

**Eastern Panhandle Preparatory**  
**Academy**

*A West Virginia Not-for-Profit Corporation*

**BOARD MEETING**  
**MINUTES**

Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy (the “School”), pursuant to public notice, held a regular Board Meeting (the “meeting”) on August 20, 2024 at 449 Rose Hill Drive, Kearneysville, West Virginia.

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Ryan Cascio, President  
Gary Dungan  
Jake Cordell  
Marie Nuar

**Board Members Not in Attendance:**

None

**Guests in Attendance:**

Demetrius Blue, Principal, Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy  
Renee Ritenour, Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy  
Xiaofei Pei, Accel - remote  
Phil Petru, Accel - remote  
Tracey B. Eberling, Attorney, Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

**1. Sign-in / A Call to order/ Pledge of Allegiance / Opening Prayer**

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Board President Cascio. The Pledge of Allegiance was made, and a time for silent prayer offered.

**2. Roll Call of Board Members**

A roll call of members was requested. A quorum was present for the meeting.

**3. Review/Acceptance of Agenda**

The acceptance of the Agenda was brought forward for consideration by the Board. Member Cascio moved that Agenda Item 10b and discussion of the Annual Report tabled until the September 17, 2024 meeting. The motion was seconded by Member Dungan. Without objection, the Agenda was so amended and approved with those changes without objection.

**4. Adoption/Approval of Minutes of Previous Board Meeting(s)**

The minutes of the July 30, 2024, Board meeting were brought forward for consideration. Following a discussion, Member Cordell moved that the minutes as presented be approved, seconded by Member Nuar. Upon unanimous vote, and the minutes were approved as presented.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>	<b>OTHER</b> <i>(Not Present, Abstain, etc.)</i>
Gary Dungan	X		
Marie Nuar	X		
Jake Cordell	X		
Ryan Cascio, Pres.	X		

**5. Election of Board Members**

Member Cascio moved to re-elect Member Dungan to an additional term as a Board member. The motion was seconded by Member Nuar and passed unanimously. Member Nuar moved to elect Member Cordell to an additional one-year term as a Board member. The motion was seconded by Member Cascio and passed unanimously. It was reported that additional applications for an additional parent member would be presented to the Board for consideration at the next Board meeting.

**6. Election of Officers**

Member Nuar nominated Member Cascio to serve as President of the Board, which was seconded by Member Cordell and unanimously approved. Member Nuar nominated Member Cordell to serve as Vice President of the Board. Member Cascio seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Member Cordell moved that Member Dungan serve as the Treasurer and the motion was seconded by Member Cascio and it passed unanimously. Member Dungan nominated Member Nuar to serve as Secretary of the Board. The motion was seconded by Member Cordell and passed by unanimous vote.

**7. Reports and Updates**

*a. School Report*

*i. School Leader Report*

Principal Blue provided an update on recruitment and preparations for the 2024-2025 school year. Teachers had eight days of professional development, capped by a “graduation” celebration. A successful summer recruitment camp was held, resulting in the interest of three to four new families. Social media activities have been increased. A Back to School Bash will be held on August 23 to welcome students and give families an additional opportunity to meet the teachers. A lot has been accomplished since Principal Blue started on July 15. His enthusiasm and creativity is appreciated, as is that of Ms. Rittenour.

Mr. Petru reported that all are pleased with the energy that Principal Blue, Ms. Ritenour, Ms. Johnson, and Mr. Halcomb are bringing to the start of the new school year. Feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive. Mr. Petru reviewed the recently released test I-Ready and GSA scores, which were positive, and discussed goals for improvement. The school staff is being challenged to build relationships to promote retention, which should help increase scores. Enrollment at present is at about 250 to 260 students. Approximately 65% percent are returning students. The decision to eliminate the high school grades has impacted enrollment numbers.

*ii. Treasurer Report*

Mr. Pei presented the Treasurer's Report. The July financials do not reflect much activity due to the quiet of summer before the start of school but will increase in August with the return of staff. It was noted that expenses for salaries is expected to decrease somewhat due to the lower enrollment of special education students with the need for specialized services. The current cash balance is \$220,771, with a deficit of about \$100,000, which is tentative and dependent on the audit. At present, the obligation of the four-year lease is reflected on the balance sheet, but this may change after the Chief Financial Officer reviews the entry. Member Dungan made the motion to approve and accept the financial report. This was seconded by Member Nuar and was approved by unanimous vote.

*b. Authorizer Update*

Dr. Paul was unable to attend the meeting. It was reported that the West Virginia Public Charter School Board had recently amended its By-Laws. One of the changes was to require that charter schools adopt a procurement policy with certain parameters for purchases up to \$10,000 and over \$10,000 and over \$250,000, with the recommendation that schools refer to West Virginia Department of Education Policy 8200 for best practices. There is not a deadline to adopt such a policy and requests for exemptions may be submitted for consideration.

**8. Committee Reports, if submitted**

None.

**9. Old Business**

None.

**10. New Business**

**Consent Items –**

The following items on the Consent Agenda, having been discussed earlier in the meeting, were brought forward for consideration by the Board.

- a. Approval of Invoices/Bills*
- c. Approval of School Board Meeting Schedule 2024-25*
- d. Approval of Contracts:*
  - 1. Steptoe & Johnson PLLC legal services*
  - 2. Speech Language Services*
  - 3. Occupational Therapy*
  - 4. Custodial Services*

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>	<b>OTHER</b> <i>(Not Present, Abstain, etc.)</i>
Gary Dungan	X		
Marie Nuar	X		
Jake Cordell	X		
Ryan Cascio, Pres.	X		

Upon motion by Member Nuar, seconded by Member Cascio, items a and d were approved upon unanimous vote. Member Cascio voted to amend Item c as reflected in the attached revised schedule, which was seconded by Member Cordell. Member Nuar moved to approve the schedule as amended and the motion was seconded by Member Cordell and the motion passed unanimously.

**Other New Business –**

*e. Adoption/Approval proposed fees for Before & After School Care*

Upon discussion of the new application being used to facilitate student pick up and the change in time of the proposed time of the before school care program to 7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m., Member Cordell moved to approve the adoption of the proposed fees for Before & After School Care to start effective October 1, 2024. Member Nuar seconded the motion, and it passed without objection.

**11. Executive Session:**

Member Nuar moved to go into executive session for an update on the Charter School litigation and a suit filed by William Tyler Parker, which was seconded by Member Cordell. Following discussion with counsel, Member Nuar made the motion to leave executive session, which was seconded by Member Cascio. Member Nuar moved to approve the payment of the fees of counsel to represent the interest of EPPA at the rate of \$185.00 to match the fee to be paid by EPPA’s insurance carrier. Member Cascio seconded the motion and was approved by unanimous vote.

**12. Date/time and location for next regular meeting.**

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Wednesday, September 17, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in person at the Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy, 449 Rose Hill Drive, Kearneysville, WV 25430.

**13. Board Member Discussion – None.**

**14. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Member Cordell moved to adjourn the August 20, 2024, regular Board meeting of Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy, which was seconded by Member Nuar. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m., without objection.

**APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Motion to approve and adopt the minutes of the July 30, 2024, Regular Board Meeting of Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy, without amendments, made by

Member Codell \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Member Dungan \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>	<b>OTHER</b> <i>(Not Present, Abstain, etc.)</i>
Gary Dungan	X		
Marie Nuar	X		
Jake Cordell	X		
Ryan Cascio, Pres.	X		

Executed and adopted by a vote of the Board on this \_\_\_\_ day of August, 2024.

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*Ryan Cascio, President  
Eastern Panhandle Preparatory Academy*