

**Board Meeting Meeting Minutes**  
**July 22, 2025**  
**7:30-9:30am @ Downtown Campus: 79 W. Monroe Street**

**Agenda**

1. Public Comment – Jim Frank
2. End-of-Year Academic Data – Dr. Daena Adams, Melissa Zaikos
3. Postsecondary Update + Discussion – Ryan Everett, Tim Ligue
4. Hiring Update – Melissa Zaikos
5. Student Enrollment + Recruitment – Lucy Weatherly, Tim Ligue
6. Governance Update, Term Renewal for Justin Manly – Jim Palos
7. FY25 Budget Update, Purchase Approval, Array Education – Katie Jacobs, Melissa Zaikos
8. Open Items – Jim Frank

**Attendance**

BOD members in attendance: Jim Frank, Justin Manly, Laura Jozwiak, Jim Palos, David Epstein

BOD members by phone: Nancy Jimenez, Greg Jones

BOD members absent: Harriet Meyer, Josh Tolman

Staff in attendance: Melissa Zaikos, Ami Gandhi, Ryan Everett, Lucy Weatherly, Daena Adams, Tim Ligue, Katie Jacobs, Michelle Trojan, Rose Traubert, Chrissy Hart, Leah Martin

**I. Opening + Public Comment - Led by Jim Frank**

The meeting was called to order by Jim Frank. Began at 7:34am. No guests or public comments. Meeting minutes approved from October 2024 and April 2025 (Laura Jozwiak motioned, David Epstein seconded).

**II. EOY Academic Data - Led by Dr. Daena Adams**

General Red / Yellow / Green to check in on highlights, trends.

David Epstein asked for the CEO to confirm key challenges and our response per discussion on prior call. Challenge: Not at 100% student engagement - in part because of chronic absenteeism rates and students not completing all work. This is a problem within Intrinsic and CPS, and nationally. CPS chronic absenteeism = 45% in 9th grade and 70% in 12th grade. We are at 44% overall so better than neighboring schools. Noble at 48%.

We are closely tracking grades and attendance, and responding with teacher coaching. What teeth do we have? Summer school. Incentives for students, Advisories who have good attendance (and grades and behavior).

The rigor of what we are asking kids to do is triggered by curriculum. We are on a path to use our new curricula better.

ACT scores are low. Hard to compare apples to apples as we are switching from SAT to ACT. Intrinsic is currently close to CPS averages and similar to Noble. ACT scores in general are dropping across low-income and

higher-income communities - i.e., this is a larger trend that may be related to AI and learning during the digital age.

Jim Frank asked for distribution of test scores - lots of kids at 16? Or lots of kids at 12 and also 20?

### **III. Postsecondary Update + Discussion - Led by Ryan Everett and Tim Ligue**

Class of 2025 results / highlights.

- Best financial aid packages = highest chance of persistence. We want our kids to choose campuses where they match within 10 percentage points of targeted college graduation rates.
- How do we really help 9th graders see success? We need two strategies: 1) Intervene effectively with 12th graders who aren't on track and 2) Intervene earlier with students in grades 9-11.

Postsecondary pathways that aren't college:

- United, for example, hires right out of high school.
- Apprenticeships with City of Chicago = once you're in, you're in for 30 years. Five Intrinsic students signed up from the Class of 2025.
- Some trades are more selective than Ivy League colleges - acceptance rate is 2% for bulldozer operators. Current electricians can't even get their kids into electrical unions; their children became plumbers instead, as a second choice.
- Elevator constructors union is the highest paid – they take 300 people every three years.

Big takeaway today: Most of these will ever only be a handful of Intrinsic students each year. We are going to keep chipping away at this.

### **IV. Hiring Update - led by Melissa Zaikos**

Belmont = SPED has three openings. ESL opening. Both roles require specific licenses.

Downtown = ELA teacher, case manager needed.

Jim Frank asked about the market overall? Michelle Trojan says it's better than last year, but still not what it was. Overall, both schools are in decent shape for hiring. Our goal = 100% hired by first day of school in August.

Big shift with leadership team at the Downtown Campus. Interesting and good news = most teachers who could stay have decided to stay, and are staying engaged.

### **V. Student Enrollment + Recruitment - Led by Lucy Weatherly**

We were shooting for 270 prospective 9th graders at Belmont and we're at 291 ... some will drop off, we know, but we are happy where we're at. We are 77 of 75 prospective 7th graders for the Middle School at Belmont. This brings us into a full building and strong budget at Belmont for FY26.

At the Downtown Campus = nearly 260 have completed enrollment to enter 9th grade at the Downtown Campus, to be part of Class of 2029. Ideal = 250 new 9th graders each year. For FY26 we aimed for 810 total ...

we're at 840 today, but we won't know for sure until fall. Lucy hired a new full-time, entry-level person in Spring 2025 who has helped give Lucy capacity to do more high-touch outreach with counselors.

We complete enrollment in person at either campus, virtually or by phone. This helps us.

#### **VI. Governance - Led by Jim Palos**

We renewed the board term of Justin Manly.

#### **VII. FY25 Budget Update – Tim Ligue and Katie Jacobs**

CPS has given us a # but there is still budget uncertainty. Justin: A lot of this isn't new, but the \*magnitude\* is new.

FY26 budget = \$40M consolidated. Katie presented a high-level overview of per-pupil revenue, and salaries + benefits at each campus,

Melissa Zaikos asked for board approval of a new \$185K contract with Teach Like a Champion. To include teacher trainings. Justin Manly moved, Jim Frank seconded, motion approved by board.

#### **VIII. Open Items**

Tim Ligue gave a brief update on the build-out of the Annex at Belmont. We are on track to be completed by November 2025.

Melissa Zaikos asked for board approval to be part of Illinois High School Sports Association (ILHSA). No cost, just board approval needed. David Epstein moved, Jim Frank seconded, approved by board.

Chrissy Hart gave a very short introduction about her new work at Intrinsic - compliance, transportation, IT, etc.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22am.