

Academy of Accelerated Learning, Inc.

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REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 **BOARD MEETING**

VENUE: **ACADEMY OF ACCELERATED LEARNING DISTRICT OFFICE**
5300 N. Braeswood, Suite 8 Houston, Texas 77096

President Brooks called the meeting to order at 9:22 am. A quorum was established and in attendance were

Board members: James Douglas, Tommy Brooks, Veda Brown, Percy Creuzot (entered the meeting at 10:04 am)

Absent: Isaac Ledesma,

Also present were Staff: Brandon Chandler (Superintendent), Julian Rhyne, Miranda Bonton, Xavier Downs, Brianna Perez, Deordre Adams, Danetta Lightener

Counsel: Luckett A. Johnson;

Other:

President Brooks called for a moment of silence.

Reading of the Mission, Vision, and Goals suspended for this meeting

Board Minutes: James Douglas moved and Veda Brown seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the June 9th board meeting. The motion to approve the June 9th minutes carried unanimously.

No Parent or Community Resident appeared at the meeting to comment.

BOARD WORKSHOP:

i. Board Training

1. 2025 Legislative Update to the Texas Education Code Training (55 min)
2. School Finance for Board Development Training (1 hour)
3. Supporting Increased Student Outcomes Through Effective Governance Training (2 hours)
4. Sexual Abuse, Human Trafficking, and Other Maltreatment of Children Awareness Training (1 hour)
5. Cybersecurity Awareness (35 min)
6. Fundraising Training for Board Development (1 hour)

Presentations:

Superintendent gave an overview of the bills that were passed during the 89th Texas Legislative Session. He reported that HB 210 stipulates that vendors shouldn't be related to the board directly or as sub-contractors. Superintendent explained the options and overview of the 10 commandment requirements. Dr. Brown questioned whether the 10 commandments posters are state funded. Superintendent additionally advised that Board meetings cannot be held during normal business hours to help parent's ability to participate in board meetings. The proposed AAL meeting times for the future will be 5-8pm. The superintendent broke down the DEI requirements as provided by Texas Legislative bills. Dr. Brown sought clarification of SB13 and whether it allows children to access the books but not check out the books or have zero access to the books at all.

The principals made presentation:

Brianna Perez – Perez gave an overview of the data related to the district on STAAR testing. There was a decrease in math 3rd and 4th grade scores. 5th grade had an increase in math scores, while 6th, 7th, 8th scores were either the same or improved. Mr. Douglas questioned what the expectation from the STAAR test are. Superintendent responded that one year of growth is the metric.

Reading scores remained the same; with a decrease in 3rd and 6th grades and an increase in the other grades. Mr. Creuzot asked why there was a significant drop in reading for third grade. The superintendent advised that staffing changes are the reason for the drop and now the district is fully staffed to promote growth. Dr. Brown questioned whether there are varying percentages as you look at cohorts from year to year. Administration stated that though they may have the same cohort they might not be the same students. There was an increase in 5th grade science scores but a decrease in 8th grade performance. Mr. Books questioned our accountability for the changing in numbers, especially decreases and what number is unacceptable as a percentage point. Superintendent reported that the group students are in when compared to as a district is based on student demographics. This year the demographics predictors were that our students should have performed higher than the previous year which it did overall with the district earning a C, which is the same as last year's C rating.

Principal Adams – The Savoy campus principal provided campus goals for the year. There was a drop in the 6th grade reading believed to be based on a change in bilingual rather than just English as a Second Language (ESL) as the campus is now. Overall, there was positive growth at the campus based on the other areas year to year. The cohort tracking provided the same growth data. The principal presented on NWEA MAP Performance which is a quadrant look at performance for the student on growth and achievement in connection with the teachers. Mr. Douglas asked how that could be reliably measured. Superintendent explained how they individually look at each child.

Plans are being finalized for implementing strategies to help enhance student performance. Mr. Brooks asked whether the schools are utilizing a mentor concept with students and if there is anything the board can do to help in this area. Transportation is an issue that could be addressed that would better help keep and gain students. Mr. Douglas wants to know if calculators add or detract from the learning experience. Adams says there is a mixed bag with calculators.

Principal Lightener – The Ashcroft campus demographic breakdown was provided. There was a significant decrease in the 3rd grade performance and there was a decrease across the board. Mr. Brooks questioned why there was such a precipitous drop in the 3rd grade performance. It is believed that switch of the campuses from Chimney Rock to Ashcroft caused the drop. It was also noted that the school is starting to see the impact of covid children that had educational disruptions. Mr. Douglas questioned whether we track AAL students and their performance. The NWEA Map Performance for the campus showed mixed growth. The Superintendent said that one year's instruction should show one year's growth which is not necessarily what is happening at this campus. There are various challenges for the campus and the plans to address them were highlighted. Mr. Brooks wants to know if the plan to address the campus issues are actually doable or whether it too much to truly accomplish; he questioned whether the principal's team is the right team.

Principal Downs reported the Bellfort campus demographics. The STAAR data comparison showed decreases in reading and math and an increase in science. Math scores reflected a decrease across the board. The NWEA Map for this campus was done slightly different from the other campuses. There is a lot of ground that can be made up in the low achievement and low growth areas across the campus. The low achievement and low growth are the highest quadrant in this mapping system. The goal is to have significant changes in the low growth and low achievement areas across all quadrants. The third grade had the greatest growth from this model. The factors outline growth model for the upcoming year. Downs presented the challenges and the plan to address the areas of concern. Mr. Douglas wanted to know why they had the staff reductions last year that contributed to the performance outcomes. Superintendent said we had the reduction because we were operating in a deficit with the budget. The anticipated goal at this campus is a score of B. Mr. Brooks questioned whether Bellfort is different as it relates to truancy/absenteeism than the rest of the campuses. Historically, Bellfort has been worse when it comes to absentee students than the other campuses. Mr. Douglas asked about homework and what they are doing to get the students to be more engaged and working independently. Leap forward has been implemented in the classroom. Need also builds on individuals and the student level. Mr. Brooks asked whether we have peer tutoring. The superintendent responded, yes, there is a component in the NWEA that has the peer engagement.

Administration also announced a new curriculum which is TCMPC. There is a year at a glance to make sure campuses are learning the same thing. Mr. Douglas wants the staff to look into how they improve students learning ability just not the transfer of information. Teacher Incentive Allotment helps teachers earn bonuses and it comes directly from the state; there was approval from the state to allow for the teachers to get the state funds through recommendations based on teacher performance and student growth.

Cybersecurity Awareness Presentation

Miranda Bonton – School Board Finance Development Training Presentation. The 2026 Budget is skewed slightly with cost associated with Savoy. Mr. Douglas asked what the enrollment needs to be for the Savoy campus to break even. The number is roughly 250 to account for the extra staff. The entire district staff cannot be moved to Savoy with some slight renovations but can move to Bellfort. Mr. Douglas wants to know what the other charter schools in the area are doing so that we can find our niche. There are two high producing schools in the area. Those schools are also more expansive in their grade levels. TEA is only considering A and B districts for expansion. The Savoy campus is not conducive to K-5 due to necessary modifications that would need to occur and the cost of those modifications, the depreciation and amortization of the budget and the bond. Mr. Douglas asked whether the superintendent has gone over the budget with each campus to determine what needs to happen from a budgetary projection. Mr. Creuzot asked if we could add grade levels to the savoy campus to help with the deficit. Mr. Creuzot wants to know exactly what has to happen to get the additional enrollment at Savoy. Mr. Douglas asked that we be sure to account for the savings when the district office moves. The enrollment projections right now are 730 and we are currently at about 683.

Breakdown of the effects of HB 2. Mr. Brooks asked if the staff raises were only paid for and not the fringe as well. The initial budget information means the fringe is not allocated as part of the teacher raises from the state. Full staff is broken down by positions. Debt covenant ratio is not being met making us subject to interventions. The bond holders have the covenants that would cause the intervention. Mr. Creuzot wants to know what the bond holders will do if there is a need for an intervention. There have been conversations about busing or vans to transport children to Savoy. There are new rules that impose certain liability when busing. There are financial gives and takes regarding adding new students with adding needed staff for those students. Dr. Brown asked whether we can get somebody popular to promote the school through the philanthropic needs and in-kind donation. We need to come up with something to sell at Savoy. Mr. Douglas wants the district to highlight that Savoy is a high performing school even though there is no individual letter grade attached to the site.

Julian Rhyne - Fundraising report included identifying available grant options. Individual donations or subscriptions on a monthly basis are being considered as well as business Partnerships and in-kind donations. Dr. Brown suggested having specialized programs that align with large donors to meet their philanthropic goals while being a benefit to the students. Directions provided for maximizing grants. The board can assist in this by using their connections and reach

to help with specific opportunities. The committee is trying to find ways to boost the donations with visibility. Need to emphasize personal contributions from board members. Engaging the community through social media and events. Dr. Brown was very impressed with the connections that Mr. Rhyne is making and strides that he is making.

Julian Rhyne – Facilities Update – All the insulation, flooring and sub-flooring are on schedule. Moisture barriers have been completed for the buildings. The drainage was not connected to the city before and now it is connected. New gutters have been installed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session was convened.

APPROVE ACTION ON ITEMS BEFORE THE BOARD:

- a) Consider Ratification and approval of the Severance Agreement and Release of all Claims with former employee
- b) Consider approval of consultant to deliver Sensitivity training to staff and Board of Directors

REPORTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Superintendent Reports:

- i. Enrollment and Marketing Update
- ii. STAAR DATA 2025 Preliminary Results and AAL Site Performance Data Update/Report
- iii. Facilities Committee Update/Report
- iv. Fundraising Committee Update/Report
- v. Board of Directors' Meeting Dates for 2025-2026

b. Financial Reports:

- i. AAL Financial Review/Report Update
- ii. 2024-2025 Preliminary Charter FIRST Rating
- iii. Finance Committee Update/Report

c. Governance – Board of Directors

- i. Board Training at Texas Public Charter Schools Association Conference: October 6-8, 2025, at Marriott Marquis in Houston, TX

Discussion:

The current enrollment is down 30 students' year to date. The enrollment typically will increase up to the snapshot date. AAL is tracking the students that said they would attend but did not show on the first day of school, Aug 11th. Bellfort had the most missing students from expected. There are some students that didn't show day one but will show this or next week. Dr. Brown asked whether ICE has had an impact on student enrollment. There are some possible issues because the AAL logo is associated with law enforcement which has some impact in light of ICE and deportations. Consequently, we changed the logo to distance the school with law enforcement misidentification. The marketing was both 5 and 10 mile radius from each campus.

There is a proposal to change board meetings from 12 to 4 times a year with 5 pm start times. Charter First Ratings are coming out and we are expected to be a C. The Texas Public Charter School Association State Conference is Oct 6-8 2025 and needs board attendance. Dr. Brown wants legal to take a look at what is and is not permissible under certain new Texas Legislative Bills.

ACTION ITEMS

- a) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 and amend actual expenses so that 10% variance does not have to be addressed under Charter FIRST; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.
- b) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve the 2025-2026 Fiscal-Year Budget; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.
- c) Motion made by Dr. Brown to approve Non-Teacher Salary Adjustments and Compensation increases of 3% for the 2025-2026 school year; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- d) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve the Letter of Engagement with McConnell & Jones, LLP to serve as the External Auditor for 2025-2026 school year to complete the annual financial report and single audit report of Fiscal Year 2024-2025 financials; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: The fee paid to auditors last year was \$44,000 and this year will be a little less. Dr. Brown requested AAL consider other auditors for the next year.

- e) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve Resolution Authorizing Increased Spending Limits Under SB 1173 of the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Dr. Brown. Motion passed unanimously.
- f) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve Resolution Approving Spending Limits and Identifying Persons Authorized to Sign Checks; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.
- g) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve and Ratify all contracts for the 2024-2025 fiscal year; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.
- h) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve and Ratify the purchase of student and staff computers for instructional use from Dell Technologies using federal grant funds; seconded by Dr. Brown. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Mr. Douglas requested the cost of the computers.

- i) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve and Ratify the AAL Fundraising Plan; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.

- j) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve the AAL Employee Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- k) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve the AAL Student Handbook for the 2025-2026 school year; seconded by Dr. Brown. Motion passed unanimously.
- l) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve Policy PG-3.321: for the establishment and the formation of the AAL Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) beginning the 2025-2026 school year and approve the selection of the members that will serve on the committee as required under SB 12 under the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- m) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve Policy PG-2.114: related to instruction on student health curriculum as required from SB 12 under the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot.
Motion passed unanimously
- n) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve Policy PG-3.404: which prohibits students from using a personal communication device while on school property during the school day as required under HB 1481 of the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed 3-0-1; Dr. Brown abstained.
- o) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve Resolution regarding Student Activities Policy PG-3.506: declining to grant non-enrolled students the opportunity to participate in University Interscholastic League (UIL); seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- p) Motion made by Dr. Brown to Approve and Adopt Board Policy PG-4.212: Personnel: Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Duties as outlined in SB 12 of the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed 3-0-1; Mr. Douglas abstained.
- q) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve and Adopt Board Policy PG-4.213: Personnel: Instructional Requirements and Prohibitions as outlined in SB 12 of the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Dr. Brown. Motion passed 3-0-1; Mr. Douglas abstained.
- r) Motion made by Dr. Brown to Approve and Adopt Board Policy PG-4.204: Personnel: Reporting Employee Misconduct as outlined in SB 12 of the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.
- s) Motion made by Dr. Brown to Approve and Adopt Board Policy PG-3.318: Students: Concussion Response Policy as required by TEC 38.173 under the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- t) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve and Adopt Policy PG-1.206: Governance: Parental Engagement Policy as required in TEC 26.0071 under the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Dr. Brown. Motion passed unanimously.

- u) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve and Adopt Board Policy PG-1.406: Governance: Security Officers in accordance with TEC 37.0814(d-1) under the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- v) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Approve and Adopt Board Policy PG-1.201: Governance: Board Meetings to be in compliance with all changes to the Open Meetings Act under the 89th Legislative Session; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.
- w) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to Table the Cubes K12 Inc. Stratonomics Contract to work with AAL; seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion to Table passed unanimously.

Discussion: Mr. Douglas inquired about the cost which is \$225,000 and in partnership with Rice University. The marketing professor that runs the marketing department at Rice University which will help market AAL. Mr. Brooks queried whether this is an expenditure that we need to undertake considering the financial issues that are at issue. The Superintendent responded that the contract can be terminated with written notice. The board's concern is spending money that we don't have. Mr. Creuzot expressed his reservations considering the high cost. The Superintendent supported his recommendation stating that this is a strategic play that will help with efficiency. Dr. Brown asked why the strategic plan that we have implemented isn't getting us where we would like to be or in the direction that we would like to be. The superintendent responded that the contract can be broken down to \$75,000 per campus. This affects enrollment and academics. Mr. Brooks stated that he does not think that we are currently in a financial position to take on a contract of this cost.

- x) Motion made by Mr. Douglas to approve Certified Administrators who can appraise a teacher in place of the Teacher's Supervisor, seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed 3-0-1; Dr. Brown abstained.

Discussion: Mr. Douglas questioned who would be certified administrators. Superintendent identified who the certified administrators are and the requirements.

- y) Motion made by Mr. Creuzot to Approve Resolution Adopting the Board of Director Meeting Dates and schedule of meetings for the 2025-2026 school year; seconded by Mr. Douglas. Motion passed unanimously.
- z) Motion made by Dr. Brown to Table the amended AAL Board travel policy seconded by Mr. Creuzot. Motion passed unanimously.

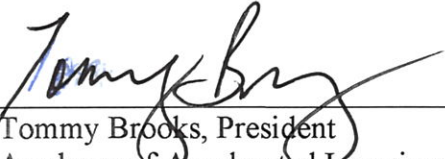
Discussion: Dr. Brown wants the amendment to clarify that HIPPA regulations would be complied with especially regarding discussion of the medical information in an open meeting. Dr. Brown would also like the amendment to specify the travel under the amendment would be for conferences but not travel to meetings and the like.

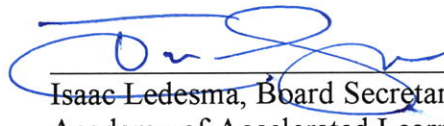
Motion by Dr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Creuzot to adjourn the meeting was unanimously approved and meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.


Tommy Brooks, Board President Academy
of Accelerated Learning, Inc.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that these minutes reflect the business of the Board of Directors of the Academy of Accelerated Learning, Inc. For the board meeting held on Tuesday, August 12, 2025.


Tommy Brooks, President
Academy of Accelerated Learning, Inc.


Isaac Ledesma, Board Secretary
Academy of Accelerated Learning, Inc.