

Board Meeting Minutes
W-A-Y Academy Detroit
(Regular Board Meeting & Annual Reorganizational Meeting)

Date: June 17th, 2025

1. Attendance

Board Members Present:

- Michael Murray (Wayne County)
- Danielle Bascomb (Wayne County)-Absent
- Sheila Flanagan (Wayne County)
- Patricia Moesner (Wayne County)
- Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Wayne County)

Others Present:

- Trena Braswell
- Cameron Nichols
- Sherry Lynem
- Dr. Green (via zoom)

Meeting called to order by Michael Murray at 6:00 PM.

II. Approval of the Agenda

- Addition to Agenda:
- **Board Member Role Transition Proposal Discussion**
 - The current proposal is to maintain all existing board member slots.
 - Role changes under consideration:
 - Patty would transition from **Vice President to Treasurer.**
 - Laura would move from **Treasurer to Vice President.**
 - A vote on this proposal will be held once Laura arrives to confirm her willingness to accept the Vice President role.
- Motion to approve the agenda by Patricia Moesner / 2nd [Sheila Flanagan](#)
 - **Roll Call Vote:** Michael Murray (Y) Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Y) Patricia Moesner (Y) Sheila Flanagan (Y). Motion carries.

III. Call to the Public

- No public comments were made.

IV. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Minutes, Regular Meeting, May 20, 2025
- B. Election of Board Officers
- C. Legal Counsel Designation
- D. Audit Firm Designation
- E. Account Designation/Depository
- F. Designated Signatory

- G. Civil Rights Representative
- H. Title IX Representative
- I. Newspaper Designation
- J. Homeless Liaison Representative
- K. CAO/Budget Timeline Resolution
- L. Board Corresponding Agent
- M. FOIA Representative
- N. Posting Resolution
- O. Electronic Funds Transfer Officer
- P. 504 Contact Person
- Q. Bonding of President, Treasurer, Bank Authorized Representative
- R. AHERA Officer
- S. Compliance with Laws
- T. School Safety Liaison
- U. Virtual Learning Plan (21F)
- V. Course List
- W. Graduation Requirements
- X. Attendance Procedures & Policy

V. Correspondence

- A. None

VII. Educational Service Providers Report

ESP Report/ Superintendents report

- **Year-End Update:**
 - **The school is closing the year in a strong financial position.**
 - **Some grants were successfully amended to allow for reallocation of funds.**
 - **Approval was received for the purchase of 100 new laptops for the upcoming school year, strengthening the school's technology resources.**
A potential increase in per-pupil funding is expected for next year. It has not been included in the proposed budget for now due to uncertainty about the amount.
- **West Campus Lease Update:**
 - **The school was recently informed of changes to its leasing structure at the West Campus.**
All tenants will now be moved to subleases with the community center, consolidating leases previously split between the parish and the center.
 - **A proposed 47% rent increase has been issued, citing:**
 - **No major rent increase in the past six years.**
 - **Increased costs in maintenance and operations.**
 - **Planned upgrades including:**
 - **Solar panel installation to reduce utility expenses.**

- Individual HVAC units per room to resolve previous heating/cooling issues.
 - Facility improvements, such as painting and bathroom upgrades.
- A draft lease has been requested and will be shared with board members for review.
- The director noted that while negotiations may be limited (as most tenants have already accepted the increase), an attempt will still be made to negotiate a reduction.
- Shared Space Proposal:
 - To reduce the percentage of the rent increase (from 47% to approx. 42%), the landlord proposed that the school share its teachers' lounge with another expanding tenant.
 - Concerns were raised about shared access and the potential impact on staff.
- Long-Term Facility Planning:
 - Board members expressed concern about the steep increase and suggested exploring alternative facilities.
 - However, it was noted that the current lease ends June 30, and the school would automatically shift to month-to-month terms if no action is taken—giving limited time for relocation planning.
- Board and ESP Evaluations:
 - A reminder was given to complete:
 - Individual board member evaluations
 - ESP (Educational Service Provider) evaluation
 - These are due next week and should be submitted to the director for upload and inclusion in the school's end-of-year report.

Here's a polished continuation of your Director's Report summary, capturing the latest portion of the discussion:

Potential Facility Option & Next Steps

- The Director shared that she will visit an alternative facility tomorrow and take photos to share with the board for review. The facility was brought up during graduation and appears to be a promising option.
- The alternative site includes:
 - 10 classrooms (5 on each floor)
 - A small gymnasium
 - A large communal area
 - A chapel space that seats approximately 600
- If the board is interested in pursuing this site, further exploration would be led by Sherry and Katrina, as the Director would recuse herself from negotiations due to a conflict of interest.
- Depending on the age group housed at the facility, a Certificate of Clearance may be required (especially for younger grade levels).

Transitional Rent Proposal Suggestions

- Board members discussed the burden of a 47% rent increase and potential staggered rent options to mitigate the impact while allowing time for transition planning.
- A phased rent model was suggested:
 - First 6 months: Pay a reduced increase (e.g., ~24%) to ease into the new rate.
 - Final 6 months: Pay the full increased rate (47%) if the school chooses to remain.
 - This staged model would:
 - Allow time for exploring relocation.
 - Provide students and families adequate notice.
 - Offer some financial relief in the short term.
- It was also discussed whether a month-to-month lease might allow for more flexibility. However:
 - The new lease holder (the community center, not the parish) now has authority.
 - Terms for month-to-month are not yet clear under the new structure.
- The Director agreed that requesting a phased approach to the increase is a reasonable and strategic step. It would give time to account for:
 - Enrollment planning
 - Budget adjustments
 - Potential funding cuts
 - Overall strategic decision-making regarding the school's long-term facility needs

Data Report WAY Academy West Campus May 2025:

1. Enrollment: **54** Students
2. Enrollment by Grade Level: **10th** Grade with **17** Students
3. Total Credit: **33.7** Credits
4. Average Credit Attainment: **0.62**
5. Average Credit Attainment by Grade Level: **12th** Grade with **1.42** Credits
6. Relative Attendance: **65%**

Data Report WAY Academy Southwest Campus May 2025:

1. Enrollment: **119** Students
2. Enrollment by Grade Level: **10th** Grade with **27** Students
3. Total Credit: **75.6** Credits
4. Average Credit Attainment: **0.64**
5. Average Credit Attainment by Grade Level: **11th** Grade with **0.93** Credits
6. Relative Attendance: **66%**

Directors Report:

- Student Credits: Credits earned have increased significantly at both campuses.
- Detroit campuses may reach over 1,000 credits this year (compared to 874 in total last year).

- Graduates: 26 students expected to graduate in June, with 8 already graduated in December.
- Testing Participation: High participation, several tests achieved 100%.
- Use of incentives (e.g., Cedar Point trip) encouraged effort.
- Enrollment Fluctuation: Recent graduate losses decreased enrollment by ~15%.
- Ongoing application processing to replenish numbers.

Southwest Points of Pride:

- We had 37 researchers obtain 0.5 credits or more this month!
- 66% of our roster earned credit this month!
- 16 of our researchers earned more than 1.0 credits!!
- We had 2 graduates this month!!

West Campus Points of Pride:

- 16 of our researchers gained over 0.5 credits this month!
- There were 8 researchers who doubled our expectation by earning 1.0+ credits!!
- 63% of the researchers on the roster earned credit this month!
- Our seniors had the highest credit average at 0.77 credits!

Student Engagement & Academic Outcomes

- **Credit Attainment & Graduation Progress**
- The school has **continued to show growth** in credit attainment for the **third consecutive year**.
 - Approximately **1,000 credits** have been earned this year across both campuses.
 - This represents an **increase of about 200 credits** over the previous year.
 - Final totals may continue to grow through **June and July**, as students are still actively earning credits.
- The consistent increase in credit attainment reflects improved student engagement, academic progress, and graduation readiness.

Student Engagement & School Culture

- The school has focused on increasing **student engagement** through meaningful activities and incentives:
 - **Science Fair**: Students are actively preparing projects, demonstrating enthusiasm and pride in participation.
 - **Field Trips**: Students who demonstrated academic growth were taken to **CJ Barrymore's**.
 - A group will attend **Cedar Point** next week as a reward for **test growth** between fall and spring assessments.

- **Holiday parties, prom-style events**, and other initiatives were implemented to increase student motivation and participation.
- These efforts are **directly tied to attendance and test participation strategies**:
 - By tying experiences to measurable outcomes (e.g., academic growth), the school has improved both attendance and test-taking buy-in.
Data-Driven School Improvement
- The leadership team has committed to **deep data analysis** to drive school improvement:
 - Examining **school index scores** and assessment data to identify opportunities for growth.
 - Designing strategies that address **academic performance, engagement, and student well-being**.
 - Leadership emphasized that while academic success is a priority, **building a supportive and engaging school culture** is essential to long-term improvement.

Student Voice & Responsive Programming

- Programming has evolved in response to **direct student feedback**:
 - A student inquiry about prom led to a broader discussion around the need for **increased student activities**.
 - Leadership recognized the importance of **student voice** and began incorporating more events and traditions to build community and pride.
- These efforts have contributed to a shift in school climate, where students are **motivated to come to school, earn credits, and graduate on their own terms**.

VIII. Old Business-None

IX. New Business

1. Strategic Planning Session:

Purpose: Review and finalize strategic goals and objectives for submission to the authorizer.

Goal 1: Enhance Student Enrichment and Community Engagement

- **Objective 1.1:** *Launch comprehensive enrichment programs that foster parent and community engagement, and improve school climate.*
 - **No changes proposed.**
- **Objective 1.2:** *Increase student participation in enrichment programs to 20% by the end of the 2025–2026 school year; and to 30% by the end of the 2026–2027 school year.*
 - **No changes proposed.**
- **Objective 1.3:** *Establish, implement, and document a Student Enrichment Framework that integrates community partnerships, academic support, and engages local leaders and stakeholders.*
 - **Revised Timeline:** From 2025–2026 to **2026–2027**.

Goal 2: Strengthen Academic Outcomes and Ensure Testing Readiness

- **Objective 2.1:** *Starting Fall 2025, improve student academic growth, targeting a minimum of 1.2 years of academic progress per school year as measured by NWEA.*
 - **No changes proposed.**
- **Objective 2.2:** *Achieve mastery of academic standards on state assessments.*
 - **Original Goal:** 70% mastery by Fall 2027.
 - **Revised Targets:**
 - 35% mastery by the end of 2025–2026 school year
 - 40% mastery by the end of 2026–2027 school year
 - This revision reflects realistic benchmarking based on current state averages (approx. 48%) and school baseline data (approx. 25–30%).
- **Objective 2.3:** *By 2027, ensure all students have individualized post-secondary success plans that outline pathways to higher education, workforce development, or vocational training using a success tracking tool.*
 - **Revised Language:** Acknowledge that not all students may opt to participate; revised to:
“By Fall 2025, identify a post-academy success track, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to utilize the tool to support their planning, while acknowledging that participation may vary.”
- **Objective 2.4:** *Utilize artificial intelligence responsibly to enhance personalized learning and academic support.*
 - **No changes proposed.**

Goal 3: Support and Retain High-Quality Staff

- **Objective 3.1:** *Maintain strong staff retention through engagement and monitoring strategies.*
 - **Revised Language:**
Remove target percentages (85–95%) due to small staff size. Instead, state: “Maintain staff retention through ongoing monitoring and engagement strategies, including monthly board report-outs, semi-annual reviews of staff trends, and continued support by WAY Management.”
- **Objective 3.2:** *Develop a long-term staffing plan starting Fall 2025, addressing recruitment, professional development, and succession planning.*
 - **No changes proposed.**
- **Objective 3.3:** *Conduct an annual review of staff compensation packages beginning in 2025 to ensure competitive salaries and benefits across instructional and support staff.*
 - **No changes proposed.**

Final Notes

- The revised objectives and goals will be submitted to the authorizer as formal feedback.
- Board members confirmed that the revised **benchmarks and language are appropriate and realistic**, acknowledging flexibility as circumstances evolve.

2. School Improvement Committee:

Update from MDE – Dr. English

- The school held its **final touchpoint of the year** with Dr. English from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). This marks the fourth annual meeting, part of a continued monitoring process in the school's **third year of the CSI plan**.
- Dr. English shared that **official re-identification status** will be communicated in **August 2025**.
- Regardless of re-identification, Dr. English encouraged the school to **continue its current strategies**, noting:
 - The school is clearly **aligned with the CSI plan**.
 - Efforts to improve academic outcomes and student engagement are **on track and effective**.
 - He affirmed the school's commitment to improvement and commended the leadership team for **not using external standards as an excuse**, but rather as motivation for sustained action.

Collaborative Support with Wayne RESA

- The school continues to meet **weekly with Wayne RESA**, specifically with CSI partners such as Serena and Beth, to:
 - Analyze testing and attendance data.
 - Understand **test participation metrics** and academic growth expectations.
 - Strategize around the **state accountability system** and ensure alignment with state standards.
- These weekly check-ins have shifted the school's improvement approach from a **monthly review cycle** to a **daily and weekly action-driven model**, leading to more meaningful impact.

Staff Retreat Announcement

- In alignment with CSI recommendations, the school will host a **two-day staff retreat** in August 2025.
Audience: All Detroit-based staff (Southwest and West campuses).
Location: Off-site (venue to be confirmed).
 - **Purpose:**
 Reflect on 2024–2025 performance data.
 - Collaborate across teams on school improvement strategies.
 - Participate in professional development aligned with state initiatives.
 - **Facilitators/Presenters:** Wayne RESA representatives, including Sabrina, who will lead sessions on:
 - **Testing outcomes and interpretation**
 - **Intervention strategies (Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring System - EWIMS)**
 - **Strategic planning aligned with state and CSI goals**
- The retreat is **fully funded** and was recommended as a best practice during CSI planning to encourage team cohesion, reduce operational distractions, and provide dedicated time for school improvement work.

A. Discussion Items:

X. Board Committee Reports

Financial Report & Budget Update

1. FY 2024–2025 Final Amended Budget

- The school is ending the fiscal year in a strong financial position.
- Previous projections from November anticipated a \$58,000 surplus. Due to careful spending, underutilized budget lines, and strategic use of grant funding to offset general fund expenses, the updated year-end surplus is projected at approximately \$114,000.
- This will bring the school's total fund balance to approximately \$733,000.
- Notably, the surplus was achieved while still providing staff bonuses and raises—without drawing from the fund balance.
- The school's fund balance percentage is now approximately 23%, well above the authorizer's (LSSU) recommended range of 5–8%, indicating strong financial health.

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3. FY 2025–2026 Proposed Budget

- The proposed budget is flat and conservative, projecting a \$3,000 surplus.
- No per-pupil funding increase is reflected yet, though increases are expected:
 - Senate and Governor's budgets propose an increase to \$10,100 per pupil (up from \$9,600).
 - The House budget remains uncertain, so projections remain cautious.
- Some non-recurring revenues from FY 2024–2025 (e.g., Esser funds, state one-time grants) will not be available next year.
- Lease cost increases are not yet included, pending final negotiations. A budget amendment will be made once lease terms are finalized.

Teacher Compensation & Competitive Analysis

- Staff compensation was discussed in the context of retention and competitiveness:
 - The school is competitive with similarly sized charter schools, though not with larger traditional public or private schools.

- Raises and bonuses have been used strategically to reward performance and manage legacy costs.
- Board members and leadership emphasized the value of balancing raises with bonuses to offer both sustainability and immediate reward.
- Additional considerations such as benefits, retirement, and work flexibility contribute to overall compensation competitiveness.
- Board interest in expanding K–8 programming as a way to support long-term sustainability and create more funding opportunities was also noted.

Staff Wellness & Retention Support

- Board members expressed strong interest in supporting:
 - Mental, financial, and physical wellness programming
 - Continued staff appreciation efforts
 - Varying recognition initiatives year to year to maintain meaningful impact

Investment Strategy & Bank Relationship Discussion

- The school currently holds an average of \$200,000+ in cash reserves.
- Exploring the potential to invest idle funds in CDs at approx. 4% interest was discussed.
 - Net gains are expected even after accounting for reduced bank earnings credits.
- The board also considered switching banks, citing positive returns from Huntington Bank in other organizational experiences.
 - Huntington reportedly provided \$6,000–\$10,000 in additional earnings through investments.
 - Leadership will explore the possibility of transitioning banking services and report back with recommendations.
 - Any bank change would require a board resolution.

4. The FY 2025–2026 food service budget was presented.

- Projected fund balance: \$31,000
- The budget remains compliant with state guidelines (e.g., not exceeding three months of operating expenses in reserve).
- A separate board vote is required for approval of the food service budget.

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5. May 2025 Financial Statements:

- State Aid Payment Received of the amount \$213,156.52
- State of Michigan \$26,849.90
- Payables as of **May 2025** \$84,192.80
- Payroll Liabilities \$ 109,332.92
- Request for transfer in the amount of \$193,525.72

B. Action Items:

Motion Approval of the May 2025 Financial Statements

- Moved by Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din / 2nd Patricia Moesner
- **Roll Call Vote:** Michael Murray (Y) Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Y) Patricia Moesner (Y) Sheila Flanagan (Y). Motion carries.

Motion Approval of the FY 2024-2025 Final & Amendment Budget

- Moved by Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din / 2nd Patricia Moesner
- **Roll Call Vote:** Michael Murray (Y) Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Y) Patricia Moesner (Y) Sheila Flanagan (Y). Motion carries.

Motion Approval of the FY 2025-2026 Proposed Budget

- Moved by Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din / 2nd Patricia Moesner
- **Roll Call Vote:** Michael Murray (Y) Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Y) Patricia Moesner (Y) Sheila Flanagan (Y). Motion carries.

Motion Approval of the FY 2025-2026 Food Service Budget

- Moved by Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din / 2nd Patricia Moesner
- **Roll Call Vote:** Michael Murray (Y) Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Y) Patricia Moesner (Y) Sheila Flanagan (Y). Motion carries.

XI. Announcements-None

XII. Call to the Public

- No public comments were made.

XIII. Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn moved by Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din / 2nd Patricia Moesner
- **Roll Call Vote:** Michael Murray (Y) Laura Chavez-Wazeerud-Din (Y) Patricia Moesner (Y) Sheila Flanagan. Motion carries.

- Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Alexandra Guzman

Approved