**Evergreen Charter School**
**Virtual Meeting of the Board of Trustees**
**605 Peninsula Blvd, Hempstead, NY 11550**
**January 30, 2025**

**8:00 pm**

**The meeting was held at 605 Peninsula Boulevard**

**Members:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Mr. Gil Bernardino** | **Present** |
| **Dr. Sarah Brewster** | **Present** |
| **Ms. Nancy Iglesias-Gillen** | **Excused** |
| **Ms. Yvonne Mowatt** | **Excused** |
| **Ms. Gladys Rodríguez** | **Present** |
| **Mr. Luis Ras** | **Present** |

**Also present:**

**Dr. Elena Litescu, 2-4 Principal, Superintendent**
**Ms. Lisett Knox, Director of Finance and Operations**
**Ms. Christine Weigand, Principal K-1**
**Ms. Atia Pasha, Principal 2-4**
**Ms. Emma Collado, HS Principal**
**Ms. Lisa Camilli, DCI/AP/ES K-1**
**Mr. Nicolas Agosti, DCI/MS**
**Ms. Christine Civitano, HS AP**
**Ms. Alisha Anderson, Director of Data and Attendance**
**Mr. Sabato Torres, DCI STEM 6-12**
**Mr. Shaun Skariah, Director of Special Education**

***Note: As always, the Board Meeting was conducted in English and Spanish.***

**I. Call to Order**
**By President, Mr. Gil Bernardino**

Mr. Bernardino welcomed everyone.

## III. Superintendent's Report By Superintendent, Dr. Elena Litescu

### Benchmark 1: Student Performance

- The second grading quarter ended on Friday, January 24, 2025.
- ELA and Math practice exams took place this last week of January at the IS and MS.
- The testing window for the Second Diagnostic of i-Ready for Math and Reading began on Monday, January 13, 2025, and will end on Friday, February 14, 2025.
- At the Middle School, 28 students are taking the Regents level Living Environment class.
- Regents exams took place at the HS during the third week of January.
- 95% of the HS Seniors are on track to graduate.
- The first College and Career Fair took place at Evergreen on 1/14/25.
- The goal is to have all graduates completing at least two college level courses while in HS. Currently there are three AP classes offered, Poetry of America, AP Spanish and AP Geography.

### Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

- Classroom observations had been conducted, either formal or informal, and the outcomes are recorded on Teachboost platform. Feedback is promptly provided to the teachers.
- Middle School Administration continues to host meeting with parents of students who demonstrate difficulty meeting the school's expectations.
- The Dean of Students and the Administration are walking the hallways to ensure students comply with the school's policies and the Student Code of Conduct.
- Teachers continue to strive to maximize student learning outcomes.
- Peer observations and model lessons provided by DCIs, are taking place at the MS.
- One on one coaching is taking place to provide extra support to teachers who need it.
- The Ready Reading pilot program is implemented in two first grade classes, and it is closely monitored.
- The Just Right Reader pilot was implemented in one second grade class, to improve the reading skills of ELLs.
- Students will celebrate the 100th Day of School at the beginning of February.
- The second Fountas and Pinnell reading benchmark assessment will be completed for K-2 students, at the end of January.
- The i-Ready Math and Reading Diagnostic 2 testing window began on Monday, January 13, 2025, and will end on Friday, February 14, 2025.
- Dolch sight word testing for K-1 students will be completed by Friday, January 31, 2025.
- RTI groups will be restructured after the Subsequent i-Ready Diagnostic test. Currently almost half of the IS student population (174 students) receives extra support in the form of either RTI or AIS.
- I-Ready testing scores need to be as accurate as possible, since individualized learning paths are generated and assigned to each student based on their scores in each domain.
- At K-1 school a Recess Planning Committee was formed with the goals to revitalize activities to add structure and academic support. These activities will strengthen their reading skills, math skills, fine and gross motor skills while increasing engagement and fun.
- The scores of the interim assessments had been shared with the HS teachers and a plan to improve the passing rate for the Regents exam had been implemented.
- Small groups instruction continues as scheduled in all schools.

- The MS faculty was provided a refresher training on differentiation of instruction to meet all students where they are academically.
- After school and Saturday school support help students strengthen their academic performance.
- Local author Karen Nespoli will visit the K-1 school on the last day of the month. She is the author of "*Gertie Saves the Day*" and the recipient of several awards.

**Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement:**

- Students' attendance record and tardy letters were shared with families. Parent meetings are taking place in all buildings to address students' excessive absences and tardiness and develop Attendance Intervention plans.
- Data team fulfilled requests for students' records and verification documents.

**School Climate and Culture Evaluation**

- Students in several grade will visit the Hempstead Library to help increase their reading skills and foster a love for reading
- A special celebration of Evergreen's 16th birthday took place in the entire school district during the Morning Assembly, on Tuesday, January 22, 2025.
- The K-1 students participated in the annual MLK Art Exhibit, organized by NYSED. ECS submitted the highest number of artworks (238) and Ms. Castro, the Art District Coordinator was interviewed for an article published in Newsday.
- Evergreen students will celebrate National School Choice Week the last week of this month. Students and staff recorded a schoolwide dance for the National School Choice Awareness Foundation which will be featured on their website.

**Behavior Management and Safety**

- Training was provided on 1/28/25, for staff, MS & HS students, all families, on preventing the use/abuse of illegal substances such as drugs and alcohol, by students.
- ECS staff has been implemented a special protocol to ensure Safeguarding of the Rights of our Immigrant Students.
- The IT team is working on ensuring the online security for K-1 school, by updating student iPads. At the MS it was noted that students struggle handling properly the Chromebooks, and teachers and administration are providing guidance and close monitoring to prevent further damages to the devices.

**DASA & Bully/Harassment**

- Students are reminded constantly and encouraged to reach out to any teacher, administrator if they are made to feel unsafe. Parents are encouraged to notify the school as soon as they become aware of anything that makes their child uncomfortable in school.

**Family Engagement**

- A workshop for families took place on 1/21/25 that was hosted by an organization to increase awareness on drugs' usage.
- Story time with Ms. Camilli will take place Friday, January 31, 2025, from 6:30 pm -7:30 pm.
- Outreach to families continue on regular basis conducted by teachers, mental health team, dean of students, and administrators.

- A Digital Equity Survey was sent home last month, and families filled it out and sent them to school with their child. Their feedback is highly valued.
- Orchestra Club meets after school at MS and HS. The Hydronauts, Earth Keepers, Kindness, and Recycling Club meet at Peninsula during the school day.
- The girls volleyball and boys soccer teams were honored and recognized for their achievements.
- The wrestling team is doing well this season.

**McKinney-Vento & Unaccompanied Minors**
- Mr. Skariah continues to provide support services to those needing McKinney-Vento and Unaccompanied Minors.

**SEL**
- SEL continues to promote topics such as Nutrition, Climate, Environmental Activism, and Global Citizenship into the curriculum.

## Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

**School Leadership**
- Administrative meetings, both as a group and one-on-one took place as scheduled.
- Lead teachers meetings take place to share important information to be disseminated to the larger groups.

**Professional Development**

Training during the faculty meeting took place on 1/8/25.
- The Math consultant will return this week to provide in person guidance and coaching to the math teachers, K-5 grades.
- DCIs meet with 6-12 grades teachers weekly to review implementation of the curriculum, lesson plans, and to provide guidance and coaching to them. They also teach high level lessons to model instructional best practices for teachers.
- Teachers are encouraged to provide feedback on schools' operations, academic programs, curriculum implementation, during grade level meetings, department meetings, and lead teacher meetings.
- ELA and Math consultants continue to provide professional development.
- Steered Straight is delivering six training sessions on recognizing the signs and preventing the use/abuse of illegal substances by youth.

## Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design

- Families in need are getting support from ECS through the sharing of donations of food and clothing by the SSW.
- Spanish teachers continue to engage their students trough well designed lessons, Raz-Kids, and Scholastic. Spanish classes are taught daily.
- At the HS, AP Spanish, and Spanish Cinema and Literature classes are provided to advanced Spanish speakers.
- Community Service is implemented for HS students during the second half of the school year.

- The K-1 school received a grant provided by the Whole Kids Garden, and they plan to select a new Green House with the funds awarded.
- During the Morning Assemblies, healthy choices are presented, such as Nutrition Tip of the Day, healthy life habits, work ethic, character, etc.
- The Wellness Committee meets every third Thursday of the month.
- ECS staff and students has been asked to participate in a survey and research conducted on indoor environmental quality and biophilic design strategies and how they impact occupant satisfaction within the space.
- During the month of February we will celebrate Black History Month by inviting guest speakers, a special concert, and highlighting African Americans for their contributions, traditions, and heritage.
- Ms. Zhang, the music teacher at Peninsula, and her kindergarten students will have a mini presentation on Friday, January 31st to celebrate the Lunar New Year.
- Project-based learning provided to HS students will encourage them to conduct research on various cultures.
- Lesson plans and instruction continue to implement the mini-workshop model. Feedback is provided promptly to teachers and revisions are made when needed.

**Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance**

- Teachers whose certifications need to be renewed are notified months in advance by the data director and support is provided to them in this process.

There were none.

**IV. Questions and Comments from the Public related to Principal and Directors reports:**

None.

**V. Director Finance and Operations Report**
**By Ms. Lisett Knox, Director of Finance and Operations**

**Benchmark 4: Financial Condition**

- Tuition billing 3 of 6 for this current school year was sent out on December 20, 2024, and we have received payments from 19 out of 26 school districts. The school districts Copiague, Rockville Centre and Uniondale are behind two payments. The two districts, Lynbrook and Valley Stream Central High School for which we filed an intercept application have both submitted their payments and I have informed NYSED to disregard the intercept request.
- We have submitted all claims for meals served to students from September through December to The Child Nutrition Administration totaling $364,789.00 and we have already received all reimbursements
- We have received approval notification for Titles I, II and IV and received the first payments amounting to $64,575.00, leaving a balance of $258,307 not including Title III. We have not yet

received any communication regarding our Title III application. Following up with NYSED is needed.

**Benchmark 5: Financial Management**

- All financial reports through December 2024, including all bank reconciliations for statements received, have been submitted to our Board of Directors and School Administrators.

**Benchmark 9: Enrollment**

- We currently have 1174 students enrolled and attending our school and 1 student going through the registration process to reach full enrollment of 1175 students.
- We are still filling some open positions and conducting interviews to fill them.
- We are accepting applications for the 2025-2026 school year.

**VIII. Approval of Minutes**

**Resolved** the Board of Trustees approves the minutes December 12, 2024

**Motion: Trustee** Sarah Brewster
**Second: Trustee** Gladys Rodriguez
**Vote: 5:0**

**IX. Reading of the Resolutions:**

The resolutions were read in English and Spanish. Resolutions were explained.

**X. Questions and comments from the public related to resolutions:**

There were none.

**XI. Voting of the Resolutions:**

**Benchmark I:**

1. **Be it therefore resolved that the Board of Trustees approves the following proposals under Student Performance:**

    a. Dr. Litescu is seeking approval to implement the First in Math platform to grades K-8 to increase students' math skills, fluency and level of engagement by gaining competence and confidence in math.
    b. Dr. Litescu is requesting to have Spanish tutoring offered after school hours to Middle School students.

c. Ms. Weigand is requesting approval to add another Homework Help teacher. There is a waiting list of students that are performing below grade level that would benefit from the extra help.
d. The K-1 Recess Planning Committee is requesting approval to purchase additional recess equipment to revitalize activities to add structure and academic support.

**Motion: Gladys Rodriguez**
**Second: Sarah Brewster**
**Vote: 5:0**

**Benchmark II:**

**2. Be it therefore resolved that the Board of Trustees approves the following proposals under Teaching and Learning that include professional development:**

| # | Name of Staff | Workshop | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | Angelica Martinez | *Purposeful Play to Increase Student's Academic Learning and Social Emotional Growth (PreK – Kindergarten)* | Wed 3/19/25 |
| b | Angelica Martinez | *Early Intervention Strategies to Help Young Children with Developmental Delays and Challenging Behaviors (PreK – Kindergarten)* | Fri 2/28/25 |
| c | Dan Levitan | *New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 2025 Nassau Zone Conference at Adelphi University* | Fri 3/21/25 |
| d | Leslie Melendez | *Online 2025 Play Therapy Conference offered by PESI Education Thursday* | Thur 6/6/25-6/28/25 |
| d | Special Ed Teachers:Jeanne Smith, Ashley Liegegott, Jacqueline Rosenking | *CARD's Professional Development Seminar* | Wed 2/26/25 |

**Motion: Yvonne Mowatt**
**Second: Luis Ras**
**Vote: 5:0**

**Benchmark III:**

3. **Be it therefore resolved that the Board of Trustees approves the following proposals under Culture, Climate, Student/Family Engagement:**

| | Who Proposes | What | When |
|---|---|---|---|
| a | The Kindergarten Team | Family Literacy Event based around the book, "The Fruit Salad Friend | Wed 2/26/25 |
| b | Emily Siebold | 4th grade trip to East Meadow Bowling | |
| c | Karla Vazquez | 3rd grade trip to Long Island Children's Museum STEAM | 3/14/25 3/15/25 |
| d | Intermediate Spanish Dept.: Cristina Ras, Lydia Fraga, Anna Collado | Mariachi Voz de México Performance for Front Street | TBD |
| e | Luis Zamora and Karla Vásquez | 4th grade Music Trip to John W. Engerman Theatre | Wed 3/26/25 |
| f | Intermediate Spanish Dept.: Cristina Ras, Lydia Fraga, Anna Collado | Sol y Sombra Spanish Dance company to perform for students. | TBD 5/25 |
| g | Luis Zamora and Karla Vasquez | 4th grade music trip to Argyle Theatre | 6/3/25 |

**Motion: Luis Ras**
**Second: Yvonne Mowatt**
**Vote: 5:0**

**Benchmark VII: Organization Capacity (include new staff here, improvement of systems and protocols)**

4. **Be it therefore resolved**, the Board of Trustees approves the following new staff:

(Some of these were approved earlier this month. This resolution ratifies their approval).

| Name | Position | Building | Effective |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gabriela Rios | Art Teacher | Loretto | TBD |
| Wajeeha Hamidi | K-1 | Substitute | TBD |
| Thomas C. Moran | Music Teacher | Front St | 01/21/2025 |
| Juan Veras | PT Custodian | TBD | TBD |
| Indiana Rodriguez | Bookkeeper | Business Office | TBD |
| Latchmin Banks | Assistant Finance Director | Business Office | TBD |
| Maria B. Lindor | Substitute Teacher | Loretto | TBD |

**Motion: Gladys Rodriguez**
**Second: Yvonne Mowatt**
**Vote: 5:0**

**Additional:**

5. **Be it therefore resolved** that the Board of Trustees approves the extension of the contract for Excelsior Advisors through 6/30/2025

**Motion: Sarah Brewster**
**Second: Yvonne Mowatt**
**Vote: 5:0**

6. **Be it therefore resolved** that the Board of Trustees approves a contract with H2M for land surveying site engineering and permitting for a parking lot for the school. See attached.

**Motion: Sarah Brewster**
**Second: Glayds Rodriguez**
**Vote: 5:0**

7. **Be it therefore resolved** that the Board of Trustees approves the following proposals:

    a. Computer Resources of America for the purchase of 1 external UPS battery pack.
        i. This battery back is to be added as a supplement to the existing one in order to be compliant for 8 hours of run time in the event of a power outage. Total cost $1,412.54.

    b. 4 Smart UPS
        i. 1 UPS per floor will provide extended hours of services in the event of a power outage. Total cost $13,003.16.

    c. 1 Fiber Module
        i. The fiber module is needed to connect Verizon's equipment to our firewall for internet connectivity. Total cost $820.55.

**Motion: Sarah Brewster**
**Second: Luis Ras**
**Vote: 5:0**

**XII. Questions**

There were none.

## XII. Additional Reports By Vice President Dr. Sarah Brewster

**School Construction:**

Trustee Brewster provided an update on construction. The team has continued to work hard. There were some delays due to the freezing temperatures however overall work continues to progress smoothly. To continue progress, the team tented and heated some areas so work could finish on the recreational area of the roof. The walkways are being prepared and concrete will be poured in the upcoming week as the weather warms up. The team continued to finish the installation of millwork in classrooms. The classrooms will be cleaned and sealed once they are finished. Work continues on the first-floor cafeteria and kitchen areas. Flooring for the gymnasium has been completed. Bleachers will be installed in the coming weeks. Installation of flooring began on the fourth floor of the One World Room and cafeteria space. The team continued to install flooring on the third floor. Lighting was installed and the outdoor walkway was completed to the kitchen. Work continued the elevators. The floor for the stage was completed. We are in the process of scheduling inspections with the fire marshal.

**XIII. Old Business/New Business**

Mr. Bernardino announced that staff, parents and students will have a chance to see the building as part of the opening. We will be planning to transition and move over the next few weeks.

**XIV. Adjournment**

**Meeting adjourned at: 9:08 pm**

**Motion: Trustee Yvonne Mowatt**
**Second: Trustee Luis Ras**
**Vote: 5:0**

**Minutes submitted by:**

**Gladys Rodriguez**
**Secretary**