

**MINUTES**  
**Excel Academy Rhode Island Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 6:00 pm**  
**622 Woonasquatucket Ave, North Providence, RI 02911**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Mayor Brett Smiley, Liz Giordano, Dr. Liza Cariaga-Lo, Chiv Heng, Gary Goldberg

**Board Members Absent:** Mayor Maria Rivera, Mayor Charles Lombardi, Channavy Chhay

**Staff Attending:** Owen Stearns, Arthur Kaynor, Kate Ring, Ferny Reyes, Andrew Solomon, Alejandra Gil, Megan Perry

**Members of the Public Attending:** Brian Guzman

**1. Call to Order**

Smiley called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and presided over the meeting. Kaynor kept the minutes of the meeting.

**2. Public Comment**

None

**3. Board Business**

Cariaga-Lo moved to approve the minutes from 12.14.23, and Heng seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

All those in favor: Mayor Brett Smiley, Liz Giordano, Dr. Liza Cariaga-Lo, Chiv Heng, Gary Goldberg

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Giordano moved to approve the update to the membership of the Building Committee as presented, and Heng seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

All those in favor: Mayor Brett Smiley, Liz Giordano, Dr. Liza Cariaga-Lo, Chiv Heng, Gary Goldberg

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

**4. Board Candidates Introduction & Vote**

Giordano and Chhay of the Governance and Nominating Committee updated the Board on two prospective Board member candidates: Imani Blake and Frangely Rojas. Bios were provided to the Board in advance, and both prospective candidates had the opportunity to meet with staff and other Board members prior to this meeting. Rojas has been a member of the Academic Oversight Committee since last year and is an Excel parent. Blake was able to attend and observe a prior Board meeting. Board members had a chance to ask questions and discuss each candidacy.

Giordano moved to approve Imani Blake and Frangely Rojas as new XLRI Board members, and Smiley seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

All those in favor: Mayor Brett Smiley, Liz Giordano, Dr. Liza Cariaga-Lo, Chiv Heng, Gary Goldberg

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

## **5. Talent Update**

Gil updated the Board on the priorities and efforts of the Talent Team and Talent Leaders across the Network. First Gil introduced the members of the Talent Team, how we define our Talent function, and who the key players are across the Network in this work – including Network Based Core Talent Staff, Network Owners of Talent Strategy, School Owners of Talent Strategy, and more than 35 Hiring Managers across the organization. Gil also presented summary staff recruitment and hiring metrics to the Board and answered clarifying questions about the data. Next, Gil summarized changes and challenges the talent function has experienced since last school year, including a shallower talent pool, more mid-year vacancies, and increased data needs. She also highlighted successes, such as success in meeting KPI goals in hiring and the overall, multi-year successful trend in shifting the diversity of Excel's staff from 84% White Non-Latinx and 16% BIPOC in '15-'16 to 51% BIPOC and 49% White Non-Latinx in '23-'24. Lastly, Gil shared an overview of the Talent Team's responses to challenges and then highlighted one area of success – the Talent Team has implemented 30-Day Conversations with new hires to better understand the positive and negative aspects of the new hire onboarding experience, which is helping both to improve the hiring and onboarding process and also to strengthen retention of new hires.

## **6. Adjourn**

Having completed the Board's business, Goldberg motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Giordano seconded, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:32pm.

List of Documents Presented at the Meeting:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes from 12.14.23 Board Meeting
3. Update to Building Committee membership
4. Resume and Bio for prospective new Board members
5. Talent Update Slides