

## Minutes

**THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.**  
5100 Cannes Street  
New Orleans, LA 70129

**Board Meeting**  
**June 14, 2016 @ 6:00 P.M.**

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. held a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday June 14, 2016, in the Community Room of CC's Coffee located at 2800 Esplanade Ave, New Orleans, LA 70119.

### **Call to Order 6:00 PM.**

#### **Roll Call:**

**Board Members:** Lauren Narcisse, Rita Bautista, J. Christopher Bowman, & Durrell Laurent;

**Staff:** Dan Davis, Phong Tran, Douglas Guidry, & Anna Faye Caminita;

**Public:** Ron Midkiff

#### **Discussion Items:**

1. Charter Amendment to Include High School Grades: Speaking on Ms. Toranto's behalf, Mr. Tran discussed the necessary amendment to EGI's charter to include high school grades.
2. Charter Renewal Timeline: Speaking on Ms. Toranto's behalf, Mr. Tran discussed the Charter renewal process which will begin towards the beginning of this year and will continue through 2017.
3. Committee Work on Goal Setting: President Narcisse discussed revisions to the committee meeting structure suggesting that we switch to committee meetings on a monthly basis. The discussion was tabled and scheduled to be discussed at the next board meeting.
4. Board Recruitment: The board considered a resume from a prospective board member.

#### **Action items**

1. Approval of Minutes of from previous meeting; unanimously approved by the board, motioned by J. Christopher Bowman and seconded by Rita Bautista.
2. Resolution in favor of Charter Amendment to include High School, unanimously approved by the board; motion by Rita Bautista and seconded by J. Christopher Bowman.

**Adjournment: 6:45 PM.**

## MINUTES

THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.

Einstein Charter Middle at  
Sarah Towles Reed  
5316 Michoud Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70129

Board Meeting  
June 7, 2016 @ 6:00 P.M.

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. held a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday June 7, 2016 at 5316 Michoud Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70129.

### Call to Order 6:15 PM

Roll Call: Lauren Narcisse, Durrell Laurent, J. Christopher Bowmen

### Approval of Minutes - tabled

### Discussion Items:

1. CEO Report – Ms. Toranto raised a concern about the number of current board members. She also noted numerous issues stemming from the adoption of the ONE APP common application system in terms of lack of records, projected student needs and the number of teachers hired. She also noted that, with respect to facilities, it is possible that the RSD will not open the VDLE building in time for the coming school year. The RSD's facilities approval process may make us wait until mid-August for the building to be prepared. Ms. Toranto suggested that the board contact leaders at the RSD and the LDOE to urge a swift resolution to this manner. Ms. Toranto will be contacting the RSD about the building at 11:00 on Friday. Reed High School opening will be 10 AM on 7/29/16. We have yet to receive a date from RSD for Sherwood Forest. We are going to pay 6-8 and 9- teachers more because the day will be expanded. Ms. Toranto also noted that staff retention this year was not as good as we could have hoped for this year. Ms. Toranto will be meeting with Mary Garton this week to discuss site codes for different schools. Ms. Toranto is particularly interested in the accountability and the logistics. Ms. Toranto has informed that board that the ELL meetings with the RSD are on-going. Shawn, Tran and Chris will be meeting with the Arkansas Charter Group to discuss the potential of having an ECS school in Arkansas. Ms. Toranto will be speaking at the conference.
2. CFO Report – We have \$5 million in the bank, a little less than \$1 million in receivables, and expect to add another \$100,000. The budget will need to be adopted this evening.
3. CAO Report – Dr. Caminita reported that the Curriculum and development team attended the Louisiana Summit. Since yesterday, we have begun day long PDs to lay out expectations for programing, including curricular materials, data driven meetings, PD delivery expectations. This will continue through June. Dr. Caminita administered last benchmarks to use the data director software to compare schools, growth, teacher retention, and other aspects of schools.
4. CSO Report – Mr. Davis noted that we received two playgrounds or KaBoom! For the Sherwood Forest Community, instruments from the Tipitina's Foundation and \$25 from

GIVENOLA. We were declined from three foundations for \$110,000. Mr. Davis noted that we are resoling the award of Safe Routes to School for \$50,000, Carol M. White for \$2.6 million, \$1.5 Innovative Approaches to Literacy, i3 Pre-Application \$5 million, National Weather Association \$750, Dollar General Literacy \$4,000 and Cox City Council \$19,960. We have some good prospects upcoming. We appear to have a received a first APR.

5. D-CEO Report Mr. Tran reported that July 5 is the moving date for ECS @ Sherwood Forest.
6. Committee Reports – tabled.

**Action items**

1. Approval of the revised minutes to date for FY 2015-16 – JCB, DL – unanimous passed
2. Adoption of the Evaluation Tool, DL, unanimous passed.
3. Executive Session #1 – Personnel Review – tabled.
  - a. CEO - Shawn Toranto
  - b. CFO - Douglas Guidry
  - c. D-CEO - Phong Tran
  - d. CSO - Daniel Davis
  - e. CAO - Anna Faye Caminita
4. Approval of the Budget – LN, CB, - unanimous passed.
5. Executive Session #2 – Prospective Litigation – tabled.

**Adjournment: 7:50**

## Minutes

**THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.**

**Board Meeting  
May 3, 6:00 P.M.**

**Einstein Charter School at  
Village De L'Est  
5100 Cannes St.  
New Orleans, LA 70129**

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc., held a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on May 3, 2016, at 5100 Cannes Street, New Orleans, LA 70129.

### Call to Order 6:10

**Roll Call: Rita Bautista, J. Chris Bowman; Mauricio Sierra; Durrell Laurent**

### Discussion Items

1. CEO Report – Ms. Toranto discussed at length the completion of our testing period at Einstein, at each campus, focusing on the process and noting that on balance, notwithstanding a few odd issues, testing went exceptionally smoothly. Ms. Toranto has discussed the financial implications of the reduction in MFP following the implementation of differentiated funding across all schools in Orleans Parish at length.
2. CFO Report – Dr. Guidry picked up where Ms. Toranto left off discussing in quantifiable terms the financial impact of differentiated funding. On the whole, notwithstanding the negative consequences, our current financial position remains healthy. The real concern about the MFP reduction is next year's operating budgets. Dr. Guidry noted that a rise in enrollment will be needed to make ends meet.
3. CAO Report – Dr. Caminita reported that the planning phase for the next school year has begun. A group of teachers, instructional coaches, and principals will be devoting half days this summer to plan and revise Einstein's instructional program for the following school year in all schools.
4. CSO Reports – Mr. Davis reported that we are in the process of finalizing a \$20,000 award to support our PLTW programming, we received \$5,000 for a laser engraving system to support STEM instruction, and we received a grant from NORDC in partnership with Community Works to host a summer camp at the middle school this summer. Further, he noted that we applied for \$1.5 million from the LDOE to implement 21<sup>st</sup> Century afterschool learning programming across all Einstein campuses. Finally, he reported that we are currently working on a collaborative application with OPSB for the Innovative Approaches to Literacy grant (\$1.5 million), a collection of stakeholders for a PE grant (\$2.4 million), and an i3 pre-application for \$5 million.
5. D-CEO Report – Mr. Tran reported that the laser engraving system would allow us to make signs from a variety of materials. Overall, he summed up that testing went smoothly; there were only 4 irregularities, for various reasons. Appropriate action was taken in each case.
6. Committee Reports – tabled.

### Action items

1. Approval of minutes – tabled
  - a. Public Comment – Mr. Le had raised concerns about the ethnic makeup of the board, the bylaws and terminations over the past school year. Although these items were not on the board’s agenda or related to the tabled matter of approval of minutes, the board engaged in robust dialogue with Mr. Le as a part of its on-going commitment to transparency and stakeholder engagement.

Adjournment 7:45 p.m.

## Minutes

THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.  
Board Retreat  
April 9, 2016, 10:30 A.M.

Robert E. Smith Library  
6301 Canal Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70124

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. held a Board Retreat at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, April 9, 2016 at the Robert E. Smith Branch Library (6301 Canal Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70124).

**Call to Order: 10:30AM**

### **Roll Call**

**Board Members Present:** Lauren Narcisse, Chris Bowman, Mauricio Sierra, Durrell Laurent

**Board Members Absent:** Rita Batiste

**Staff Members Present:** Jacob Holmes, Sabrina D. Marsh, Anna Faye Caminita, Dr. Doug Guidry, Shawn Toranto, Phong Tran, Tiffany Cherrie, Shimon Ancker, Dan Davis

### **Approval of Minutes**

### **Discussion Items:**

1. Board Vision and Values – Shawn Toranto, Lauren Narcisse, & Chris Bowman
  - System of Einstein values:
    - Increase student achievement and competitive opportunities for students
    - Holistic foundation for students to achieve their personal goals
    - Teamwork, cooperative endeavor
    - Research and effective implementation of high quality programming
    - Professional development
    - Respectful and responsible school environment
    - Compliance with all regulations; board governance critical to mission
  - Individual and group board visioning: Board members commit to uphold the Einstein mission by:
    - Ensuring accountability and transparency through informed governance to all stakeholders
    - Ensuring student success by engaging and supporting all stakeholders
    - Fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion among our stakeholders
  
2. Role of the Board- Increasing Engagement-- Lauren Narcisse, Chris Bowman, & Daniel Davis
  - Expectations for current and future board members:
    - Supporting evolving mission

- Community engagement and school event participation
- Fundraising participation and events
- Professional services
- Board meeting minutes approved, signed after every meeting and on record in CMO office
- Attendance
- Compliance oversight
- Regular communication with organization
- Need more board members, at least 9, to encourage greater diversity and allow for greater meeting flexibility
- Create list of board requirements (e.g., XX hours of volunteer time, fundraising goals, defined campaigns)
- Guarantee board seats for directly appointed community members

### 3. CSR Grant Status Report – Daniel Davis

- Drawing down funds: approximately \$500,000.00
- Holding regular planning meetings and recording minutes
- Need to pass Business Plan
- Need to hire Evaluator by September 2016; plan to begin RFP bidding process before August 31. University of Washington evaluators encouraged to apply.
- Budget has five school units + CMO unit
- Main budget expense item is personnel.
- 4 existing schools will approach cost threshold within 2 years
- GRPA 1: Substantially close to meeting goal of 3 new schools and expansion of 2 existing schools
- GRPA 2: Testing will soon provide student progress data for this goal
- SWOT analysis:
  - Differentiation between schools
    - Need separate IDs, cultures, events, but shared Einstein values. If we don't adequately separate the schools, we could lose CSR funding, prestige, and future funding opportunities.
  - High-quality teachers
    - Teacher recruitment currently benefits from rigorous interview process, internal and external interest in positions, increased PD for existing staff to grow. However, we are having difficulty recruiting certified candidates and there is a need for a teacher development program partnership. If we don't attract more high-quality teachers, our teaching quality may decline, SPS may decline, and the schools will experience more turnover.
  - 93% SLT attainment
    - SLTs need to be rigorous and teachers are eager to improve, but current SLTs lack rigor and teachers need more PD opportunities. We need to develop a highly structured plan or else SLTs will be inconsistent and student performance and teacher effectiveness will stagnate.

**Action items**

1. Approval of minutes

- Chris Bowman made a motion to approve January 2016 minutes and to adjourn the meeting. Durrell Laurent seconded minute approval. Mauricio Sierra seconded move to adjourn. All present board members approved both motions.

**Next Steps:**

2. Write follow-up responses to SWOT

**Adjournment: 2:00PM**



## NOTICE

THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.

Einstein Charter School at  
Sherwood Forest  
5316 Michoud Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70129

Board Meeting  
April 5, 6:00 P.M.

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. will hold a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on April, 5, 2016, at 5316 Michoud Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70129.

**Call to Order: 6:21 PM**

### Roll Call

**Board Members present: Lauren Narcisse; J. Christopher Bowman; Rita Battista**

### Discussion Items

1. CEO Report – Ms. Toranto provided an extensive discussion of the on-going differentiated funding issue recently voted upon by BESE. She noted that she played a significant role as a member of the working group and strongly urged the Board to support the school in the endeavor. After receiving a question from Mr. Bowman about the recent article in the newspaper about the parent's from Morris Jefferson's lawsuit against the state, Ms. Toranto elaborated on the details of the differentiated funding plan and explained the two percent loss cap being granted to selective admissions schools.
2. CFO Report – Dr. Guidry reported that board's finances are healthy and that we should expect to maintain healthy balances. Dr. Guidry also explained that the school's budgeting process is underway. He further elaborated that the budget hearing would take place in late May.
3. CAO Report - Dr. Caminita informed the board that testing preparations were will underway. Specifically, she looks forward to implementing real time coaching protocalls with teachers and coaches.
4. CSO Report – Mr. Davis reported that all things we well on the development front and that Einstein was currently partnering with Community Works to submit a 21<sup>st</sup> century grant to implement afterschool programming at all Einstein's campuses.
5. D-CEO Report – Mr. Tran indicated that for the sake of brevity he was going to keep his remarks brief. He invited all to the walk though at Sherwood Forest.
6. Committee Reports – tabled.
7. Committee Goal Setting – tabled.

### Action items

1. Approval of minutes – proposed by Rita Battitsa, seconded by J.C. Bowman, passed unanimously.

2. Resolution from the board authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to apply for 21 Century Learning Center Grant funds and expressing the board's strong support of this potential future program. – Proposed by John Chris Bowman, seconded by Rita Battista, passed unanimously.

**Adjournment 7:37 PM**

## Minutes

**THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.**

**Einstein Charter Middle at  
Sarah Towles Reed  
5316 Michoud Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70129**

**Board Meeting  
March 9, 6:00 P.M.**

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. held a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 5316 Michoud Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70112.

### **Call to Order: 6:04 PM**

**Roll Call:** Present: Lauren Narcisse, Rita Bautista, Chris Bowman; Anna Faye Caminita, Shawn Toranto, Daniel Davis, Phong Tran, Douglas Guidry, Toya Jackson, Ron Midkiff

### **Approval of Minutes**

### **Discussion Items:**

1. CEO Report – introduced CEO Shawn Toranto and described the on-going success at schools. CEO noted that last month’s teachers fair was a roaring success; all 3 schools able to participate. New principals are a real draw for applicants. We are focusing on attracting professional educators. We also hired José Torres, who comes from Andrew Wilson and is bilingual in Spanish.

CEO also discussed differentiated funding formula, noted her on-going participation in the working group since November. She voted for the formula but believes the weight attached to ELL is insufficient and that the committee needs to research the costs of ELL instruction. Notes that selective admissions schools will only lose 2%.

2. CFO Report – CFO reported that we are in solid financial position.
3. CAO Report – CAO described in detail the working of the instructional Tuesday.
4. CSO Report – Reported on grants received, grant applications declined, and CSR implementation. The new documentation procedures should go a long way to ensuring that reports are timely and needed information is gathered.
5. D-CEO Report – Noted that we added 20 seats at Children’s Palace, that Sherwood Forest is coming along and that we are hoping for a site visit in April.
6. Committee Reports – tabled.
7. Committee Goal Setting – tabled.

### **Action items**

1. Approval of minutes – tabled.
2. Board Resolution that EGI commits to founding and opening open-admissions schools.

3. Board Resolution that EGI is opposed to provisions of OPSB's Policy HA mandating yellow bus transportation and authorizes the Chief Executive Officer to pursue any remedies available to prevent this policy's provisions from effecting EGI schools.

**Adjournment approximately 7:00 PM**

## MINUTES

THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.

Board Meeting  
January 12, 6:00 P.M.

Einstein Charter School at  
Village De L'Est  
5100 Cannes St.  
New Orleans, LA 70129

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. conducted a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday January 12, at 5100 Cannes Street, New Orleans, LA 70129.

### Call to Order : 6:16pm

### Roll Call

Board Members Present – Lauren Narcisse, Chris Bowman, Mauricio Sierra, Durrell Laurent

### Board Members Absent

Staff Members Present - Shawn Toranto, Phong Tran, Dr. Douglas Guidry, Julia Pokros, Danial Davis, April Catarella

Public – Ron Midkiff

### Discussion Items:

1. CEO Report – Shawn Toranto – Mrs. Toranto reported on committee she is member of regarding revising of school system funding based on SPED, ELL, etc... With majority of funding models they are looking at Einstein will make out better than most other schools, however it will not provide all funding needed. Negotiations are going on to make sure it is fair and will provide best scenario possible for all schools. She addressed that our school leaders are doing an excellent job. Ms. Cherrie has on boarded her assistant principal at the Middle School, Jose Torres, who is bilingual and a resource for Spanish students. She reported that Ms. Cherrie and Ms. Steed have been meeting with different representatives to assist with career and technical education for high school. Mrs. Toranto challenged the board to participate with purchase or raising funds to purchase stoves to go into culinary arts kitchen, estimated \$560 each (President Narcisse accepted as a board project). Board excited to assist with CTE planning – Mauricio interested in helping with law/justice, April will fwd to Kelly. Mrs. Toranto reported curriculum instruction specialist, Dr. Caminita, joined us in New Year, addition of gifted teacher at middle school and hiring of a social worker for VDLE from within. Two kindergarten teachers received certification and are continuing on that path. She suggest we have a board/teacher mixer.
2. CFO Report – Dr. Doug Guidry – Dr. Guidry passed out financial packet to the board. He reported that cash balances are good, over \$4 million in bank. EGI is expecting \$900,000(+) reimbursement to be filed at OPSB. He reported assets are in at \$5,600,000 million once all are received
3. CAO Report – Julia Pokros – Ms. Pokros concurred that Dr. Caminita is a wonderful thought partner for EGI; she completed on boarding last week. She reported that we

have strong new middle school teachers that being shown the Einstein Way. Ms. Pokros announced that EGI completed benchmark examinations last week and curricula is focused on rigor and goals are being attained. She announced Einstein's Science Fair on Jan 27<sup>th</sup> and invited board to judge; Lauren Narcisse accepted.

4. CSO Report – Daniel Davis – Mr. Davis reported on current marketing efforts to boost enrollment – digital board, outdoor board, bus shelters, TV PSA committed; working on radio and print. Mr. Davis introduced the drafted board policies noting that they will and can be updated. He announced that EGI is a recipient of \$15,000 from Rex. He reported that the development team is continuing to pepper grant applications by playing the volume game. Mr. Davis reported that new employee April Catarella is being on boarded for her role. He announced the interest in purchasing signage for all buildings to assist with branding of Einstein way.
5. D-CEO Report – Phong Tran – Mr. Tran reported that EGI is opening another twenty seats at Children's Place, who will be servicing through Agenda for Children. He reported the status of painting at Reed location. Mr. Tran announced that Hands On NOLA will be at the Reed location twice in January to paint classrooms and build gardens with volunteer groups. He reported that he will check with RSD to approve the demolition of the kitchen to prepare for culinary arts room.
6. Committee Reports
  - a. Governance Committee – Meeting requested to layout vision for the board-moving forward including laying out the expectations of a board member. Invitation was extended to board members Durrell Laurent and Chris Bowman.
  - b. New board member introduced Rita Battista was appointed to the board. Decision to be made on her committee involvement. Ms. Battista will be present at February meeting.
7. Committee Goal Setting

### **Action items**

#### *December 2015 Minutes*

- Durrell Laurent made a motion to approve minutes.
- Chris Bowman seconded this motion.
- All board members present were in favor: Mauricio Sierra, Lauren Narcisse.

#### *Adoption of updated board policies*

- Lauren Narcisse motions to provisionally approve
- Chris Bowman seconded this motion.
- All board members present were in favor: Mauricio Sierra, Durrell Laurent.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Ron Midkiff had a question about the dates of the board meetings, he inquired if they are to be every third Thursday or the first Tuesday. President Narcisse responded that meetings will be on the first Tuesday at 6:00pm.

Adjournment 7:26 PM

## Minutes

THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.

Board Meeting  
December 1, 2015, 6:00 P.M.

Einstein Charter Middle at  
Sarah Towles Reed  
5316 Michoud Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70129

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. held a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday December 1, 2015 at 5316 Michoud Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70129.

**Call to Order: 6:30 PM (approximately)**

**Roll Call:** Members present: Lauren Narcisse, J. Christopher Bowman, Durrell Laurent, Mauricio Sierra

### Discussion Items:

1. CEO Report – Shawn Toranto – Ms. Toranto reported that the new school was well under way and that the new principal appeared to be making an effective and swift change. She further elaborated that she could “sleep at night” and that she was spending a significant amount of time working with the new principal to help her transition into her new role.
2. Academic Report – Julia Pockros – Ms. Pockros noted that benchmarking was underway and she looked forward to sharing the results with the board once produced in January.
3. Finance Report – Douglas Guidry – Dr. Guidry reported that our finance were in good shape and that they should remain as such provided that OPSB repays its RFR in a timely manner.
4. Development Report – Daniel Davis – Mr. Davis reported that all was well and invited all to attend the Einstein Winter party coming up in a weeks at the Dish. There will be a dj and delicious food. We look forward to celebrating the close of the year. In addition, Mr. Davis reported that he had active and real leads on sponsorship for the party.
5. Operations Report – Phong Tran – Mr. Tran indicated that he would like to keep his remarks brief and indicated that he looked forward to a productive new year. He then spoke at great length about the need for the privacy policy to be adopted and provided detailed logistics on its development. This information was provided for informational purposes only.
6. Committee Reports \_ tabled.

### Action items

1. Approval of minutes – tabled
2. Privacy policy adoption – withdrawn.
3. Executive Session – Personnel Review – Shawn Toranto, Douglas Guidry, Phong Tran, Daniel Davis J. Chris Bowman motion, Lauren Narcisse seconded, the motion was approved unanimously. It was called at approximately 7:15 PM and ended at approximately 8:12 PM.



Adjournment : 8:13 PM

**THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.**

**Board Meeting  
October 6, 6:00 P.M.**

**Einstein Charter School at  
Village De L'Est  
5100 Cannes St.  
New Orleans, LA 70129**

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. will hold a Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday October 6, at 5100 Cannes Street, New Orleans, LA 70129.

## MINUTES

### Call to Order: 6:20pm

#### Roll Call

Board members present: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, Durrell Laurent  
Board members absent: Sheila Sundar, Mauricio Sierra

Staff: Shawn Toranto, Phong Tran, Daniel Davis  
Public: Kelly Steed

#### Approval of Minutes

- Lauren Narcisse made to approve the August Board Meeting minutes.
- Chris Bowman seconded this motion.
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, and Durrell Laurent.

#### Amendment to Agenda:

- Lauren Narcisse made a motion to add the following Discussion Items to the agenda...
  - Potential Board Members
  - Development Report
  - Operations Report
- Chris Bowman seconded this motion.
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, and Durrell Laurent.

#### Discussion Items:

1. Committee Reports: Board Members discussed a meeting structure and schedule for committees that worked best for its members.
2. Committee Goal Setting: Board Members finalized their Committee Description documents that will be added to the Einstein Charter School Board Member handbook. This year's goals for each committee was also discussed.
3. Potential Board Members: Lauren Narcisse discussed the recruitment process for potential new board members. Current board members were asked to share any potential candidates with Lauren.

4. Development Report: Daniel Davis reported updates from the Development department. He shared that Einstein Charter Schools was the recipient of a five million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education.
5. Operations Report: Phong Tran reported to the Board about the Volunteers of America food service at all schools, steps to solve IT issues, and student testing updates.

**Action items:** No action items

**Adjournment:** 7:50pm

**THE EINSTEIN GROUP, INC.**  
**Board Retreat**  
**August 22, 2015**  
**10:00 A.M.**

**Einstein Charter School**  
**Sarah T. Reed Campus**  
**5316 Michoud Blvd.**  
**New Orleans, LA 70129**

The Board of Trustees of the Einstein Group, Inc. held a board retreat at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, August 22, 2015 at the address listed above.

## MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: 10:10AM

### ROLL CALL

**Board members present:** Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, Durrell Laurent  
**Board members absent:** Sheila Sundar, Mauricio Sierra, Andrew Lorenz

**Staff:** Shawn Toranto, Douglas Guidry, Phong Tran, Daniel Davis, Julia Pockros  
**Public:** Rochelle Gilmore, Nikita Jones

### DISCUSSION ITEMS:

#### CEO'S REPORT - SHAWN TORANTO

Mrs. Toranto shared that the opening of the Reed campus has been a huge undertaking. The team has worked extremely hard to get everything ready for the first day of school. Everyone has been working nights and weekends to prepare. There was a problem with the drains in the kitchen. RSD is now working on repairs such as light switches, and the roof. Main campus renovations have been going well. Sherwood Forest campus is on track with construction. Einstein is still working on enrollment, and continuing to recruitment. There are spots for 75 more students at the Extension. All grades have started school, except Kindergarten; students will begin Monday. Mrs. Toranto has partnered with Agenda for Children to open a Pre-K at a local daycare center (Einstein at Children's Palace). Daycare center teachers will be participating in professional development opportunities with Einstein teachers. This has created a pipeline of students from Pre-K to Kindergarten. There is also a partnership with Kingsley House for after school care. They will be extending hours to 3:00-6:00PM. Students participate in academics, socialization, and many more structured activities. Students are also fed dinner. This after school care will be at all Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> campuses.

#### ACADEMIC REPORT – JULIA POCKROS

Ms. Pockros gave the Board the Academic report, sharing that one of her goals this year is to close the gap with reading. 100% of students are leaving 3<sup>rd</sup> grade on or above grade level in reading. Anticipating 100% passing in Algebra. Worked with Instructional Coaches this summer on cross-curricular alignment, standards, and DIBELS intervention curriculum. New Blended Learning staff person, Jared, and he will be administering pre-tests and diagnostic tests at all campuses. DIBELS testing will begin next week. Still waiting for PARCC end of year test scores from this past school year. All schools are now using a new lesson plan template that is Common Core aligned. New courses being offered are a computer science class, and three different courses on Engineering. Will also be offering engineering classes within Science classes at K-5. Einstein is now a user of Google

Schools. Teachers can submit lesson plans, and access documents. There is also a great tool called Google Classroom, which offers an online dialogue for students & teachers.

#### FINANCE REPORT – DR. DOUGLAS GUIDRY

Dr. Guidry reported that they just completed their annual audit. Everything was fine, and went extremely well. The first draft of the report will be released next week. There were no findings. Dr. Guidry also gave a report on the current finances of Einstein Charter Schools. He has sent out many requests for reimbursements, and is still waiting on those checks.

#### OPERATIONS REPORT - PHONG TRAN

Mr. Tran reported that this summer has been focused on getting the Reed campus ready for teachers and students. Currently, the roof is leaking, and pipes by the gym leaking. This will be repaired soon. Volunteers of America is doing food service at all 3 campuses. This has been going great, and students seem to really enjoy the food. They will be providing breakfast, and lunch for all students, and dinner for students at after care. Mr. Tran stated that they are still working on the new website. It should be up and running on Monday. An IT guy has been hired to help with all 3 campuses, Mr. Green.

#### DEVELOPMENT REPORT – DANIEL DAVIS

Mr. Davis reported on grants awarded and grants applied for over the past month. Einstein was awarded 7 grants, including a seat expansion grant from NSNO, and a grant from the Jazz and Heritage Foundation for Instruments at the Sherwood Forest campus. 5 grants were submitted during the past month. Mr. Davis also reported on the success of the Sarah T. Reed campus ribbon cutting ceremony.

#### PRESENTATION OF BUSINESS PLAN – DANIEL DAVIS

Mr. Davis reported that an Education Pioneer was hired to help create a Business Plan to show the community and funders what Einstein's vision is. Board members received a draft copy of the Business Plan. The Board will vote on it at a future Board meeting.

#### SARAH T. REED GROUNDS – DANIEL DAVIS

Mr. Davis distributed a copy of the landscape site plan for the Sarah T. Reed campus, and also estimated cost projections of the landscape projects.

#### BOARD HANDBOOK/POLICY – LAURIN JACOBSEN

-WILL SEND BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 28<sup>TH</sup> SO THAT LAUREN CAN COMPILE BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> BOARD MEETING

#### CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 15-16 SCHOOL YEAR – LAURIN JACOBSEN

SEPT. 1<sup>ST</sup> EXTENSION

OCTOBER 6<sup>TH</sup>: MAIN CAMPUS

NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>: REED

DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>: EXTENSION

**ACTION ITEMS:**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Lauren Narcisse made a motion to approve the June 2015 minutes.
- Chris Bowman seconded this motion.
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, and Chris Bowman.
- Board Member Durrell Laurent abstained, because he was not present at this meeting.

APPROVAL OF BUSINESS PLAN

- Tabled until another Board meeting.

APPROVAL OF BOARD HANDBOOK/POLICY

- Tabled until another Board meeting.

APPROVAL OF CALENDAR

- Laurin Jacobsen made a motion to approve the Fall 2015 Board meeting calendar.
- Chris Bowman seconded this motion.
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, and Durrell Laurent.

BOARD ELECTIONS

*PRESIDENT*

- Laurin Jacobsen nominated Lauren Narcisse
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, and Durrell Laurent.

*VICE-PRESIDENT*

- Laurin Jacobsen nominated Chris Bowman.
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, and Durrell Laurent.

*SECRETARY*

- Chris Bowman nominated Sheila Sundar.
- All Board Members present were in favor: Lauren Narcisse, Laurin Jacobsen, Chris Bowman, and Durrell Laurent.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

ROCHELLE GILMORE:

Mrs. Gilmore shared her concerns on the length of time that school dismissal was taking, particularly for the carpool students. Mrs. Toranto shared that until the Principals and teachers are familiar with parents, and vehicles, that dismissal may take a few weeks to get into a quick routine. For the safety of students, students are never allowed to get into a vehicle without someone verifying that the person picking up the student is the appropriate person.

**ADJOURNMENT: 2:27 PM**