

Twin Cities International Schools School Board Meeting

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting held on **Thursday, September 18, 2025**, at 4:00 PM.
Twin Cities International Schools, 277 12th Ave N. Room #200, Mpls, MN 55401

Attendance:

| <i>Name (Representative)</i> | <i>Position</i> | <i>Attendance</i> |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|
| Mr. Warsame Shirwa (Community) | Board Chair | Present |
| Mr. Abdirazak Botan (Parent) | Treasurer | Present |
| Mr. Jimmy Engler (Community) | Director | Present |
| Mr. Yusuf Samatar (Parent) | Director | Present |
| Ms. Heidi Tesfaye (Teacher) | Director | Present |
| Mr. Abdirashid Warsame (Executive Director) | Ex-Officio | Present |
| Mr. Ismail Ahmed (Director of Finance & Operations) | Ex-Officio | Present |

Also Present:

- Ms. Sawsan Natsheh, Authorizing Manager, Pillsbury United Communities (PUC)
- Mr. Travis Berends, Accountant and Senior Advisor, Creative Planning Business Services
- Ms. Bethany Griffith, Board Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Warsame, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM. He acknowledged a quorum was present. Mr. Warsame welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new school year and thanked them for attending today. He invited those present to introduce themselves and share their position on the Board.

2. Open Agenda

Mr. Warsame acknowledged the open meeting. No public comments or questions were posed to the Board.

3. Approve Agenda

Mr. Jimmy motioned for the September 18, 2025, agenda to be approved.
Ms. Heidi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. Board Members

Mr. Warsame acknowledged that a full quorum was present at today's meeting.

5. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

5.1 Minutes from June 19th, 2025 Special Board Meeting

Mr. Abdirazak motioned for the Special Board Meeting minutes from June 19th, 2025 to be approved.
Mr. Jimmy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6. Business Arising from June 19, 2025

All business items arising from the previous board meeting are included in the agenda.

7. Treasurer's Report

7.1 July 2025 – August 2025 Year-To-Date (YTD) Report

Mr. Ismail introduced Mr. Travis Berends from Creative Planning Business Services to present the YTD Report.

Mr. Travis thanked the Board for having him at the meeting today. He explained that he is a senior advisor at Creative Planning and has been working as an accountant for 8 years. He reminded the Board that this report will cover the YTD financials from July 1, 2025, to August 31, 2025.

He noted the following:

- The original budget had an ADM of 950. The current ADM is 918.
- 17% of the year is complete, with revenues tracking at 15% and expenditures tracking at 10%. He explained that expenditures are usually lower at the beginning of the year because schools are not in session during the summer months.
- The state holdback is \$242,740.
- Audit fieldwork is scheduled to begin on October 6, 2025.
- The line item for textbooks and curriculum is tracking at 60%. He explained that this is common, given that schools need to purchase items over the summer in preparation for the new school year.
- He reviewed line items in the Special Education fund and reminded the Board that TCIS will be reimbursed for their expenditures at 93% from the state.
- Overall, TCIS has a strong cash balance, and its financial holdings are steady.

Mr. Warsame requested clarification on item 360 under expenditures regarding contracted transportation. Mr. Ismail explained that the school has contracted 22 buses to provide services to TCIS. Only the first five buses have been paid for, which is why the approved budget amount is higher than the YTD activity.

Mr. Warsame also requested clarification regarding item 305 under expenditures for contracted services. He asked if the YTD activity amount was for a single contracted service or multiple services. Mr. Travis explained that several contracts are included in that line item and gave the examples of contracting services for substitute teachers, nursing, and advertising.

Mr. Jimmy made a motion to approve the July 2025 – August 2025 YTD Report. Mr. Yusuf seconded the motion. The motion carried.

8. Authorizer's Report

Ms. Sawsan thanked the Board for having her at today's meeting. She explained that she was in attendance to observe and did not have a formal report to share from PUC. She notified the Board that she will be participating in a site visit soon and will share a summary with TCIS once it is complete. She shared that she enjoyed coming to TCIS and was impressed with the entrance, parking lot, welcome desk, and safety protocols in place.

Mr. Ismail thanked Ms. Sawsan for attending today's meeting. He went on to explain that two staff members have resigned at PUC, so the workload for Ms. Sawsan has increased considerably. He commends her for her hard work.

Mr. Abdirashid asked Ms. Sawsan to please support TCIS in staying updated about legislation. Ms. Sawsan stated that there are no new legislative changes as of now, but she will be sure to keep TCIS updated as more information becomes available.

Mr. Warsame thanked Ms. Sawsan for observing the Board today. A motion to receive the authorizer's report was not made due to no formal report being given.

9. Director's Report

Mr. Abdirashid Warsame, Executive Director, reported the following to the Board:

- a) Enrollment Update: District 904 (K-5 579; MS 325). The goal for ADM is 918.
 1. October 1 is the drop date for students who have not attended school this year.
 2. One of the concerns is the lower number of students enrolled in kindergarten, which affects the other grades as students progress.
 3. Mr. Ismail explained that many families are moving to the suburbs, which makes it difficult for students to continue attending TCIS due to the long commute.
- b) TCIS staff reported back to work on Monday, August 18, 2025. The open house was held on Monday, August 25, 2025. The first day for students was Wednesday, August 27, 2025.
- c) There was no school on Monday, September 1, 2025, for the Labor Day holiday. School resumed on Tuesday, September 2, 2025.
- d) The TCIS Leadership Team meeting was held on Monday, August 2, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM.
- e) Elementary Specialists started teaching on August 28.
- f) Reading Screeners for grades K-3 were held the week of September 2, 2025. The WIDA ACCESS Placement Tests will follow. The FastBridge aReading & aMath assessments, along with the Reading Edge program, began the week of September 9, 2025.
- g) September 24, 2025, will be an early dismissal for staff professional development in reading.
- h) The school is planning the fall fire and lockdown drills as required.

Any other business:

- Academic Goals Achieved: WIDA Access for ELL Screening, K-3 Screeners in reading, and FastBridge aReading & aMath assessments. (The Assessment Calendar can be found on the school website.)
- Non-Academic Goals Achieved: The Open House was a successful event, with 95.5% of families in attendance. Those who were unable to attend were contacted via phone by both teachers and educational assistants.

Ms. Heidi made a motion to receive the Director's Report. Mr. Abdirazak seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10. Reports and Action Items

10.1 Oath and Commitment of Board Service

Mr. Ismail handed out forms with the Oath and Commitment for the board members to review and sign. Board members signed the forms, and they will be sent to MDE to fulfill the requirement.

10.2 Annual Charter School Assurances for 2025-2026: To be signed by the Executive Director and the Board Chair.

Mr. Abdirashid and Mr. Warsame reviewed and signed the forms.

Mr. Jimmy made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 Annual Charter School Assurances.

Mr. Abdirazak seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10.3 Language Access Plan

Mr. Ismail explained that every school district needs to create a language access plan regarding how to serve students with diverse language needs. Mr. Abdirashid shared that TCIS has developed and utilized a language access plan for numerous years, given the students' diverse language background, with a high population speaking Arabic, Somali, and Oromo. TCIS will continue to develop its language access plan, utilizing best practices to serve students and families.

Mr. Abdiazak made a motion to approve the Language Access Plan. Ms. Heidi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10.4 Designate the Position of the School Board Treasurer

Mr. Warsame explained that the Board needs to nominate a board member to serve as the School Board Treasurer for the 2025-2026 school year.

Mr. Yusuf made a motion nominating Mr. Abdirazak to serve as the School Board Treasurer.

Mr. Jimmy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

In the event that Mr. Abdirazak is absent from a meeting, the Board designated Mr. Warsame, Board Chair, to fulfill the role as an alternate.

Ms. Heidi made a motion to approve Mr. Warsame as an alternate for the position of treasurer if Mr. Abdirazak is absent. Mr. Jimmy seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10.5 Designate the Position of the School Board Clerk

Mr. Abdirazak nominated Ms. Bethany to serve as the School Board Clerk. Mr. Yusuf seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10.6 First Readings for September 2025

10.6.1 – Whistleblower Policy (496)

10.6.2 – Development and Maintenance of an Inventory of Capital Assets and a Capital Asset Accounting System (704)

10.6.3 – Investments (705)

Ms. Bethany asked who would serve as the investment officer in policy 705 regarding investments. Mr. Abdirashid stated the executive director would serve in that role under the direction of the Board.

Ms. Heidi made a motion to approve policies 496, 704, and 705 as first readings.

Mr. Abdirazak seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10.7 Board Goals

Mr. Abdirashid stated that most of the Board's goals were described in the Director's Report. Additionally, TCIS has begun offering "Supply Kits" to facilitate easier access to resources for families to ensure their students have the necessary materials for instruction. Lastly, TCIS will hold a "Welcome Back" gathering on September 27, providing a great opportunity for the entire school community to connect.

11. Adjournment

Mr. Jimmy motioned for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:43 PM. Mr. Yusuf seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 4:00 PM.