



CORNERSTONE JEFFERSON-DOUGLASS ACADEMY

Meeting of the Board of Directors Public School Academy Corporation

6861 Nevada Ave. Detroit, MI 48234

Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2025

9:00 a.m.

1) BUSINESS ROUTINE

a) Call to Order (Chairman)

The meeting called to order at 9:01 a.m.

b) Board of Directors Roll Call

Present: Patrick Nelson, David Felton, Marla Thrower, Yvette Bing, Robert Zawideh

Absent: None

Attendees: Andy Anuzis, President; Clint McDaniel, GVSU Representative; John Kava, Legal Counsel (arrived at 9:20a); Dustin Quarrella, Director of Enrollment; Mary Ann Johnson, Finance Director; Grant Heugel, Director of Operations; Elizabeth Noa Carrion, Compliance Director; Joe Valentic, Chief Financial Officer

c) Adoption of Agenda

Nelson moved to adopt the agenda. Felton seconded. All approved.

d) Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes

Nelson moved to approve the previous meeting minutes. Felton seconded. All approved.

e) Pledge of Allegiance

Board and attendees said the pledge of allegiance.

f) Sharing Gratitude

Board and attendees expressed their gratitude's.

2) PUBLIC COMMENT (Limited to agenda items)

There was no public comment.

3) PRESENTATIONS

a) Organizational Update - Andy Anuzis

Spring assessment scores are beginning to arrive and show slight improvements, although overall performance remains aligned with surrounding schools and has yet to experience a significant academic breakthrough. Leadership and culture are our strong assets, with a capable principal and administrative team in place here at JDA. A major concern is the low number of certified teachers at JDA—only 7 out of 26—making recruitment and teacher development a pressing issue. The instructional team is actively supporting non-certified teachers through coaching and professional development focused on instructional quality and classroom management. It was

noted that CEG offers incentives, support programs, and partnerships with organizations to fast-track certification, including financial assistance with a two-year retention requirement.

b) Academic Update - Monica Thompson

The Embargo scores from our MSTEP are not complete, however, we have preliminary MSTEP testing data. Staff has reviewed early insights to guide instructional planning. Notably, third-grade students have shown promising growth in reading, an area of focused intervention. High attendance and student engagement during testing have been critical contributors to success, along with strong coordination from the testing team. Intervention efforts for students performing below grade level are showing measurable academic growth, even for those who may not yet meet proficiency thresholds. Strategic use of IReady data allowed staff to provide targeted support to students with high potential to pass the MSTEP, resulting in encouraging preliminary results. Teachers have also implemented standard-based pacing guides to ensure students are exposed to assessed content, which has contributed to performance improvements in key areas. Moving forward, the school will continue monitoring test completion, analyzing data, and engaging in data-driven instruction planning.

c) Enrollment Update - Dustin Quarrella

We are proposing to add Pre-K programs to the district's elementary schools starting in Fall 2025. We have found a strong family demand for a unified Pre-K through 8th grade structure, which means improved convenience for families, and the potential to increase student retention and enrollment. Pre-K programs are also expected to support early learning readiness, especially in foundational literacy and classroom behaviors, and strengthen our district's virtue education initiative. From a financial standpoint, Pre-K is projected to be sustainable, with each student generating approximately \$12,222 annually—significantly higher than current per-pupil funding in K–8. Though Pre-K classes require smaller student-to-teacher ratios and more staffing (one lead and one assistant per classroom), the economics remain favorable. The district is in the process of securing necessary approvals, including child care center certification and GSRP provider status through Wayne RESA. Initial polling showed interest from approximately 62 families, and recruiting is ongoing. Board members requested a comprehensive financial model, including a 5-year outlook with projected costs, staffing details, and long-term enrollment trends.

d) Financial Update - Mary Ann Johnson

Overall expenditures are tracking below the original budget of \$7.8 million, indicating positive expense management. The need for the amendment is primarily driven by lower-than-expected revenues, largely due to missed enrollment targets and a forecasting error related to federal funding. Johnson reviewed the amended budget, highlighting that total expenditures are currently at 72%—slightly below the typical 75% expected by the third quarter. This variance is attributed to timing and seasonality, particularly due to the accrual of salaries for 10-month employees, which will be reflected at year-end. The current projection anticipates maintaining a 5% general fund balance by year-end. Transitioning from an annualized budgeting approach to a month-by-month model for improved seasonal accuracy moving forward was discussed. Facilities gave an update regarding the rooftop HVAC project affecting several classrooms. Heugel stated that thanks to grant support and quick project execution, impacted classrooms were restored after a brief two-month relocation period.

4) BOARD POLICY WORK

- a)** Board meeting dates: All meetings are at 8:00am.
5. May 19, 2025
6. June 23, 2025

5) ACTION ITEMS

- a.) Approval of the 2025-2026 School Calendar

Nelson motioned to approve Action Item a. Zawideh moved. Thrower seconded. All approved.

- b.) Approval of the Pre-K addition

Nelson motioned to table Action Item b until May's board meeting. Zawideh moved. Thrower seconded. All approved.

c.) Approval of Amended Budget

Nelson motioned to approve Action Item c. Zawideh moved. Thrower seconded. All approved.

6) AUTHORIZER COMMENTS – McDaniel

- Teacher Appreciation Week will take place from May 5–9, with Teacher Appreciation Day on Tuesday, May 6.
- May 6 is also a significant day with: A large statewide advocacy event at the Capitol in Lansing.
- And the Celebration at the Detroit Athenaeum from 4–6 p.m., open to board members and school staff (RSVP deadline has passed, but late requests can be directed to Michael Cousins).
- Results from the 24–25 Stakeholder Survey were shared, showing strong satisfaction scores in areas like communication and oversight. Opportunities for improvement include increasing awareness and use of support resources.
- Board Training Opportunities: Three virtual trainings remain this year, fulfilling the requirement of at least two members attending one hour of training to secure \$10 per pupil funding:
 - April 24: *School Budgeting and Finance*
 - May 22: *Best Practice: Efficient Governance Committee Structures*
 - June 2: *Effective Charter School Governance*
- New Legislative Requirement: As of April 1, all charter schools must include the name of their authorizer and EMO on websites, enrollment forms, ads, and signage. A recorded webinar explaining compliance is available; contact Michael Cousins for access.
- School Aid Budget Proposals (FY25–26):
 - Governor Whitmer proposes \$10,000 per pupil for brick-and-mortar schools and \$8,000 for cyber charter schools.
 - The House proposal recommends \$10,025 per pupil for all schools. Negotiations are ongoing.
- Charter Schools Week will be celebrated May 12–16, highlighting the accomplishments of charter school communities.
- Teacher & Leader Certification Support: The office is investing in alternative certification pathways, including the *Professional Innovators in Teaching* and *LEAD* programs. Scholarships covering 50% of program costs will be available to approved applicants; more details to follow.

7) ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Next Meeting: May 19, 2025, at 8:00 a.m.

8) PUBLIC COMMENT (related to non-agenda items)

There was no public comment.

9) MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:05 a.m. by Nelson. Thrower seconded. The above minutes were duly adopted on 5/19/25 by the Cornerstone Jefferson-Douglass Academy Board of Directors at a properly noticed meeting held at which a quorum was present.

Marla Thrower

Submitted by Marla Thrower, Secretary