

Board Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2026

79 W. Monroe

Agenda

1. Public Comment – Jim Frank
2. Open Items – Jim Frank
3. Mission Statement Update
4. Student Engagement

Attendance

BOD members in attendance: Jim Frank, Jim Palos, Nancy Jimenez, Greg Jones, David Epstein, Justin Manly, Harriet Meyer, Laura Jozwiak

BOD members by phone: Josh Tolman

BOD members absent:

Staff in attendance: Melissa Zaikos, Ami Gandhi, Lucy Weatherly, Tim Ligue, Michelle Trojan, Rose Traubert, Chrissy Hart, Ryan Everett, Haley Giannone

I. Opening + Public Comment - Led by Jim Frank

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Jim Frank. Began at 7:32 am. No guests or public comments. Meeting minutes approved for October. Jim motioned to approve and Greg Jones seconded.

II. Mission Statement Update

Melissa Zaikos shared a draft of the mission statement. There was discussion about whether the EPIC (Empathy, Persistence, Identity, Curiosity) needed to be listed out so it would be more understandable. A final decision was not made but the group agreed that it was very near finalization.

III. Student Engagement

Attendees shared reflections from student focus groups, categorized by student self-identification based on profiles from book *The Disengaged Teen*:

- **Explorers (Shared by Laura):** The group of students self-identified as explorers. They appreciated the diversity of the Downtown campus and reported strong friend groups, a sense of community, and success in navigating transportation. They valued the block schedule, and the climate set by the teacher was noted as impactful. Students viewed academic challenge more as a sense of easy or hard rather than mastering something new.
- **Achievers (Shared by Ami):** These students felt school was important as a means to achieving their end goals. They shared a strong interest in financial success as part of a successful future. They were strongly motivated by the attendance incentive Rang, and "enjoyed C-Day. Students expressed a desire for more academic challenge. It seemed their interest was greatly impacted by the teacher's

interest.

- **Passengers (Shared by Nancy):** Students in this group were strongly influenced by family members, usually a sibling or parent. They identified geometry and biology as difficult courses and rely on strong peer support networks for help with school work. They expressed that they enjoyed the opportunity to attend school Downtown with students from different neighborhoods.
- **Resisters (Shared by Tim):** All students in this group ended up attending Intrinsic because of siblings also attended. Academics were not a major source of motivation, but they had a strong idea of their future. They were strongly motivated by family and faith.

Greg Jones summarized with an overall reflection about the power teachers had in impacting the student experience. He noted the importance of instruction being relevant to the students.

IV. AI Strategy

Melissa presented her working theory that AI's primary impact will be on improving the quality of instruction, student goal setting, and career planning. Jim Frank clarified if the priority for an AI strategy was differentiation for students. Melissa affirmed that differentiation is central to strong instruction. Rose noted that Downtown was considering a more standard ELA curriculum and that AI integration was a central requirement in any consideration. This was followed by a demonstration of CourseMojo supporting differentiation as one example of what this might look like.

Rose and Michelle then proposed an Honors Pilot at the Downtown campus. The pilot would feature a hybrid schedule with flexible daily Math/ELA blocks, a typical block for Science/AP Human Geography, and an afternoon honors advisory/experience block emphasizing gradual release of learning.

Jim Frank questioned if honors students were the most effective starting point for the AI strategy. Melissa clarified the strategy is to start with a small group of highly motivated teachers and students in order to learn the technology before expanding its use to all students. Greg Jones suggested considering a credit recovery course as an alternative pilot group. David Epstein questioned whether a pilot would have the reach and impact that Intrinsic is seeking. The lack of a pilot at the Belmont campus was noted, but Michelle noted that piloting at the Downtown was less cost prohibitive based on proximity to the enrichment opportunities. Greg Jones also emphasized ensuring the pilot is integrated into a four-year scope and sequence.

V. Accountability & Support

The board agreed that Melissa would work with Josh and Greg to put together metrics to be tracked at each board meeting in line with our annual goals. Melissa will work with Jim Palos to outline the board agendas for the next full year.

VI. Organizational Capacity

The board agreed that Melissa should engage Transcend for a 3 month consulting project to explore new models and how to implement a new program that allows us to learn more about increasing

student engagement and challenging students. Melissa owes the board a full project plan by mid-February.

VII. Open Items – Jim Frank

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 am.