



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OCTOBER 8, 2025 | 8 AM

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL INFO | Meeting ID: 893 5140 2100

MEETING LOCATION: TECH FREIRE CHARTER SCHOOL (2221 N. BROAD ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA 19132)

Board Members Present: Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, Kathleen O'Connell

Others Present: Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Kelly KeLeon, Dawn Eubanks, Promise Evans, Brian Galetto, Patrick Leka (10th GRADE STUDENT SERVICES / ENGLISH II TEACHER, FCHS), Chris Moore, Tanza Pugliese, Paul Ramirez, Melanie Reiser, Mya Reynolds, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, Jaleesa Thomas (9th Grade Academic Advisor, TFCS), Nathan Yufer, Andrea Zepp

Meeting Start, 8:04 AM

I. Public Comment

- A. No public comment.

II. Executive Session

- A. Slate of Staff

1. Kathleen makes a motion to move into Executive Session at 8:06 AM *"To discuss any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the agency, or former public officer or employee, provided, however, that the individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected may request, in writing, that the matter or matters be discussed at an open meeting."* Paul Archibald seconds.
2. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.
3. The Freire Charter School board exits Executive Session at 8:12 AM and reconvenes the public meeting.

III. Resolutions

- A. Review & Approve Minutes from Board Meeting on September 10, 2025 (Attachment 1A)*
 1. The board reviews the minutes from the September 10, 2025 board meeting.
 2. Linda Kilpatrick makes a motion to approve. Paul Archibald seconds.
 3. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.
- B. Approve Slate of Staff (Attachment 1B)*
 1. The board reviews the Slate of Staff.
 2. Linda Kilpatrick makes a motion to approve. Paul Archibald seconds.
 3. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.
- C. Review & Approve Schoolwide Plan (Attachment 1C)*
 1. Leigh Botwinik shares this year's School-Wide Plan which outlines how Freire Schools will strengthen academic outcomes for all students, with a particular focus on students with disabilities. The plans align with federal Title I and TSI (Targeted Support and Intervention) requirements and builds upon the Network-Wide Academic Plan introduced earlier this year.
 2. Key efforts include enhanced teacher training particularly around special education topics, refined MTSS interventions, a strategy to embed literacy across the curriculum, and increased time for practice problems in math.
 3. The School will provide an update on TSI plan implementation at February board meeting.
 4. Paul Archibald makes a motion to approve. Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
 5. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

D. Reappoint Freire Schools Collaborative Board Members*

1. Paul Ramirez shares that the Freire Charter School board has the authority to appoint a majority of the members of the Freire Schools Collaborative board.
2. Paul Archibald makes a motion to re-appoint Eldron Blackwell and Len Poncia and to appoint Paul Ramirez as Directors of the FSC board effective June 24, 2025. Raquel Leach seconds.
3. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

IV. School Report

A. Staff & Student Update

1. Chris introduces Promise Evans & Patrick Leka to the board.
2. Promise shares October is her favorite month being at Freire due to the festive activities coming up.
3. In class, she is enjoying learning about root words/origins of words
4. Lunch has been less crowded for the seniors since students are allowed to go out for lunch again. The new incentive is to have the students earn the eligibility to go out by meeting certain thresholds based on their performance in school.
5. The College Application process has been smooth, her current top choice is Yale University and LSU.
6. Spring Break trip is destined for Panama and she is excited to go with her favorite Spanish teacher.
7. Patrick Leka has been with Freire for four years now and primarily taught English, focusing on grades 9-12, and recently transitioned into a Student Services role as a 10th Grade Case Manager, while continuing to teach one section of English. Patrick describes this as the best school year of her career. He enjoys working closely with small groups and providing individualized support to students.
8. Patrick is widely known across the network for launching and leading the Writing My Passion contest, an initiative to encourage student creativity and self-expression. He credits his own positive experiences with writing contests as a student for inspiring him to create similar opportunities for Freire students. His initiative has grown into a well-loved tradition that promotes creativity, resilience, and literacy across the network.

B. Heads Report

1. Andrea Zepp shares that the Middle School students are actively participating in after-school activities, with staff support ensuring smooth engagement.
2. Parent Engagement & Events
 - a) School Night: 143 families attended, representing nearly 30% of the student population. Parents shared positive feedback regarding staff, facilities, and programs.
 - b) Fall Fest: Scheduled for the end of the month for 8th-grade parents.
3. Parent Events by Grade Team:
 - a) 6th Grade: Friendship bracelet event with parents.
 - b) 5th and 7th Grade: Events to be determined.
4. February Seminar Day: Staff-led seminars (educational and recreational) open to any parents and students wishing to participate. This is intended as an additional open house opportunity.
5. Enrollment & Open House
 - a) Open House: Scheduled for Monday, November 10th, targeting prospective and current families to highlight school offerings and attract new enrollments.
6. Student Behavior & Safety
 - a) Attendance is up compared to last year.
 - b) Suspensions have increased due to issues primarily involving new students.
7. Chris Moore shares that enrollment is at the highest level in the school's history.
8. Attendance is up, approaching pre-COVID levels - Suspensions have decreased compared to last year. The school benefits from experienced returning staff as well as new hires who have quickly adapted and positively contributed to the community. Katie Pick, Head of Academics, played a key role in preparing new staff during the summer to ensure readiness and ongoing support throughout the year.
9. Community & School Events
 - a) The school building remains energetic and active, reflecting strong engagement among students, staff, and families.
 - b) Annual Block Party: Scheduled for Halloween, this event is a popular highlight for students and staff. Activities include a DJ, games, and interactive fun such as a dunk tank. The event provides a brief pause from instruction while promoting community engagement.

10. Parent Engagement

- a) Increased partnerships with parents have created a stronger alliance in supporting student compliance with school policies.
- b) Parents are more invested and generally understand school rules, helping students stay on track.

C. October Freire Dashboard (Attachment 2)

1. See Heads Report

D. Health Insurance Update

- 1. Leigh Botwinik shared that both Freire Charter School and TECH Freire added a Board meeting to the calendar for November 12, 2025 with insurance renewal as the key agenda item.

V. Financials

A. August 2025 Financial Report (Attachment 3)

- 1. Ben Wainwright shares that Freire Charter School has a current surplus of \$140,000 and is projected to close the year with a total surplus of \$637,000.
- 2. Total revenue for the year is expected at \$24,400,000 due to higher enrollment count.

B. Audit Update

- 1. Nathan shares the audit will be finalized soon and presented to the board at the next board meeting.

VI. Advancement

A. Advancement Report (Attachment 4)

- 1. Melanie Reiser shares that the unrestricted fundraising target for FY26 is set at \$600,000 which is \$350,000 for the Philadelphia campuses and \$250,000 for Freire Wilmington.
- 2. To date currently the Advancement Team has raised \$209,920 in donations and pledges toward the goal which leaves approximately \$390,000 left.
- 3. A few Advancement Team updates:
 - a) The network-wide Advancement Committee is set to meet on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 to develop a fundraising plan for FY26.
 - b) Recently received a \$9,750 grant from M&T Bank to fund the peer mediation program at the Philadelphia Freire campuses.

B. Political Landscape

- 1. Freire Schools continues to pay close attention to any proposed charter regulation, budget cuts or proposed changes to the charter school renewal process.

VII. Governance

A. Annual Board Visitation Day | October 15, 2025 at 9am

- 1. Olivia Burgess reminds the board of the upcoming annual board visit day at FCSW on October 15, 2025 at 9am.

Meeting Adjourned, 9:27 AM