

MINUTES
Excel Academy Massachusetts Board
Governance & Nominating Committee Meeting
Thursday, December 7, 2023 – 9:30 am
Location: Zoom

Committee Members in Attendance: Pamela Klein, David Sachs, Maher Colaylat

Committee Members Not in Attendance: N/A

Non-Committee Board Members in Attendance: N/A

Staff Attending: Owen Stearns, Arthur Kaynor

Members of the Public Attending: N/A

1. Call to Order & Welcome

Klein called the meeting to order at 10:04am and presided over the meeting. Kaynor kept the minutes.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Minutes

N/A

4. Refresh on Governance & Nominating Committee Structure and Priorities

Klein and Kaynor reviewed the structure and responsibilities of the Governance & Nominating Committee with the Committee members and discussed priorities for the Committee this year, including the following:

1. The Committee is assisting with ensuring effective Board meeting documentation and protocols and ensuring that the Board is responsive to DESE's feedback during the charter renewal process last year.
2. The Committee is assisting to vet and implement a new software, BoardOnTrack, which will facilitate good governance, documentation, and compliance practices.
3. The Committee is leading an inter-Board working group with a representative from the Excel Academy Rhode Island Board of Trustees and assistance from the Friends of Excel Academy Charter Schools Board to refresh the Board's on-boarding resources and orientation process for new members.
4. The Committee has just recruited two new members and is aware of additional membership recruitment needs that the Committee would like to start building a pipeline for.

Klein noted that she would also like to engage with the Committee at a future meeting in a discussion about how we can implement a more rigorous Board self-assessment process.

5. Update on Board On-Boarding Project

Sachs summarized his progress in organizing an inter-Board review and refresh of Excel Academy's orientation resources for new Board members. Sachs held three working meetings with staff members (Arthur Kaynor, Elizabeth Matson, and Owen Stearns), along with Dr. Liza Cariaga-Lo, the newest member of the Excel Academy Rhode Island Board. The group, with input from the Committee, decided to develop a new Onboarding Orientation Slide Deck, to replace the previous Word Doc. versions of orientation materials and to provide new Board members with a more accessible format for receiving this important information. A draft slide deck is ready for the Committee's review. Colaylat offered to assist with the next round of review. Then we will share this new resource with other new members of Excel's Boards for their feedback as well, and we will continue to improve the resource over time. The Friends of Excel Academy Board just recruited a new member, and the Excel Academy Rhode Island Board is anticipating two new members in early 2024.

6. Update on Continued Recruitment Priorities

Kaynor reminded the Board of the current membership recruitment goals that are part of the Board's annual

SY23-24 goals: (1) increase BIPOC & alumni representation, particularly on the Finance Committee, and (2) rebuild fundraising capacity on the Board after recent transitions.

Klein added that she would also like the Committee to prioritize succession planning for key roles on the Board. The Board recently navigated a transition to a new Chair successfully. We are also anticipating a Treasurer transition at the end of the current Treasurer's second three-year term and need to begin planning for this role.

Stearns added that it would also be helpful for this Committee to revisit the concept of an alumni association and/or junior Board in the future.

7. Adjourn

Colaylat moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:24am, seconded by Klein, and the meeting was adjourned.

List of Documents Presented at the Meeting:

1. Agenda
2. Excel Academy MA - Board of Trustees - Committee Overview
3. Draft Board On-Boarding Slide Deck