

**LANGUAGE & LITERACY ACADEMY FOR LEARNING, INC.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

50 2nd St SE Winter Haven, FL 33880

Monday, January 26, 2025 5:30 p.m.

**Draft Board Minutes**

**Time: January 26, 5:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**MISSION**

Accelerate growth in language, literacy, and social skills for students with special needs while engaging parents as lifelong partners in education.

**VISION**

To create a nationally known infant, toddler, Pre-K, K-12 educational institution for students with disabilities that is noted for providing supports that address the child's health conditions (physical body functions & structures, hearing, vision, language, communication & speech, fine motor, visual perceptual, sensory), environmental factors (physical, social, and attitudinal environment in which children live and conduct their lives.

- Call to Order (Board Chair): **5:50 pm**
- Roll Call of Board Members (Dr. Collins): **Markeishia Smith, Eddie Crockett, Paulette Napper, Kimberly Persaud, Zelda Abram**
- Public Comment Period (Board Chair) (30 minutes maximum) N/A
  - The Board of Directors welcomes public comments. Each speaker shall sign -up to speak on the sign-in sheet at the entrance to the room. Speakers will be called in order as listed on the sign-in sheet. Speakers shall have no more than 3 minutes to speak. The public comment period will last up to 30 minutes. If the public comment period has ended and there are still individuals wishing to address the Board, there will be an additional public comment period at the end of the meeting to accommodate those individuals.
  - Process for public comments given the limitations of the time available and the purpose of this meeting, the Board will hear your comments but will not engage in any back and forth with speakers. If questions are asked about specific school operations, School staff will be happy to research your question and get back to you.
- Consideration of the Board Minutes. (Board Chair) **5/5**
- Agenda Items:
  - Unfinished business item: **Fundraisers**
    - Bowling Fundraiser Revenue Planning
      - The group discussed a potential fundraising event at a bowling alley, with George confirming they would need to turn around a positive \$100,000 to \$300,000 next year to satisfy the district.

They reviewed the cost of booking the entire facility for \$2,600 per hour, which could accommodate 400 people at \$10 per person, potentially generating \$20,000 in revenue before expenses. The team considered pricing options, including a \$50 ticket price for a 2-hour event with food and drinks, and discussed the possibility of bringing in their own DJ and catering, though they needed to confirm these details with the venue.

- The team discussed plans for a bowling fundraiser event, including pricing structure, volunteer involvement, and sponsorship opportunities. They agreed to charge \$50 per team member and seek \$500 sponsorships per lane, aiming to raise funds while providing an inclusive experience for students and supporters. The group decided to have students serve as greeters and potentially receive \$20 arcade credits, while also exploring options for food and beverage service. Board members were tasked with securing 5 sponsors each to contribute to the \$10,000 fundraising goal, with the event scheduled for April 25th from 4-6 PM.
- December 2026- Dancing with the students Event Planning
  - The team discussed plans for a December dancing event with students, focusing on securing a venue and dance instructors. They identified the Lake Eliana Club in Arbondale as a potential location, with plans to contact the city for availability. The group agreed to compile a list of 10 choreographers to work with 10 dance groups, with Vincent Miller and Crystal as potential contacts. They also discussed sending out save-the-date notices and working on sponsorship details by the end of the week.
- Graduate Trip and Conference Planning
  - The group discussed organizing a trip to Busch Gardens for graduates, noting they had enough students last year but not enough this year. They agreed to send out plans and coordinate with Vincent, with Douglas planning to call him the next day. The conversation also

touched on a dance performance, with Eddie asking about dancing and the group discussing the need for volunteer judges.

■ New business:

- Financial Loss and Enrollment Challenges
  - George presented the financial status, noting a loss of \$853,000 for the year, primarily due to the move into a new building. He projected a potential loss of \$929,000 for the year, but expected it to be closer to \$880,000 by year-end. Dr. raised concerns about space constraints limiting enrollment, despite having the budget for 400 students. They discussed plans to add modular classrooms or a skill-building facility next year to accommodate growth.
- School Board Legal and Accreditation Updates
  - The board meeting discussed several key topics, including the approval of minutes from a previous meeting and upcoming agenda items. They addressed a legal matter involving a property dispute, with plans to meet with an attorney in February to discuss options. The group also discussed the school's accreditation process, noting that they are approaching their ninth year and will need to prepare for a mid-cycle review in 2027. The board reviewed and approved the list of FTE and non-certified teachers. Finally, they touched on the upcoming school board election and the school's performance in addressing previous concerns raised by the board.
- Teacher Voting
  - The meeting focused on voting for FTEs and reviewing the updated list of non-certified and certified teachers, which was approved by a show of hands (List provided to board members as an attachment). Approved 5/5
- Playground Plans
  - The group discussed a plan to move the playground and modular buildings, potentially saving \$70,000 by placing them on the street side rather than the fenced lot. The conversation

ended with a request for special prayers for staff members experiencing health issues, particularly cancer.

- Modulars/Building
  - The meeting discussed plans for a new steel building to be constructed on a corner lot, which will include four classrooms and an auditorium with movable walls. The building, approved by the city, is expected to be erected within 4 weeks after permitting, and Growth Schools is currently evaluating the feasibility of this option.
- There are upcoming conferences in Singapore and Dubai in December 2026, with Dr. Collins as a keynote speaker in Singapore.
- Additional Public Comment period for those who signed up at the start of the meeting but the 30 minutes for the public comments had expired (Board Chair). **N/A**
- Next board meeting date: **February 23, 2026**
- Adjournment: **6:46 pm**