



**Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

November 20, 2024 at 4:00 pm via ZOOM Link Available on Website

New London, CT

This meeting will be held virtually

MINUTES

PRESENT: R. Muckle, M. Spellman, N. Spera, L. Muller, B. Crouch, B. Buscetto, R. Sanders, D. Brailey, E. Bumgardner, A. Grundy, S. Lougee, E. Robb, W. Linski, T. Collins

4:00 pm

1. WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Chairman R. Muckle

1a. Establishment of Quorum

1b. No Public Comment

Chairman Muckle read the following statement: The Board of Directors welcomes public comment. Due to the nature of the virtual format of the meeting, all comments are to be submitted via email prior to noon on the day of the meeting. Comments may be made on almost any matter related to the operations of ISAAC and will be shared with the Board members in their packet. We shall not read or address any comments at this meeting. However, comments concerning individual students or staff members shall not be permitted.

4:01 pm

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman R. Muckle

- Approval for the October BOD Minutes
- Acceptance of the Year-to-Date Profit/Loss Financial Report for October 2024
- 2025 ISAAC Board of Directors Meeting Dates
- Acceptance of Building Committee approval for payment to G. Donovan Construction for \$309,508
- Revised 2024-2025 ISAAC Budget
- Approval of Bid Waiver for an aquarium rack system from Something Fishy (CSP Grant Funds)
- Approval of Bid Waiver for classroom furniture from Williams Sonoma (CSP Grant Funds)
- Approval of the Executive Director's Goals for 2024-2025

Motion: Approve and accept all items on the consent agenda

**FIRST MOTION: B. CROUCH, SECOND MOTION: BRAILEY –
VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR - MOTION PASSES**

4:03 pm

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Spera

3a. CSDE Report Update

Dr. Spera reported that Principal Linski, Associate Principal Collins, and Director of Special Education, Amy Geary, presented the school's action plan to the state board of education's accountability committee last month. The plan included the steps towards academic improvement, suspension rate improvement, and the steps taken regarding the human resources report that was completed by Shipman and Goodwin. Dr. Spera reported that small changes were needed based upon the findings of the report which included reducing the number of teachers that the Director of Human Resources evaluates and including additional trainings to the staff throughout the school year. As for academic achievement, ISAAC will continue its work that has increased academic achievement for the past several years.

3b. Grant Update

Dr. Spera reviewed the CSP Grant along with the practice of ensuring that the Board approves large purchases according to Board policy. Dr. Spera explained the grant approval process that includes three quotes and a rubric scoring guide. Dr. Spera explained the addition of Marine Science as a special for all 4th and 5th graders next year. This includes the addition of a rack system and touch tank that will only be used by 4th and 5th graders. Dr. Spera also informed the Board that they will be pursuing the renewal of the 21CCLC Grant for \$850,000.

3c. Legislative Update

Dr. Spera informed the Board that he is planning a legislative luncheon in January 2025. This was similar to last year's November meeting which was instrumental in growing ISAAC. Dr. Spera invited members of the Board to contact him with ideas for the meeting. He asked Board members to contact him to discuss ideas and desires for the school to pursue. In addition, he asked members of the Board to contact him if they wish to join the meeting in January.



3d. Hiring Update

Dr. Spera stated that the school still has a Special Education teacher opening in response to the additional students accepted. He stated that although the opening exists, students' IEP needs are still being met.

3e. Recruitment Plan

Dr. Spera reviewed the proposed marketing plan with the Board. He discussed the design of the 3 minute video that will combine Freaky Friday and The Office.

3f. Construction Project Update

Dr. Spera updated the Board on the building project. Dr. Spera reported that it has been a roller coaster of a project but better than the last project. Dr. Spera believes that families will be able to view the classrooms during Open House in February.

4:15 pm

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

4a. FINANCE

Treasurer L. Muller

- Finance Update – October Minutes
- Revised 2024-2025 ISAAC Budget

Treasurer Muller recapped the last Finance Meeting with the Board. The items on the consent agenda were all approved by the Finance Committee prior to the Board meeting.

- 2025-2026 Special Education Hourly Rate – January 2025

Dr. Spera informed the Board that at its next meeting, the Board will have the breakdown for the special education hourly rate. Dr. Spera stated that it is critical that this amount gets told to local Superintendents as they plan for their annual budgets in January.

4b. SCHOOL BUILDING

Chairman Muckle

- School Building Committee Status Update

Chairman Muckle reiterated the report from Dr. Spera about the building project. He added that Scott Donovan stated that the rooms would be ready for the public to view in February 2025 at the last building committee meeting.

- First Payment for Construction and Timeline

This is the first payment for work for the project.

4:20 pm

5. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman R. Muckle

5a. Accountability Index Review & School Improvement Plan

Dr. Spera

Dr. Spera reviewed the school's ranking in the Accountability Index. ISAAC is once again third behind East Lyme and Lyme/Old Lyme Middle Schools. Dr. Spera went over the school's historical success. Dr. Brailey asked about the methods used to gain student excitement and motivation for maximum effort on the test. Dr. Spera discussed the purposeful PD Day before SBAC week to create a 'Super Bowl' atmosphere for the students when they walk in on Monday. In addition, Dr. Spera spoke about the half days and the purposeful stopping of the test so that students don't try to rush through it. Dr. Brailey praised the trust of the staff and commented about the incredible work of Dr. Spera. Secretary Crouch complimented everyone on the successful scores. Treasurer Muller complimented Dr. Spera for his work over the past 5 years stating that the best thing that the Board ever did was hiring Dr. Spera five years ago. She reminded the Board that they still owe him the steak dinner that was supposed to happen for his first interview in November 2019. Chairman Muckle echoed the success of the entire leadership team and staff but concluded that Dr. Spera has been instrumental in the turn around academically and financially for ISAAC.

5b. Training with Attorney Jessica Ritter – Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Chairman R. Muckle

Chairman Muckle reminded the Board that they have committed to period trainings with Shipman and Goodwin. Dr. Spera reminded the Board that the first meeting is on a Tuesday versus the usual Wednesday.

5c. Chairman's Year-End Comments

Chairman Muckle wished everyone a wonderful holiday as the Board will not meet in December.

5:00 pm

6. ADJOURN

Chairman R. Muckle

Motion to Adjourn: FIRST MOTION: B. CROUCH, SECOND MOTION: BRAILEY