

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Drexel Foundation for Educational Excellence, Inc.
DBA Thea Bowman Leadership Academy
3401 W. 5th Avenue, Gary, IN 46406
Thursday, February 29, 2024
6:00 PM CT

I. Meeting Called to Order

A meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Thea Bowman Leadership Academy (“TBLA”) was held on Thursday, February 29, 2024. The meeting was called to order by the Board Chair at 6:01 PM CT.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was recited by the assembled Directors and attendees.

III. Roll Call

Eve Gomez, President	Present
Jason Beres, Vice President	Absent
Michelle Dickerson, Treasurer	Present - Online
Helen Hill	Present
Cedric Steele	Present

Other Attendees:

- Marisa Simmons, Principal, Thea Bowman Leadership Academy
- Antoinette Troupe, Operations Manager, Thea Bowman Leadership Academy
- Melissa Morris, Executive Director, PLA
- Dr. Brison Blackwell, Operations Manager, Thea Bowman Leadership Academy
- Jewell Harris, Jr., Attorney, Harris Law Firm
- Caitlin Hicks, Education One
- Eva Spilker, President & CFO, PLA
- Crissy Franco, VP of Career & Technology, PLA
- Cathy Kendrick, Director of Human Resources, PLA
- Andrea Robinson, Chief Academic Officer, PLA
- Brandy Ivy, Human Resources Generalist, PLA
- Lauren Fihe, Development Manager, Government, PLA
- Johnny Jin, Chief Strategy & Development Officer, PLA
- Khyla Jackson, Regional Director of Operations, PLA
- Theresa Jacobs, NW Regional Instructional Specialist, PLA
- Tanisha Smith, Thea Bowman Leadership Academy PTA President
- Ms. Collins, Debate Team Teacher, TBLA

- Caron Baker, Student, TBLA
- Jaydon Phillips, Student, TBLA
- Olivia, Student, TBLA

a. Approval of Board Agenda

The board made a motion to approve the agenda for February 29, 2024.

Motion: Helen Hill Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 4 Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to approve the agenda.

b. Approval of Board Minutes from January 31, 2024.

The board made a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion: Cedric Steele Support: Helen Hill

Yays: 4 Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to approve the January 31, 2024 board minutes.

IV. Open Communication/Public Comments

- None

V. CMO Report

a. Principal's Report

Principal Simmons presented the February Admin Report with updates on academics, previous and upcoming events, and a special congratulations. TBLA staff received professional development in ALICE training and ILEARN/IREAD in preparation for the upcoming testing season. Cheer Camp, Boys Senior Night, a visit from the Black Labor Union, Black History Program, Door Decorating Contest, Red Cross Blood Drive, and Health Expo were several events that took place in February. A huge congratulations to the Debate Team who placed 5th in the ISSDA 2024 Speech Tournament; Caron Baker placed 5th in original oratory, and Paij Rhymes placed 6th in original performance! Scholar, Caron Baker, thanked everyone for congratulating him and the team. Also, scholars Olivia and Jaydon were thankful for the kind words and encouragement.

b. Academic Board Report

Melissa Morris presented the academic board report and shared the Horizon Education data which mirrors the (P)SAT.

c. Financial Report

Eva Spilker presented the financial review with an overview of the income statement with revenue, expenses, and net income, the balance sheet with cash balances, accounts payable balances, days cash, and the enrollment budget.

ACTION ITEM: A breakdown list of expenses for fiscal year 2025.

ACTION ITEM: Principal Simmons to provide the enrollment numbers from last month compared to this month.

d. ESSER Update

Lauren Fihe provided a February 2024 ESSER overview of use of funds and Title IV Stronger Connections Grant. Eva Spilker provided the expenditure update and Johnny Jin presented an update on the charter facility grant.

VI. Authorizer Report (Trine University/Education One LLC)

Caitlin Hicks shared the authorizer’s accountability update, local academic, financial, and organizational performances, historical proficiency data, school improvement plan scorecard, community connections, and upcoming events.

VII. Old Business

a. Security Camera Options

This item was tabled until the March board meeting.

Motion: Helen Hill

Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to table this item until the March board meeting.

b. Access Control Package for Entryway

This item was deferred until after its been presented at the facility committee meeting.

Motion: Helen Hill

Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to table this item.

VIII. New Business

a. Approval of 2024-25 School Year Calendar

The board motioned to approve the 2024-25 school year calendar.

Motion: Cedric Steele

Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to approve the 2024-25 school year calendar.

b. Approval to Purchase Gym Floor Coverings

The board made a motion to table this item until an itemized quote has been received and viewed by the board.

Motion: Helen Hill

Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to table this item.

c. Approval of Bus Transportation Wrapping

The board made a motion to remove this item from the agenda due to the purchase being under the required threshold amount.

Motion: Cedric Steele

Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The unanimously voted to remove this item from the agenda.

IX. Discussion Items

a. New Truancy Bill – Tara Nelson, Project Manager of Project Rebuild

Due to a family emergency, Tara Nelson was unable to attend today's meeting. We look forward to inviting her back to discuss the new truancy bill.

b. Kitchen Equipment – B. Blackwell

The board made a motion to defer this item until it has been addressed during the facility committee meeting.

Motion: Helen Hill

Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to defer this line item.

c. MDM (Mobile Device Management) for Apple Products – B. Blackwell

The board made a motion to defer this item until it has been addressed with the facility committee.

Motion: Cedric Steele

Support: Helen Hill

Yays: 4

Nays: 0

The board unanimously voted to defer this item.

X. PTA

PTA President, Tanisha Smith, provided the PTA update. A meeting was held on Tuesday, 2/20 with guest speaker Latonya Woodson, Director of Community Health Education of Edgewater. They have a free wellness fair coming up on 3/9 at St. Timothy Church from 10am-1pm. Domino's Slice-the-Price fundraiser kicks off on 3/4 and goes until 3/18. The next PTA meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19th with the Branch Manager of Everwise Credit Union and TBLA parent as the guest speaker.

XI. Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Michelle Dickerson

Support: Cedric Steele

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 PM.

Zoom Chat Comments:

- 00:22:55 Crissy Franco-PLA: Those doors look fantastic!
- 00:25:28 PLA - Christina Garrett: Congrats to the Debate Team!!
- 00:26:20 Melissa Morris - PLA: WELL DONE!
- 00:26:30 Caron Baker: Thank you all! ❤️
- 00:26:43 Theresa Jacobs: AWESOME!!
- 00:27:34 Cathy Kendrick: Congrats - great job!
- 00:27:38 Crissy Franco-PLA: Congratulations Debate Team!!!
- 00:27:54 Brandy Ivy: Congratulations!!
- 00:28:20 Johnny Jin: Congratulations!!
- 00:29:22 PLA-Andrea Robinson: So many great things happened in February!! ❤️
- 00:35:04 Caron Baker: Reacted to So many great things... with "❤️"
- 01:17:10 Caron Baker: 😊

- 01:43:10 Tanisha Smith: How can you use the QR code on the bus if it's in motion? Can that be replaced with our Eagle?
- 01:43:30 Caron Baker: Huge upgrade, I love the design! I think maroon would be a better color tho