

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
Drexel Foundation for Educational Excellence, Inc.  
DBA Thea Bowman Leadership Academy  
3401 W. 5th Avenue, Gary, IN 46406  
Wednesday, July 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, July 26, 2023. The meeting was called to order by the Board Chair at 6:05 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 Absent

Helen Hill Present - Online

Cedric Steele Present

Jerry Williams Present

**Other Attendees:**

- Marisa Simmons, Principal, Thea Bowman Leadership Academy
- Eva Spilker, President & CFO, PLA
- Melissa Morris, NW Regional Director, PLA
- Jewell Harris, Jr., Attorney, Harris Law Firm
- Tahirah Thompson, Director of Operations Facilities & New School Launch, PLA
- Antoinette Troupe, Operations Manager, TBLA
- Johnny Jin, Chief Strategy & Development Officer, PLA
- Ashley Minter, Director of Marketing & Communications, PLA
- JoAnn Gama, Chief Human Assets Officer, PLA
- Andrea Robinson, Chief Academic Officer, PLA
- Lindsay Omlar, Executive Director, Education One
- Paul Farrington, Associate Director of Operations, PLA

a. Approval of Board Agenda

The Board made a motion to amend the agenda to include bus transportation under new business, Item d.

Motion: Michelle Dickerson                      Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6    Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the amended board agenda.

b. Approval of Board Minutes from June 28, 2023

Motion: Jason Beres                                Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 6    Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the board minutes.

**IV. CMO Report**

a. Principal's Report

Principal, Marisa Simmons, presented the admin report and shared an academic and enrollment update, summer professional development, July events, leadership and new teacher institute, and upcoming events.

b. Academic Support Update

Melissa Morris presented the ILEARN, SAT, and IREAD data. She was excited to share that 91.1% of all 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade scholars passed the IREAD-3 assessment!

c. Financial Report

i. Summary of Audit Proposals

ii. Donovan 990 Proposal

iii. Blue & Company Proposal

iv. CLA Proposal

Eva Spilker presented the financial review with an overview of the income statement, balance sheet, and enrollment. Three proposals were presented and shared with the board to review.

The Board made a motion to accept Donovan as the external auditor for FY24.

Motion: Helen Hill                                Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 6    Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the Donovan 990 Proposal.

**V. Updates**

a. ESSER

Johnny Jin, Chief Strategy & Development Officer, provided an ESSER overview and was pleased to report that spending was on track.

b. Meca Engineering presented illustrations on the design-build and the steps and process of moving forward.

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

Lindsay Omlor shared the authorizer’s accountability update, academic performance deficiency report, financial performance, organizational performance, community connections, and upcoming events.

**VII. Old Business**

**VIII. New Business**

a. Approval of Change in Membership of the Board of Directors

The board made a motion to send an official letter and make a phone call to dismiss board member, Cliff Gooden.

Motion: Jason Beres

Support: Helen Hill

Yays: 6

Nays: 0

Abstention: 1 – Cedric Steele

The majority of the Board voted to approve the motion to take steps toward the dismissal of Trustee Gooden.

The Board made a motion to approve the new board member, Prosecutor Bernard Carter.

Motion: Cedric Steele

Support: Jason Beres

Yays: 6

Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the new board member.

Chairwoman, Eve Gomez, swore-in the new board member, Prosecutor Bernard Carter.

b. Approval of Food Services Vendor for 2023-24

The Board made a motion to approve the food services vendor for 2023-24 and the contract to be approved at the next board meeting.

Motion: Jason Beres

Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6

Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the food services vendor 2023-24.

c. Approval of Lighting Upgrade – NIPSCO Rebate

The Board made a motion to approve the lighting upgrade.

Motion: Michelle Dickerson

Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6

Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the lighting upgrade.

d. Approval of Bus Transportation *\*(amended item)*

The Board made a motion to approve the purchase of bus transportation not to exceed \$300,000 (three hundred thousand dollars).

Motion: Cedric Steele

Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 6

Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the purchase of bus transportation.

e. Approval of Flooring Equipment

The Board made a motion to approve the flooring equipment.

Motion: Jason Beres

Support: Michelle Dickerson

Yays: 6

Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the flooring equipment.

f. Approval of Go Guardian (Admin and Teacher)

The Board made a motion to approve Go Guardian.

Motion: Michelle Dickerson                      Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6    Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve Go Guardian.

g. Approval of Imagine Learning

The Board made a motion to approve Imagine Learning.

Motion: Cedric Steele                              Support: Jerry Williams

Yays: 6    Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve Imagine Learning.

h-j. Approval of HMH Curriculum (Social Studies 6-8, 9-12, and PD)

The Board made a motion to approve the HMH Curriculum.

Motion: Jason Beres                              Support: Cedric Steele

Yays: 6    Nays: 0

The Board unanimously voted to approve the HMH Social Studies curriculum.

**IX. PTA**

None

**X. Open Communication/Public Comments**

Eve invited all attendees to the clinic event.

**XI. Meeting Adjourned**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Michelle Dickerson                      Support: Cedric Steele

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.