

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
Drexel Foundation for Educational Excellence, Inc.  
DBA Thea Bowman Leadership Academy  
3401 W. 5th Avenue, Gary, IN 46406  
Wednesday, April 26, 2023  
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 Wednesday, April 26, 2023. 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	Present
Michelle Dickerson, Treasurer	Present
Cliff Gooden	Present
Helen Hill, Secretary	Present
Cedric Steele	Present

**Other Attendees:**

- Marisa Simmons, Principal, Thea Bowman Leadership Academy
- Melissa Morris, NW Regional Director, PLA
- Carlo Hershberger, Director of Finance & Accounting, PLA
- JoAnn Gama, Chief Human Assets Officer, PLA
- Tahirah Thompson, Director of Operations Facilities & New School Launch, PLA
- Johnny Jin, Chief Strategy & Development Officer, PLA
- Ashley Minter, National Director of Marketing & Communications, PLA
- Javi Dimas, VP of Enrollment, PLA
- JoAnn Gama, Chief Human Assets Officer, PLA
- Jermaine Mead, Dean of Students, TBLA
- Emily Gaskill, Assistant Director of Accountability, Education One
- Andrea Robinson, Chief Academic Officer, PLA

a. Approval of Board Agenda

Motion: Jason Beres                      Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the board agenda.

b. Approval of Board Minutes from March 29, 2023

Motion: Cliff Gooden                      Support: Jason Beres

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the board minutes.

**IV. Presentation**

a. Victory 4 Kidz

Dr. Regina Beard, the founder of Victory 4 Kidz, provided a brief introduction and information on various healthcare careers for scholars to explore.

**V. CMO Report**

a. Principal's Report

Principal Simmons, provided an update on academics, professional development, the data dashboard, April events, and upcoming events.

b. Academic Support Update

Melissa Morris provided the academic support update and started with a brief introduction for Crissy Franco, VP of College and Technical Education. A comparison report on Gary Public Schools was provided, along with a shout-out to the intervention squad. Mr. Mead shared an overview of school safety.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Mead is to look into a school that compares in construction to TBLA and shares one building; and a security consultant for a more detailed, broader reach of data.

**ACTION ITEM:** Michelle requested an improvement report be provided moving forward.

c. Financial Report

Carlo Hershberger presented a financial review of the income statement, cash balances, accounts payable balances, and days cash.

Motion: Jason Beres                      Support: Helen Hill

Yays: 5                                      Nays: 0                                      Abstain: 1

*\*Michelle Dickerson abstained due to her concern about why the end of February financials are being presented and not the end of March financials.*

The majority of the Board voted to approve the financial report.

**ACTION ITEM:** Carlo to look into why the end of February financials are being presented and not the end of March financials.

**ACTION ITEM:** Carlo to look into why the actuals are low compared to budget.

**VI. Updates**

a. ESSER

Johnny Jin, Chief Strategy & Development Officer, provided the ESSER update.

**ACTION ITEM:** Michelle requested the estimated cost, updates, and breakdown of additional expenses.

b. Marketing

Javi Dimas, VP of Enrollment, presented the enrollment and recruitment update. Ashley Minter, National Director of Marketing & Communications, shared out on billboard displays, mobile geo, radio, and marketing spending.

**ACTION ITEM:** Eve requested that board meetings be advertised and live on social media.

**ACTION ITEM:** Ashley to redirect the .org domain to the new .com website.

**VII. Authorizer Report (Trine University/Education One LLC)**

Emily Gaskill shared the accountability update, community connections, and upcoming events. The End of Year Satisfaction surveys are due on June 1<sup>st</sup> and are used in the annual review.

**VIII. Old Business**

a. Approval of Staff Pay & Benefits

Motion: Jason Beres                      Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to amend the staff raises to 5% (opposed to 3%) and approved the 5% increase.

The Board unanimously voted to accept options 1 and 2 of the performance incentive.

Motion: Michelle Dickerson              Support: Helen Hill

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the holiday bonus and table the marketing discussion.

Motion: Cedric Steele                      Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to table the PTO Policy Changes until accounting and legal clarification is received.

Motion: Jason Beres                      Support: Cliff Gooden

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

**ACTION ITEM:** JoAnn to confirm if the time accrued is a liability and provide further clarification on accounting and legal ramifications.

**IX. New Business**

a. Approval of Building Expansion Contract

The Board agreed to table this item, contingent upon further discussion with legal counsel.

Motion: Jason Beres                      Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

b. Approval of Playground RFP

Motion: Helen Hill                      Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the playground RFP.

c. Approval of Curriculum Purchases

i. Eureka Math 6-8 Renewal – \$13,967.49

ii. Eureka Math K-5 Renewal – \$18,805.22

iii. HMH Into Reading and Into Literature K-8 Renewal – \$36,549.04

iv. NWEA – \$10,876.50

TOTAL = \$80,198.25

The Board unanimously voted to approve the curricula purchases for the upcoming school year.

Motion: Jason Beres                      Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6                                      Nays: 0

**X. Discussion Items**

a. Portables

Tahirah Thompson informed the Board that the portables have been completed. Principal Simmons provided an update regarding the timeline for moving into the portables.

**XI. PTA**

None

**XII. Open Communication/Public Comments**

None

**XIII. Meeting Adjourned**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Cedric Steele                      Support: Helen Hill

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.