

Shool Governance Council Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2025

Date: October 27, 2025

In attendance: Loralee Crowder, Sharleen De Los Santos-Lazaro, Muriel Drake, Mubarra Elahee, John Henry Hanna, Faith B. Howard, Eric Jackson, Melissa Kaplan, Donald Moses, Margret Otieno, Chris Wuerth

Meeting called to order: 6:05 PM

Adjourned: 7:04 PM

Document Review

- NEASC (accreditation) documents were reviewed — similar to those Eric shared earlier in the week.
- Focus remains on aligning the School Improvement Plan (SIP) with NEASC standards.

Principal's Advisory Council

- Meetings with Students: Discussed what's going well and areas of concern.
 - Arrival and Metal Detectors: Identified as major issues due to limited staffing and large student body (1,600 students).
 - Goal: Streamline the arrival process.
 - Doors open at 6:45 AM.

SIP (School Improvement Plan) Review

- Eric reviewed the agenda, previous minutes, and SIP progress.
- Goal: Finalize SIP and identify areas for feedback.
- Minutes to be approved by co-chairs after review.
- SIP remains a *fluid document* — goals and action steps will evolve.
- Main SIP Focus Areas:
 - Increase the percentage of students “on track to success.”
 - Decrease 9th-grade failure rates.
 - Emphasize progress monitoring, attendance, and academic performance.

AI and Professional Development

- Discussion on the benefits and risks of using **ChatGPT and other AI tools** in education.
 - A **2-hour AI training session** scheduled for **October 31**, with a consultant recommended by fellow principals.
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Student Progress and Attendance

- Last year's failure rates correlated closely with absenteeism.
 - **Grade 9 initiative:** Focused attention and support to reduce chronic absenteeism.
 - **Progress monitoring metrics:**
 - Maintain a "B" average.
 - More than 2 absences per month = chronically absent.
 - No out-of-school suspensions.
 - **HOUSE Program:** Dedicated to 9th grade; including dean, team leader, and social worker.
 - Team exploring a model that worked previously and how to expand to a second team.
 - Mrs. Richardson (attending to a student in crisis) is absent.
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Family and Community Outreach

- **Outreach Coordinators:** Melissa and Sharleen discussed ongoing work.
 - Each coordinator assigned to specific families to identify causes of absenteeism.
 - Outreach includes connecting families with resources: PowerSchool, ParentSquare, health and mental health services, tutoring, etc.
 - Success story shared: A student with anxiety improved from inconsistent attendance to earning A/B grades and pursuing college.
 - Emphasis on building **meaningful relationships** with families and students.
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Safety and Security Update

- **Mr. Lamond Battle** is transitioning to a new role at the Keefe Center.
 - Well loved by students expressed appreciation; suggestion to collect notes and cards.
 - Homecoming will be his final event in this capacity.
 - **New Model:** Transitioning to a **Team Lead structure** (Mrs. Forcucci, Marcus Pink, others).
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Student Concerns and Ideas – Arrival & Metal Detectors

- **Issues:** Long lines, alarms, and bottlenecks at entry.
 - **Proposed Solutions:**
 - Regulate or eliminate full-size backpacks.
 - Encourage locker use
 - Clear bags suggested -having a sensitivity to female students' needs was mentioned
 - Store lunch bags in lockers.
 - Consider "TSA-style" check lines (students with smaller bags move faster).
 - Relocate detectors to side entrances takes time to transition.
 - Explore options that are cost-efficient long-term.
 - **Student Representative (Margaret):** Suggested extending passing time if lockers are required.
 - **Faith and Melissa:** Stressed being mindful of student comfort and practicality.
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Budget and Funding

- **Melissa (BOE):** Emphasized importance of community, parent, and student representation in advocating for a fully funded Board of Education.
 - Noted that only 3 attendees were at the last budget meeting (1 student).
 - Future grant funding uncertain — operational funding remains critical.
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Credit Recovery and Mentoring

- **Credit Recovery:**
 - Managed by Mrs. Bailey; will expand in 2nd semester using **Edmentum**.
 - Goal: Allow students to recover lost credits while earning current ones.
 - Preference to balance online tools with in-person learning.
 - Discussion on underscoring consequences and avoiding “social promotion.”
 - May particularly benefit at-risk and transfer students

 - **Mentoring / Credit-Bearing Opportunities:**
 - Students can serve as TAs, work in the library or offices, and support peers through work-study.
 - Aims to promote engagement and responsibility in the second half of the year.
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Upcoming Events & Initiatives

- **Homecoming:** Saturday.
 - **NEASC Collaborative Visit:** Scheduled for March.
 - **Leads:** Tina and Emily (Co-Chairs).
 - Self-study in progress across five standards: schools must provide evidence to support their performance claims.
 - Committees drafting narratives; ratings include *Not Yet Evident* → *Initiating*, etc.
 - December: Drafts finalized and refined.
 - Goal: Collective voice to identify needs and guide continuous improvement.
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Next Steps

- Review and provide feedback on SIP.
- Continue progress monitoring and attendance interventions.
- Prepare documentation for NEASC review.
- Finalize AI training logistics.
- Develop plan for arrival process and security improvements.