



**TRIANGLE EDUCATION ORGANIZATION, INC** on behalf of Pine Springs

Preparatory The following are the Minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting on **August 5, 2025.**

Held August 5, 2025, 5:30pm ET at 220 Rosewood Centre Drive, Holly Springs, NC

**I. Call to Order**

Having a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Board Chair, Erin Fisher , followed by roll call.

**Members Present**

[Erin Fisher](#)

[Josh Prizer](#)

[Fay Gore](#)

[Dave Machado](#)

[Julia McCombs](#)

[Jamie McDonald](#)

[Gregg Sindere](#)

**Members Absent**

[Sean Coleman](#)

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

**III. Pine Springs Prep Mission Statement**

The Pine Springs Prep Mission statement was recited by Josh Prizer

**IV. Adoption of Meeting Agenda and Previous Board Meeting Minutes**

Prizer made a motion to adopt the agenda.

Second: McCombs

Discussion: None

Action: Unanimous

Sindere made a motion to approve the [Board Meeting Minutes-August 8, 2025](#) meeting minutes.

Second: McDonald

Discussion: None

Action: Unanimous

## **V. Public Comment**

None

## **VI. PSPA School Report**

### [PSPA School Report - August 2025.docx](#)

Superintendent indicated that the new Chief Academic Officer, Stephanie Needham would provide the school report updates. Before turning the update over to Ms. Needham, Friend shared that enrollment was at capacity. There are 1,191 on the waitlist.

Sinders: When we look at the Middle School enrollment, can we get a report on class sizes across the board? When we look at the # of rooms, we've already hit the target of 525. It makes me wonder if we might be able to get a few more off the waitlist to help for the High School in the future.

Friend: I will circle back with Principal Dansky and Chief Academic officer Needham.

Needham facilitated the sharing of the school report.

- Excitement about the new school year
- Admin team met in July - The new theme is Game On! Collaboration is a Mindset. This was spurred, in part because the admin team heard during last board meeting about culture so as a team they talked about the importance of collaboration, working together and thinking outside the box, and having real conversations

Lauren Johnson introduced as the new Elementary Principal and provided an update

- [Gina Newell](#) is the new Assist. Principal coming from another charter
- Tues. was the 1st day with parent institutes for Kindergarten families and they will host another one on Thursday. Essentially it serves to welcome new families.
- Only 1 new staff members this year, new EC teacher; couple of new teacher assistants

Glen Dansky provided the Middle School report.

- There are no more vacancies at the middle school.
- They may need to add a couple more teachers in the future.
- New assist. Principles, Chantal Barr who comes from Philadelphia and has experience in public, private, and charter schools.
  - Started on Monday morning
- They conducted 6th grade orientation on Tues.
- They hosted parent institutes this week.
- They are hoping to get the parking lot painted.

Michelle Alharoon provided the Blended Academy update.

- They hosted a summer family gathering at Pleasant Park
- They are hosting a coffee social on Aug. 1 for high school students
- The new high school counselor came out as well to meet students.
- New hires received Pearson training on July 31st.
- Target: 150; feel good about hitting target; 9th and 10th grade has been a challenge

[Craig Tucker](#) provided the Upper School report

- All 3 school positions are filled.
- They are focused on team building and planning
- Preparing for outreach events – open house on 8/18

- Building recruitment pipeline

He had a meet and greet with Seqirus and Wake Tech with the purpose of connecting with everyone and understanding the various points of contact, building relationships with the organizations, etc.

Virtual Academy Update

Rep from Stride K-12 introduced the new executive director, GeRita Connor. She has lots of experience to include leading NC Connections Academy and K-12 Principal and manager of state testing. She launched a new virtual school in SC that was also K-12; met state metrics for standards the very first year. She also led brick and mortar schools as well.

The current confirmed enrollment is 3,470 students, which is nearly double last year's enrollment.

All the staff returned.

Culture and accountability are her focus areas and passion.

Leadership team met on day 2 to set the tone for the year and goals before bring in new members.

12 days into the role

Josh: What challenges do you see

Reconnecting our team with accountability and understanding the state accountability models and how each staff member can contribute to

Making sure team understand that they are a part of the PSPA team

Understanding the data – so they know where we are and where we needed to be headed

Where are they meeting: Waxsaw - right outside of Charlotte

Met in Concord - don't have a centralized place yet

What is the cap on enrollment? And where do we get to a limit that you can handle grade wise teacher

Staffed at 4200 for this year with staff having to be hired to meet that expectation

She has led up to 3200

New Sr. Academic administrator that will be charged with helping principals

Importance of responsible growth

As long as we stay connected and transparent about where we are

Bruce: the cap rests with him; he knows what he budgeted for and what they staffed for - need to make sure each student is served; constant monitoring; now more mindful of this

Of the 3400, how many are returning – Bruce will get this number

How many students in K-12 Stride NC Virtual connection

Josh - Largest grade; typically, 8th grade

Sinder: if there are policies we need to adopt as a board, please let us know. Need to make sure we have the policies in place to hold folks accountable – keep us posted. We will show some grace, but then need to get touch if we are not holding folks accountable to expectations.

Bruce feels good about alignment on culture and what it means to be successful.

New teachers come back on Monday

8/20 first day of school for students

Friend: Mr. Tucker CBS-17 doing a special feature on Pine Springs on the Upper School and typing it into workforce development and what is happening in Holly Springs. 5 min piece - mayor invited to along with CSL – coming together to meet the needs of the community.

Friend: Parent Institute this morning was fun. The 8th graders are those who started with the school in Kindergarten. Serendipitous thought., – Celebration for 8th graders since they have been with the school since day 1.

Reiterated what an amazing staff at Pine springs and the vision we have and the support of the board – providing parents with high quality school choice – pause and celebrate!

Looking at some of the community events to get

### [1. Action Item\\_ 2025-2026 Personnel Contracts.docx](#)

Prizer made a motion to approve the above linked list.

Second: McCombs

Discussion: None

Action: Unanimous

### [2. Action Item\\_ 2025-2026 PSPVA Handbook.docx](#)

- parent student expectations
- focused on making sure that the handbook addressed students who are not engaged.
- working with VA staff – discussed this with Dr. Conner today

Sinders made a motion to approve handbooks as listed in the above linked document.

Second: Prizer

Discussion:

- [Julia McCombs](#) asked about how the handbook suggested that we have a requirement that students have access to Kindergarten before 1st grade virtual school enrollment
- Required report cards and transcripts for placement; change from the previous year
- Try not to have barriers to enrollment; will not deny enrollment for students who are 2 grade levels off, but will make sure students are appropriately placed and to start interventions immediately

Action: Unanimous

### [3. Action Item\\_ Virtual Academy Application Status.docx](#)

SB2254, allows a school who is operating a charter who is – ask the charter school review board to convert it to its own charter. Not required to go through a planning year and can have an expedited process for approval. This past

Approve two things: (1) notify the officer of charter schools that we are withdrawing our application for the springs and (2) Asking the charter review board to establish our remote charter school as outlined in the new law. Bruce has already discussed it with the office of charter schools. The sept. 9 review board meeting will be to ask the charter school review board to accept our request to convert the virtual charter to its own remote academy.

Machado: Will we get a 5-year charter, and it will not coincide with the bring and mortar charter. Will be treated like a new charter – ending in 2-030 if approved. There is the question of when it takes effect, working with OCS to let them know that our desire is to let it take effect immediately. It will take some time to establish this across the various divisions at DPI.

Gore: Could this be retroactive? If we are rolling into Oct., it may have to take effect on July 1, 2026. Director of OCS, she get it and having discussions on our behalf. Her staff is well aware and support this. We are hopeful that this will happen quickly.

McCombs: anything that makes it fearful that we will not meet the criteria? There is the possibility that they will not approve it; we have the backing of the new legislation.

Goal during the review board meeting is to answer the basic question why? The main one is size; we serve 2200 – remote academy is larger than the brick and mortar – being able to support the scale. same governing board is in place, same superintendent, – makes it easier for us and dpi to have the separation.

Sinders: We will have 93N (elementary and middle) which will be under its; 10 years  
Keep 93N-310 for remainder of the 10 for the blended  
Request a new charter for the - Virtual Academy  
– will be getting 3 school grades

Up in 2031 for the existing charter (10-year charter)  
2029 for Blended (5-year charter)

- We will need to get approval from Rosemawr to do this.
- Will have to set up another LLC for the Virtual Academy

What changes:

- We will be implementing that with Dr Connor i.e. own testing coordinator
- Clearer delineation for responsibility

Can still have 1 combined consent agenda even with 2 separate charter schools.

Sinders pledge revenue from VA charter for Pine Springs brick and mortar so will need to get approval from loaning agency.

Prizer: Can we borrow more money now with the separate charter schools

Sinders: Can not borrow more money.

Board Chair made a motion to approve the above linked list.

Second: McDonald

Discussion:

Gore: Do we have to get this approved before going before the CSRB?

Sinders: No

Action: Unanimous

Sept. 9th set to go before the review board meeting – end of the agenda during the day. Bruce will let us know the timing when it is closer to the meeting.

## **VII. Committee Reports**

### A. Academic & Performance Committee

- Excited to meet new faces at the meeting
- Reflected on the EOGs, summer school program,
- Oct. meeting will roll out data; what we've seen is extremely encouraging
- Set new time for academic meeting to be prepared for board meetings
- Talked about strategies that made us smile and how we can expound on those
- Look at what changes need to be employed
- Reassure the board that staff are ready to bring it on!

### B. Finance & Facilities Committee

#### [August Financial Report.docx](#)

- New staff member; Mary Carol Roberts; mom since year 2, background - accounting and finance; worked from Ernest and Young, and then International Paper (internal auditor); worked as business manager for a small business
- Michelle Cordellia will transition to HR responsibilities
- Report:
  - See report
  - \$1.6 M
  - Need to educate districts on the right address to send the checks for VA; Address 190
  - Rent started on new offices
  - Have some rental i.e. Holly Springs Church of Christ, Orchestra group, basketball camps throughout the year
  - Let the scouts use the facility but do not charge
  - Closed the bond last week.
- Employee Health Benefits Decision
  - 2025 Renewal Summary
  - Never been a part of the state plan and don't plan to be
  - Was with Blue Cross and Blue Shields but switched to United Healthcare 2 years ago.
  - Over 20% increase with United Healthcare this year
  - Got other quotes
    - BCBS - 15% increase

- Cigna - 5% increase
- United came back to 10%
- There is going to be an increase in insurance
- Comes down to staying with United or switching to Cigna with a 5% increase
- Will be a 50K difference between United and Cigna
- Machado: thinks this will be a staff decision
- Prizer: every dollar counts; if you make the change, it benefits Pine Springs and staff from a financial standpoint
- Bruce and team will go back and ask more questions and make a decision.
- Having to replace one of the units in the elementary \$17K bill
- August 15th is the planned completion date for the new building

C. Executive Committee:

- Date for Upper School Ground - Breaking Ceremony
  - Chamber will help with most of this
  - Invite list
  - During the week and during the school day
  - Find a place to have coffee and donuts - Maybe Thanks-a-Latte
  - Friday, September 26th
  - Bruce will contact the Chamber

**Adjourn**

McCombs made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Gore

Discussion: none

Action: Unanimous