



WASHINGTON-PARKS ACADEMY

A Cornerstone School

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Location: 11685 Appleton, Redford Charter Twp, MI 48239

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2025

8:30am

1) BUSINESS ROUTINE

a) Call to Order (President)

The meeting called to order at 8:33 am.

b) Board of Directors Roll Call

Present: Steve Londo, John George, TeShayla Coates, Marcia Kreger

Absent: None

Attendees: Andy Anuzis, President; Dustin Quarrella , Director of Enrollment; Grant Heugel, Director of Operations; Elizabeth Noa Carrion, Compliance Director; Joe Valentic, Chief Financial Officer; Mary Ann Johnson, Finance Director; Clint McDaniel, GVSU Representative; Taiwo Da-Silva, Superintendent; Doug Zloto, Chief Operating Officer; Wanesha Daniel, HR Director (arrived at 8:37 am); John Kava, Legal Counsel (arrived at 8:52 am); Devon Graham, Building Principal

Londo announced that TeShayla Coates is relocating to Texas and will be submitting her resignation.

Adoption of Agenda

George moved. Kreger seconded. All approved.

c) Approval of Previous Board Meeting Minutes

George moved. Kreger seconded. All approved.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board and attendees said the pledge of allegiance.

d) Sharing of 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

Taiwo Da-Silva has been appointed as Superintendent, serving as the primary liaison with the Michigan Department of Education, Grand Valley State University, and school leadership. Doug Zlato, recently retired from the U.S. Secret Service, has joined as Chief Operating Officer (COO). Taiwo expressed gratitude for the opportunity and confidence placed in her by leadership and the board. She has over 20 years in education, including 9 years at Cornerstone (2 years as Special Ed Supervisor and 7 as Director). She has deep passion for student equity, collaboration, and reading literacy. Da-Silva emphasized the importance of teamwork and listening to stakeholders (students, families, staff, board).

Zlato shared his 30-year career with the U.S. Secret Service, including leadership in protective operations and threat assessment. He has personal ties to Michigan and passion for supporting educational operations. His role will focus on operational efficiency and ensuring central office functions effectively support educators and students. He is inspired by his wife's career as a teacher, Zlato is motivated to strengthen systems that enable classroom success.

b) Academic Update - Devon Graham

This year marks the inaugural implementation of both university-partnered programs, Wayne State (Middle School Math) & Lawrence Tech (Early Intervention) Programs, aimed at improving math performance. While both initiatives show incremental gains, results are not yet aligned with expectations. We've had significant growth in reading across the district. IREADY Diagnostic Data indicates the following progress: 108 students were three or more grade levels behind (red zone), 92 students were two grade levels behind, 166 students were one grade level below (yellow zone). Currently, 65 students are now on early grade level and 64 students are mid or above grade level. The key interventions contributing to success include the Super Readers Program led by Karissa Williams and increased classroom support from interventionists and library staff.

Math growth is incremental and still under analysis. Full and complete data will be available in June, including IREADY results from fall, winter, and spring. Both university programs (Wayne State and Lawrence Tech) are being reviewed for effectiveness. Discussions with university leads (e.g., Dr. Kahn and Dr. Nelson) are ongoing. Expect a comprehensive report in June with refined math and reading data and trend analysis.

c) Enrollment - Dustin Quarrella

Our reading scores have remained stagnant or declined, and our current instruction lacks full integration of the Science of Reading (e.g., phonics, direct instruction, collaborative learning). Success for All (SFA) has a proven 30+ year track record in urban schools with measurable academic gains. A specific example of this is David Ellis Academy, which increased their reading proficiency from ~10% to 50%. SFA has a structured phonics-based program with scripted instruction, training, and consistent implementation. There is an emphasis on school-wide fidelity and rhythm; all students participate in a 90-minute uninterrupted reading block daily. Students are grouped by their ability level—not grade level—creating comfortable learning environments and supporting student confidence. SFA would have a 3-year phased rollout beginning with Adams-Young Elementary, Madison-Carver Academy, and Washington-Parks Academy. SFA provides materials, training, on-site coaching, and leadership development. Our goal is to be the top school in Detroit within 5 years, and Michigan within 10 years. The initial costs are around \$50,000–\$60,000 per school per year. The SFA Foundation has also secured a \$100,000 grant to offset our Year 1 expenses.

We are also proposing the launching of a Pre-K program at Cornerstone beginning Fall 2026. While the original hope was to implement it for Fall 2025, the Wayne-Resa standard application cycle has already closed, making a Fall 2026 start more feasible. Adding Pre-K supports long-term K–12 enrollment sustainability. Families with multiple children often prefer a single-school solution, and not offering Pre-K has resulted in lost enrollments. In addition, Pre-K supports early childhood development aligned with the school's mission, especially in virtue education, readiness skills, and classroom routine acclimation. Preliminary outreach

indicated high interest from families, with overwhelming response and inquiries the same day the concept was floated. The program would be funded through Michigan's GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program), with over \$12,000 in state funding per enrolled student (five-day program). The initial plan includes two Pre-K sections (max 20 students each). The net return of revenue for year 1 with 15-20 students would be \$45,000. Full enrollment of 40 students total could yield \$131,000 annually.

d) Finance - MaryAnn Johnson

Efforts are underway to build a detailed 12-month, month-by-month budget. This will improve the clarity and accuracy of budget-to-actual reports and eliminate misleading variances caused by generalized allocations. Work is in progress to separate discretionary expenditures controlled by building leaders. This aims to enhance accountability and communication around spending at the school level, though it may not be ready for the next meeting. Backend system improvements are being implemented to support this new budgeting process, ultimately enabling more real-time financial reporting. These changes are intended to support stronger financial transparency and align with the board's interest in ongoing updates about financial status.

- e) Closed Session pursuant to Section 8(1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute, such as written opinion of legal counsel subject to attorney-client privilege.

At 10:23 a.m., a motion was made by Londo, supported by George and Coates, to enter closed session pursuant to Section 8(1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act for the purpose of considering material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute, such as written opinion of legal counsel subject to attorney-client privilege.

Roll Call Vote:

Londo – Yes

George – Yes

Coates – Yes

Kreger – Yes

Motion carried. The board entered closed session at 10:23 a.m.

The board returned to open session at 10:48 a.m.

4) BOARD POLICY WORK

- a) Board Meeting Dates for 2024-2025: All on Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.

1. June 24, 2025

5) ACTION ITEMS

- a) Approval of 2025/2026 School Calendar
- b) Approval of Pre-K addition
- c) Approval of Success for All (SFA) Curriculum purchase
- d) Approval of the 2025-2026 Professional Development Advisory Committee members
- e) Approval of the proposed Lease Extension Agreement

Londo motioned to combine and approve Action Items 5 a-d. George moved, Coates seconded. All approved.

Londo motioned to table Action Item 5e until the next board meeting. George moved, Coates seconded. All approved.

6) CONSENT ITEMS

None

7) 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: Two virtual trainings remain this year, fulfilling the requirement of at least two members attending one hour of training to secure \$10 per pupil funding:
 - 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.

The oath of office was administered to Marcia Kreger.

GVSU recognized Steve Londo for his 15 years of service to Washington-Parks Academy.

8) ANNOUNCEMENTS

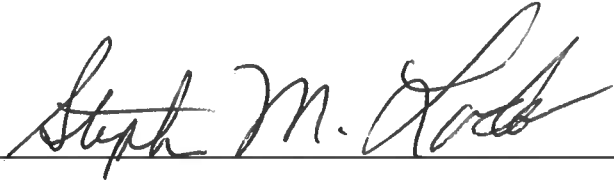
- a) Next Meeting: June 24, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT (related to non-agenda items)

There was no public comment.

9) MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion to adjourn meeting at 10:48 a.m. by Londo. George seconded. The above minutes were duly adopted on 6/30/25 by the Cornerstone Washington-Parks Academy Board of Directors at a properly noticed meeting held at which a quorum was present.



Submitted by ~~TeShayla Coates, Secretary~~
Stephen Londo, President