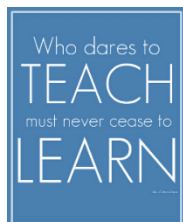




The Staff Development Center
350 Main Street, White Plains, New York 10601

SDC Policy Board Meeting
Thursday, April 16, 2026
8:00 am – 3:00 pm



Agenda Item	Planned Format/Outcome	Discussion Lead	Allotted Time
Opening/Welcome	Call to Open Meeting, Group Greeting	Rhoda	5 minutes
Goals for the Day/Check-In		Lauren	10 minutes
Approval of Meeting Minutes (3)	Motions/Seconds/Votes	All	15 minutes
Budget Update	Explanation/Overview	Monica	15 minutes
Course Proposals	Motions/Seconds/Votes	All	15 minutes
Course Updates & Evaluations		Annie	20 minutes
Instruction Technology Update	Presentation	Rocco	30 minutes
Education in the Age AI Summit	Discussion/Planning	Lauren & Rocco	20 minutes
10:30	Break		10 minutes
Workplan Matrix	Planning for 2026-2027	Lauren	30 minutes
Proposed 26-27 FS-10	Motion/Second/Vote	All	30 minutes
Feedback Checkpoint	Form	All	5 minutes
11:45	Lunch		30 Minutes
Mentor Program Updates	Presentation/Sharing	Chrissy S	15 minutes
New Instructor Tools	Sharing New Tools: Instructor Reflection Form, Course Evaluation Tool Questions	Annie	15 minutes

The Staff Development Center
350 Main Street, White Plains, New York 10601

Professional Learning	Professional Learning Activity		30 minutes
Summer Course Catalog	Share and Distribute	Lauren	10 minutes
Policy Board Composition	Discussion	All	10 minutes
Celebrating our Valued PB Members	Discussion and Acknowledgement	All	20 minutes
Closing & Evaluation	Motion, Second, Vote to Adjourn	Rhoda	5 minutes

Thank you to all our Policy Board Members!

"Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." Edward Everett Hale



The Staff Development Center

350 Main Street, White Plains, New York 10601 Tel: 914-422-2438

Staff Development Center

Policy Board Meeting Minutes: Thursday, September 25, 2025

3:45- 5:15 pm @ SDC Conference Room

Board Members:

Teachers Present: Rhoda Havis, Joan Cruz, Jeanette Castilla, Toni Marie Amato, Grizel Marquez, Brooke Kunze, Kelly DeBellis, Amy Estersohn, Ray Drach, Lisa Vushaj, Lauren Casalino

Others Present: Monica Alvarez, Jerusha Beckerman (via Zoom)

Absent: Dr. Debbie Hand, Dr. Kathy Barpoulis; Paula Santa- Donato, Micheal Eaton, Dr. Kimberly Crawford, Donna Martuge, Joey Havis, Jorge Gonzalez Guillot

Others Present (non-voting): Lauren Crowley (Co-Director), Annie Hovis-Williams (Co-Director) via Zoom

Quorum present: Yes

Rhoda called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm

Motion: (M. Alvarez) moved to approve Jerusha to join us via zoom (a quorum of 12 was present)

2nd motion – J. Castilla

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Opening and Check-Ins

Members participated in brief personal and professional check-ins, reflecting workload, stress levels, and needs at the start of the school year. Common themes included:

- High cognitive load related to paperwork, transitions, and staffing.
- Strong interest in mindfulness, wellness, and creative outlets as forms of professional renewal.
- Appreciation for Policy Board meetings as professional, reflective spaces outside daily classroom demands.
- Continued enthusiasm for hands-on and experiential PD, including woodworking, pottery, and mindfulness-based offerings.

Review of Annual Norms

- The Board reaffirmed norms established the prior year, including:

- Professional, efficient meetings with shared airtime.
- Preparedness through advance review of agendas and minutes.
- Responsiveness to RSVPs to ensure quorum.
- Responsible stewardship of public funds and awareness of the public nature of Board decisions.
- Respectful disagreement and inclusive participation, with options for non-verbal or digital input.

Grant and Work Plan Matrix

- Annual Teacher Center grant: approximately **\$63,724**.
- The Work Plan Matrix functions as both a planning tool and a compliance document and must be executed substantially as approved.
- The matrix reflects collaborative planning between the Policy Board and Teacher Center leadership and is reconciled annually with budget constraints.
- End-of-year reporting and the following year's grant application are informed by participation data and course outcomes.

Budget Snapshot

Major Allocations:

- **Professional Salaries:** approx. \$50,950
 - Includes instructor compensation, MA+60 stipends, and mentor program funding.
- **Mentor Program:** \$10,750.
- **MA+60 Stipends:**
 - 19 stipends at \$375 completed over the summer.
 - Future MA+60 stipends now funded by the district rather than the grant.
- **New Courses:**
 - 21 new courses planned, with capacity for approximately three additional 22-hour courses.
- **Supplies, Travel, Benefits, Indirect Costs:** modest, fixed, or formula-driven amounts.

Approximately **\$33,000** of grant funds had already been committed at the time of the meeting.

District Support and Sustainability

- The district regularly supplements grant funding to support repeat offerings and maintain program breadth.
- Leadership emphasized the importance of defending stipends and PD funding as essential to instructional quality and staff well-being.
- Board members were encouraged to serve as advocates for sustained professional learning within their buildings.

Course Proposals and Decisions

Revised Course: “Getting Students Talking” (Robin)

- Substantially revised and treated as a new proposal.
- Board feedback focused on:
 - Clarifying target audience (grade levels and TA eligibility).

- Adjusting dates that conflicted with holidays or Valentine's Day.
- Decision: Approved with required revisions to audience description and scheduling.

Motion: (G. Marquez) moved to approve and fund Getting Students Talking course

2nd motion – L. Casalino

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Wood Carving Follow-Up Course (Chad Allen)

- Second-level course building on a previously successful offering.
- Discussion included enrollment history, prerequisite expectations, and scheduling across two weekdays.
- Decision: Approved.

Motion: (L. Vushaj) moved to approve and fund Wood Carving course

2nd motion – T. Amato

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Educators Resilience (Armen) – Retroactive

- Course already posted and fully enrolled due to timing constraints.
- Aligns strongly with expressed Board needs around wellness and resilience.
- Decision: Supported for retroactive approval, with final determination of funding source (grant or district) to be confirmed by leadership.

Motion: (L. Casalino) moved to approve and fund Educators Resilience course

2nd motion – J. Cruz

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Spanish Book Club: “Voices and Stories from Latin America” – Retroactive

- Advanced-level Spanish book club facilitated by Angie Garcia and Catalina.
- Currently enrolled and running.
- Discussion acknowledged both its value and its limited accessibility due to language level.
- Decision: Retroactively approved, with interest expressed in developing a future entry-level Spanish offering.

Motion: (T. Amato) moved to approve and fund Voices and Stories from Latin America books club

2nd motion – R. Drach

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Creating a Digital Tenure Portfolio- (Tomaselli)

Motion: (T. Amato) moved to approve and fund Creating a Digital Tenure Portfolio course

2nd motion – R. Drach
Opposed: None
Abstained: None
All Approved- Motion carried

Next Level Instruction- L. Crowley recused herself

Motion: (J. Cruz) moved to approve and fund Next Level Instruction course

2nd motion – K. DeBellis
Opposed: None
Abstained: None
All Approved- Motion carried
L. Crowley returned after the vote

Motion: (J. Castilla) moved for repeat courses from last school year to be approved and funded by the 2025-26 school year (list below)

2nd motion – T. Amato
Opposed: None
Abstained: None
All Approved- Motion carried

Visible Thinking Routines Grs. K-12

07/07/2025 -07/11/2025 Instructor: Amanda Molloy

Gratitude Journaling: Mindful Practices to Promote Reflection Grs. K-12

07/08/2025 - 07/10/2025 Instructor: Samantha Tinampay

Supporting ENL Students in Content Areas: Developing Routines, Visual Supports, and Instructional Materials Grs. K-12

07/14/2025 - 07/18/2025 Instructor: Michelle Goodman

The Reading Comprehension Blueprint Book Study Grs. K-12

07/14/2025 - 07/18/2025 Instructor: Amanda Molloy

Uncovering the Logic of English Book Study Grs. K-5

07/14/2025 - 07/17/2025 Instructor: Tracey Morrissey

Designing AI-Durable Learning Experiences Grs. 6-12

07/29/2025 - 07/31/2025 Instructor: Lauren Crowley

Building Classroom Community Using Drama Grs. K-12 (All Staff)

08/04/2025 - 08/07/2025 Instructor: Seren Cepler

Supporting Newcomers in the Classroom Grs. K-12 (All Staff)

08/19/2025 - 08/21/2025 Instructors: Damari Martinez

Choosing Our Words: The Impact of Teacher Language Grs. K-12

08/27/2025 - 10/18/2025 Instructors: Ann Hovis-Williams

Writing Revolution in the Content Areas: Building Science and Social Studies Knowledge Through Writing Grs. K-2

09/15/2025 - 10/20/2025 Instructors: Amanda Molloy

Spin, Sculpt, Create: Unlocking Creativity Through Clay Grs. K-12

09/30/2025 - 10/28/2025 Instructors: May Burnett & Denise O'Keeffe

Differentiated Teaching Strategies: Making Schoology Work Through Your Content Grs. K-12

10/09/2025-11/24/2025 Instructors: Ray Drach & Dayana Picard

Reimagining Educational Practices with AI Grs. 6-12

10/11/2025 - 12/13/2025 Instructors: Lauren J Crowley

Reigniting the Joy of Reading: An Educator's Book Club Grs. K-12

10/21/2025 - 05/05/2026 Instructors: Amy Estersohn

Mentor Teacher Training Workshop

10/27/2025 - 11/24/2025 Instructors: Colleen Torres

Uncovering the Logic of English Book Study Grs. K-5

10/28/2025 - 12/09/2025 Instructors: Tracey Morrissey

Motion: (L. Casalino) moved to adjourn the SDC Policy Board meeting at 5:12 pm

2nd motion – B. Kunze

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Submitted by: L. Crowley



The Staff Development Center

350 Main Street, White Plains, New York 10601 Tel: 914-422-2438

Staff Development Center

Policy Board Meeting Minutes: Thursday, January 15, 2026

8:00 am- 3:00 pm @ SDC Conference Room

Board Members:

Teachers Present: Rhoda Havis, Joan Cruz, Jeanette Castilla, Toni Marie Amato, Grizel Marquez, Lauren Casalino, Brooke Kunze, Kelly DeBellis, Lisa Vushaj, Amy Estersohn, Ray Drach,

Others Present: Joey Havis, Monica Alvarez, Dr. Kathy Barpoulis, Jerusha Beckerman, Dr. Debbie Hand

Absent: Dr. Kimberly Crawford, Micheal Eaton, Donna Martuge, Paula Santa- Donato, Jorge Gonzalez Guillot,

Others Present (non-voting): Lauren Crowley (Co-Director), Annie Hovis-Williams (Co-Director), Kara Lyons, Christina Samagio

Quorum present: Yes

Rhoda called the meeting to order at 8:18 am

Opening and Check-Ins

The January 2026 full-day meeting of the Staff Development Center (SDC) Policy Board was called to order by the Co-Directors. Members were welcomed and thanked for their commitment to participating in an all-day session outside of classroom responsibilities.

The Board acknowledged that:

- The November Policy Board meeting was cancelled.
- The December meeting functioned as an informal gathering without official business.
- This January session served as the formal midyear all-day meeting for governance, planning, and budget alignment.

RECONNECT AND REIMAGINE ACTIVITY

The Board engaged in a structured reflection protocol titled **"Reconnect and Reimagine."**

Members responded to four prompts posted throughout the room:

- What I'm proud of
- What's been challenging
- What I'm seeing in the field
- What I'm wondering about next year

Themes that emerged included:

- Increased educator isolation and self-preservation, with fewer organic opportunities for collaboration.
- Student disengagement and apathy, even in classrooms emphasizing differentiation and choice.
- Ongoing challenges with implementation of new curriculum initiatives.
- Declining participation in the SDC needs assessment survey.

In a follow-up task, members created aspirational “future headlines” describing the desired impact of SDC and Policy Board work. These headlines will serve as guiding touchstones for future planning and visioning.

HUMAN CONNECTION AND WELLNESS CHECK-IN

Board members participated in a brief emotional check-in using a visual reflection tool. Several members shared current personal and professional stressors, including family illness, bereavement, and extended home disruptions.

This discussion reinforced:

- The urgency of supporting educator wellness.
- The importance of professional learning that acknowledges emotional labor and sustained stress.
- The relevance of wellness-focused offerings within the SDC portfolio.

Motion: (R. Beckerman) moved to approve October 23, 2025 minutes.

2nd motion: T. Amato

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

COURSE PROPOSALS AND FUNDING DECISIONS

A. Deep Dive into Arts & Letters Module 3 K-2 & 3-5 Resource Support Courses-

J. Castilla recused herself

Two courses supporting implementation of the district's new ELA resource (K–2 and Grades 3–5) were presented. Courses were developed in coordination with district curriculum leadership and focus on assessment alignment and classroom implementation.

The Board discussed the strong need for support alongside concerns about timing and teacher capacity mid-year. Feedback regarding pacing and rollout will be shared with facilitators and curriculum leaders.

Action: Retroactive grant funding approved for both courses.

Motion: (J. Cruz): moved to approve and fund Deep Dive K-2

2nd motion: L. Casalino

Opposed: None

Abstained: J. Castilla

All Approved- Motion carried

Jeannette returned after the vote

Motion: (L. Casalino): moved to approve and fund Deep Dive 3-5

2nd motion – R. Beckerman

Opposed: None

Abstained: J. Castilla
All Approved- Motion carried
Jeannette returned after the vote

B. “Nurturing Teaching Spirit”

A rerun of this wellness-focused course was presented. The Board noted strong alignment with identified needs related to burnout, reflection, and professional renewal.

Motion (K. DeBellis): moved to approve and fund Nurturing Teaching Spirit

2nd motion: L. Vushaj

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

C. Hands-On Arts Offerings

The Board reviewed proposals to rerun:

- *Build, Sculpt, Create* (revised from *Spin, Sculpt, Create*)
- Woodworking 101

These offerings continue to generate strong interest and waitlists. The Board emphasized timely cancellations and proactive waitlist participation.

Action: Approved for rerun with grant funding.

Motion: (J. Havis) moved to approve and fund Built, Sculpt, Create

2nd motion: J. Castilla

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Motion: (L. Casalino): moved to approve and fund Woodworking 101

2nd motion: K. DeBellis

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

D. “Supporting Newcomers in the Classroom”

Despite high district need, enrollment was low. The Board identified revisions needed to:

- Broaden learning outcomes.
- Clarify session structure and dates.
- Reframe marketing to reach a wider audience beyond ENL specialists.

Decision: Funding deferred; proposal to be revised and resubmitted.

E. Trauma-Informed Teaching Proposal- A new two-day summer workshop was reviewed. Given existing trauma-informed materials already owned by SDC, the Board requested clearer differentiation and a more detailed outline.

Decision: Returned for revision; no vote taken.

COURSE EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The Board reviewed evaluation data from a wide range of completed offerings. Overall feedback was highly positive, with educators reporting strong relevance, practical application, and positive impacts on classroom practice and well-being.

MINDFULNESS AND RESILIENCE (RISE)

A RISE-trained educator provided an overview of the program and facilitated a brief grounding exercise. The Board affirmed the value of continued resilience and mindfulness offerings for both educators and students.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND WORK PLAN MATRIX (2026–2027)

The Board reviewed needs assessment data and began populating the 2026–2027 Work Plan Matrix. Priority areas included:

- Support for diverse and neurodivergent learners.
- Modular and stackable professional learning.
- AI in instructional planning and assessment.
- Expanded virtual PD options.
- Wellness and burnout prevention.
- Classroom management and co-regulation.
- Support for new teachers aligned with the Mentor Program

Mentor Program Overview

- 43 active mentors matched by grade level or experience.
- Mentors complete a 15-hour foundational course and ongoing PD.
- Program emphasizes coaching skills, adult learning theory, and school culture.
- Approximately 25% of grant funds support mentoring.

Virtual Professional Learning

The Board discussed challenges with engagement and professionalism in virtual PD. Concerns included camera-off participation, multitasking, and limited engagement. Proposed actions:

- Reinforce norms consistently.
- Provide facilitators with clear protocols.
- Clarify expectations tied to credit and compensation.
- Determine the future structure of virtual PD by July.

Communication Platform Transition

The Board reviewed the district's transition from Remind to ParentSquare, including training plans, staff support, and consolidation of communication tools.

AI Work and Events

Updates included ongoing AI-related PD, district guideline development, a February 26 parent-facing AI panel, and early planning for a potential Education and AI Summit.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING CLOSURE

The day concluded with structured community-building activities including a story circle, movement-based reflection, and a written affirmation exercise. These were framed as transferable SEL strategies for classrooms and staff spaces.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT STEPS

The Board will continue refining the 2026–2027 Work Plan Matrix and use it to guide spring budget decisions and course catalog development.

Motion: (J. Havis) moved to adjourn the SDC Policy board meeting at 2:47 pm

2nd motion: R. Drach

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved- Motion carried

Submitted by: Lauren Crowley



The Staff Development Center

350 Main Street, White Plains, New York 10601 Tel: 914-422-2438

Staff Development Center

Policy Board Meeting Minutes: Thursday, March 19, 2026

3:45- 5:15 pm @ SDC Conference Room

Board Members:

Teachers Present: Rhoda Havis, Joan Cruz, Toni Marie Amato, Grizel Marquez, Brooke Kunze, Amy Estersohn, Ray Drach, Lisa Vushaj

Others Present: Joey Havis, Monica Alvarez, Dr. Debbie Hand, Dr. Kathy Barpoulis, Jerusha Beckerman, Leroy Dixon

Absent: Lauren Casalino, Paula Santa- Donato, Dr. Kimberly Crawford, Kelly Debellis, Donna Martuge, Jeanette Castilla, Jorge Gonzalez Guillot

Others Present (non-voting): Lauren Crowley (Co-Director), Annie Hovis-Williams (Co-Director) via Zoom

Quorum present: Yes

Call to Order

Rhoda Havis called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm.

Course Proposals

1. Horticulture: The Study of Plants for Food and Wellness

Experiential course focused on horticulture, SEL, and hands-on learning
Discussion included materials, structure (3-day format), and summer application
Clarification that materials may be provided (pending confirmation)

Motion: (J. Beckerman) moved to approve funding for Horticulture Science: The study of plants for food and wellness.

2nd motion: L. Vushaj

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

2. The Anxious Generation- April & July 2026 dates Annie recused herself.

Motion: (G. Marquez) moved to approve funding for the Anxious Generation.

2nd motion:: B. Kunze

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

Annie returned

3. Supporting English Language Learners

Revised version of a previously offered course

Adjusted structure and content; repeat participants not permitted

Motion: (J. Cruz) moved to approve funding for Supporting English Language Learner.

2nd motion: J. Havis

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

4. Narrative-Based Learning

Strong content and organization

Concerns raised regarding scheduling (full week, 9–12 daily) and accessibility for summer school staff

Noted increase in diverse course proposals overall

Motion: (J. Beckerman) moved to approve funding for Narrative–Based Learning.

2nd motion:: R. Drach

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

5. Arts and Letters (Revised Offering)

Shift from broader course to Module 1 focus

Adjusted due to participant interest trends

Motion: (T. Amato) moved to approve funding for Arts and Letters.

2nd motion:: G. Marques

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

6. The Sound Lab

Strong interest and positive feedback

Questions raised regarding:

Accessibility of tools (GarageBand, Logic Pro)

Classroom application and transfer

Recognized value in interdisciplinary connections

Motion: (J. Havis) moved to approve funding for the Sound Lab.

2nd motion: T. Amato

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

7. Supporting Diverse Learners with AI (Lauren)

Strong support and credibility

Emphasis on differentiation, rigor, and accessibility

Motion: (J. Cruz) moved to approve funding for Supporting Diverse Learners with AI

2nd motion: L. Vushaj

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

8. Teacher Walking Course-

Significant discussion regarding:

Alignment with classroom practice

Justification for compensation

Need for clearer SEL and instructional connections

Consensus that revisions are needed

Action: Proposal tabled for further revision and feedback

9. Piano-Based Learning Course

Overemphasis on skill acquisition vs. classroom transfer

Need to highlight SEL, executive functioning, and PBL connections

Discussion around direction of SDC offerings (professional learning vs. personal enrichment)

Action: Proposal tabled for revision and reframing

10. Martial Arts / Physical Training Proposal

Concerns regarding:

- Liability
- Time structure
- Classroom relevance

Action: Proposal tabled

AI Summit Discussion

Proposed November conference: "Education in the Age of AI"

Co-sponsored by Staff Development and Instructional Technology

Tentative structure:

- Keynote speaker
- Breakout sessions (multiple pathways)
- Workshop model (AI for Education)
- Endnote: Future of AI

Key Points Discussed:

Focus audience: primarily educators (recommendation to avoid over-expansion initially)

Importance of:

- Ethical considerations (copyright, AI use)
- Practical classroom applications
- Differentiation and AI-durable tasks

Potential speakers:

- Monica Burns
- Amanda (AI for Education)

Additional Ideas:

- PLC-style collaboration groups
- Community-building components
- Social media and outreach strategy
- Food trucks for lunch
- CTLE credit alignment

Status: Informational only – no vote taken

Policy Board Composition

10 members rotating off by June 2026

Urgent need to identify and recruit new members

Board members encouraged to:

- Recommend candidates
- Reach out or share names with leadership

Adjournment

Motion: (J. Havis) moved to adjourn the SDC Policy board meeting at 5:14 pm

2nd motion: M. Alvarez

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

All Approved – Motion carried

Submitted by: Lauren Crowley