calculations, and filling the open teacher vacancies. He also reviewed the balance sheet, cash flow, bond portfolio, and cash projections, which is positively trending for the end of the year.
4. Ms. Lamb provided a governance committee update. This was the first time the committee has met since last spring. During their meeting, they checked in and reflected on goals set





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last year, as well as set goals for this year. They acknowledged the board has changed in significant ways and is currently a smaller group than in previous years. Ms. Lamb reminded the board that VOICE's bylaws state a minimum of 7x board members are required. This number could be revisited as discussions about what is the right size for the board commenced. The governance committee will also be reaching out to board members individually to have conversations about what you hope to get out of serving on the board and what the school needs from the board. The governance committee will also be working on a succession plan for the board and they are planning to re-establish their connection with board recruitment networks. Ms. Lamb reminded the board to bring new prospects to the school. She would also like to speak with our newest board member, Mr. Gujral, about his experience with the onboarding process.

5. Ms. Biddleman provided an EAC committee update. The committee has been impressed with how the meetings have been conducted and how the data has been reported to them.
6. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley reviewed the data dashboard. Enrollment is tracking where we want it to be, meeting our target enrollment. We have a waitlist forming and are keeping the enrollment number stable with a healthy pipeline built from the waitlist. Our student attendance is consistent with the city, although not where we want it to be. However, we may need to reconsider our expectations. Our newcomer families are playing a part in the attendance numbers since families are moving away while still being enrolled in the school. We are communicating with families to keep these records updated. We are also making progress on our teacher certifications, enrolling teachers in Relay. Mr. Headley gave an update on teacher vacancies and the creative solutions that are in the works to enhance teacher recruitment. Referrals continue to be the strongest pipeline for quality teachers.
7. Mr. Headley shared a condensed report that was presented during the EAC committee meeting, which included attendance data by grade level, comparing it to last year's data in January. The report also showed student discharges by month, showing our newcomers at the highest level most months. We are serving a different population than 5 years ago. ELA IA data showed some stories of success in certain grades almost reaching their goals and other grades showing an improvement in proficiency. As the data is assessed, the test prep and test prep launches are being revamped. The iReady ELA data has proven to be an excellent predictor on how students will perform on the state test – we saw some stories of success here with certain grades coming close to their goals. iReady Math data also showed an upward trend, celebrating certain grades for their jump in scores.
8. Mr. Headley gave an update on internal and external interventions in place for our students, including K-2's partnership with Reading Go and our tutoring services. We have expanded



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our tutoring services in grades 3-5 and grades 6-8 since reviewing the data and seeing the positive impact.

9. VOICE had a remote snow day this week due to NYC closing their schools for the weather. We haven't had a snow day since 2018. VOICE was able to make the adjustment and give students asynchronous work, while the teachers had a remote PD day. During this PD day, staff had more time to breakdown the data and modify lessons based on standards.
10. VOICE is also looking to implement a new teacher development platform, Sibme. This tool is aligned with VOICE's efforts in the growth of our teachers. The Voice leadership saw a demo of the platform, which consists of AI reporting and data tracking interpreted from videos uploaded to the platform of teachers in the classroom. We will schedule a time for a Sibme demo with the EAC committee. There has also been a declaration of a potential conflict of interest due to our point person at Sibme being a spouse of a board member.
11. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:02 pm.

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Susheel Kurien, Secretary



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## **VOICE Charter School of New York Minutes of March 20, 2024, Board Meeting**

**Trustees in Attendance:** Chris Doyle (via Zoom), Sheila Durant (via Zoom), Rick Grasse (via Zoom), Michael Karp (via Zoom), Susheel Kurien (via Zoom), Casey Lamb (via Zoom).

**Absent Trustees:** Sari Biddleman, Sachin Gujral.

**Other Attendees:** Franklin Headley, Diana DiCocco, Thomas Ficeto, Dominic Van Bussel.

**Date and Time:** March 20, 2024, 4:36 pm to 6:29 pm

**Location:** Zoom – remote locations for all Zoom participants were posted on the meeting notice.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Approval of Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
2. Committees and Task Forces
3. Old Business
4. New Business

### **BOARD DELIBERATIONS**

1. Mr. Doyle called the board meeting to order at 4:36 pm.
2. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley reviewed the data dashboard, including the results from our second math interim assessment (IA) and staff pulse survey. Mr. Headley explained the interim assessments are not as strong of a predictor of how students will perform on the state tests as iReady. Comparing the two interim assessments, the scores are trending upwards. Mr. Headley went on to review the grade level data and highlight the key takeaways, such as seeing the greatest growth occurring in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In grades 3-5, we were able to conduct a standards analysis of the same data since the first IA only test



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children on what they had been taught so far, while the second IA covered all topics, including topics that are scheduled to be taught later in the year.

3. Mr. Headley also reviewed how the standards analysis was used to determine our continued tutoring efforts. We shared the results with our after-school programming and external tutoring partner so they could emphasize areas of need. We are also preparing to host a math camp intervention during spring break that will be run by our external tutoring partner, Bobby-Tariq. Sign-ups for this math camp have started and we are seeing a good turnout. Bobby-Tariq tutoring specializes in preparing for tests and we have seen our students engaging well during their sessions. This is the first year VOICE has done test prep, and it has been a different philosophical approach to teaching. We are working on embedding test prep into our everyday routine to familiarize teachers and students, while also making sure school is a joyful place for the students.
4. VOICE will also be hosting a summer program for rising 1<sup>st</sup> graders to rising 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The program will include a mix of the Lavina curriculum and Bobby-Tariq's services. Lavina will provide coaching and training to our summer program staff.
5. During the Principal's report, Mr. Headley presented the employee pulse survey results and key questions that are being tracked on the data dashboard. The school's changing demographic of the newcomer population has affected the results to the question, "I have the resources to meet all the needs of the students in my classroom," since staff is looking for ways to make sure this population feels supported. When we distribute this survey again, we will update this question to have an open-ended follow-up option. The survey had a 60% response rate, which may lead us back to providing incentives. Over the years, we have shortened the survey to increase the response rate. We saw an improving upward trend for the following questions: "I see a place for myself at VOICE five years from now" and "I would recommend a friend to VOICE." This data is shared with the staff and leadership team and goes into supervisors' action plans.
6. The girls' basketball team won the Queens championship game. They are playing for a spot in the finals in Manhattan. The boys' basketball team also a great season, ending in the semi-finals round.
7. The board voted on an update to VOICE's COVID policy. The changes to the policy are eliminating the recommended 5-day quarantine, as per the CDC and city's requirement updates, and removal of the COVID vaccination requirement. The board asked questions



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about how teachers felt about the policy updates and any concerns. After a motion duly made and seconded, the removal of the 5-day quarantine was approved with four members in favor and two members abstaining. After a motion duly made and seconded, the removal of the COVID vaccination requirement was approved with four members in favor and two members abstaining, while also noting we don't know how the staff will feel about this change in requirement. It was also noted that Mr. Headley and Mr. Ficeto attend monthly state webinars that serve as the primary source for updates in COVID policies.

8. The board also voted on VOICE's partnership with Sibme, an instructional coaching and evaluation tool, being aware of the appearance of potential conflict of interest given that a board member's spouse works for the company. Sibme conducted a demo of the platform to Mr. Headley and the leadership team of School Directors and Deans. Afterwards, Sibme presented their platform to the EAC committee. Mr. Karp reported on the presentation, stating he was very impressed with the potential to provide this type of information and impressed with the strong quantitative orientation of the platform. Sibme uses AI technology to collect data on recordings submitted by teachers on their lessons, including data on student talk time vs. teacher talk time. The platform is user friendly and allows teachers accessibility to film their own videos and upload them to the platform. It also empowers teachers to pick the lessons they want to record and allows administrators access to an increased amount of data. Board members asked follow-up questions about Sibme as a company and about the conflict of interest. VOICE will be running the partnership with our attorney to clarify any further steps needed to address the conflict of interest. After a motion duly made and seconded, the motion for VOICE to enter a contract with Sibme was approved, subject to the attorney signing off on it. The conflict of interest related to Ms. Lamb was discussed and she abstained from the vote.
9. After a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes for the December, January, and February board meetings were approved.
10. Mr. Kurien requested an update on the task force dedicated to auditing VOICE's cyber security. They met with the finance committee and will be moving forward with a formal cyber audit of the school. The task force dedicated to recruitment and HR methods will be meeting in the coming weeks to discuss further efforts. We will also plan to have a representative from the Music department join an upcoming board meeting to update the board on the music data collected.



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11. Mr. Ficeto provided a finance committee update. They will engage in a cyber security audit, which will consist of an extensive analysis and a presentation of suggestions. We will know more about the timing once a vendor is selected. Mr. Ficeto reviewed the financials. We received some further federal funding through the FEMA grant. We are also applying for funding for our summer programming, which is higher than budgeted. The insurance money from the flooding that occurred a few months ago came in with a sizeable insurance settlement. The variances remain similar to last month, with higher variances remaining due to the new curriculum and heating costs in the new building. The board will review proposals to improve the heating situation. Mr. Ficeto gave an update on the spending trend of our SPED money. He also reviewed the balance sheet, which is similar to previous months. For the line item of paid time off payable, a list of employees has been gathered who have been employed at VOICE eight or more years and have PTO saved up. Mr. Ficeto explained that if an employee under this profile leaves, they will have 50% of their saved PTO paid to them. He also summarized the cash flow, bond portfolio, and cash projections, which is continuing to grow.
12. Mr. Van Bussel shared VOICE's newly launched website. The website has a new homepage and Board of Trustees page with updated pictures and information on our after-school programs, helping to build VOICE's identity to prospective families.
13. Mr. Headley introduced VOICE's wall mural project. We are receiving bids from vendors to create an image of children on the side of the Upper Elementary school building to act as a strong visual and outdoor advertisement for passer-byers. The board suggested involving students in the project, asking them to help design the vision and center our students' voices.
14. Mr. Karp provided an EAC committee update. The committee received a presentation on the Math IA results, with the numbers tracking slightly more positive.
15. Ms. Lamb provided a governance committee update. The governance committee will continue to reach out to board members individually to have conversations about what you hope to get out of serving on the board and what the school needs from the board. Mr. Karp has also been reaching out to former board members to receive their insights. The committee will be engaging in Board Assist and Board Lead, two recruitment platforms specially for board member opportunities. They have received two prospects from Board Assist and shared their reflections on initial meetings. Overall, the committee is focused on board recruitment and is committed to growing the board.



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16. Enrollment is tracking where we want it to be, remaining at a lower total by design as we don't want to add new students immediately prior to the state tests. Our student attendance is consistent with the city, although not where we want it to be. However, we may need to reconsider our expectations. We are also making progress on our teacher certifications, as we have seen this number has been trending up. In terms of our teacher attendance, we saw a dip in this number in December.

17. Mr. Doyle adjourned the meeting at 6:29 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susheel J. Kurien". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Susheel Kurien, Secretary