

Tab 1



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Watershed Public Charter School October 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 · 6:00 – 7:30pm, In-Person

Start Time: 6:04 p.m.-open session notes taken by Christina Sawyer

Board Member	Attendance
Baze, Crystal	Late, arrived in-person @ 6:51 p.m.
Freedman, Laurel	Present
Keniston, Charlotte	Present
Gilbert, William	Present
Magness-Hill, Sage	Absent
Smolinski, Ann	Present
Sasha McGruder	Present (Online), in-person @ 6:29 p.m.
Thompson, Raven	Late, arrived @ 6:50 p.m. (Online)
Ex-Officio Members	Attendance
David Miller	Present
Lori Widney	Present

Board Norms

- *Come to meetings with an open-mind*
- *Prepare to actively listen*
- *Trust collective wisdom that is shared*
- *Strive for consensus and clarity*
- *Be willing to accept feedback and ask questions*
- *Value all lived experiences and perspectives*
- *Use cultural humility when engaging with others*
- *Be conscious of "air time"*

Upcoming Key Dates:

October 31 – 3-Hour Early Dismissal/1st Marking Period Ends
November 11 @ 5:30 pm – Governance Committee Meeting
November 17 – 21 – American Education Week
November 18 – All-School Conference Day
November 18 @ 4:30 – 6:00 pm Unit I Showcase
November 25 @ 6:00 pm – Board Meeting (in-person)

November 26 – School Closed for Students; ½ Day Professional Development for Staff
November 27 & 28 – Thanksgiving Holiday/Schools and Offices Closed
December 24 – January 2 – Winter Break



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Student Spotlight

Will Harris, 1st Grader: talked about building a chicken swing in Kindergarten with Ms. Chapman.
Ellie Adams, 8th Grader: talked about the impact of environmental education and last year her class made a puppet theater with puppets out of pinecones to perform A Midsummer Nights Dream. Ms. Durantaye is Ellie's favorite teacher because she has a unique way of teaching End of Unit Projects (EOU) and yes, Ellie would recommend Watershed to others who care about the environment and thinks she is well-prepared for high school. She would like Watershed classes to go outside more than they do.

Public Comment

Laura Guelcher, Watershed Academic Director: talked about being a Watershed Founder and speaking at the board meeting to raise a major concern about the impact the facility has on faculty and students. Laura invited the board to spend an hour at school and pointed to having art on a cart, encouraged following the math resource teacher find a class to teach geometry in, to follow a 5th grader from the trailer to the 1st and 2nd floor of the building for each of their classes and that Laura's desk is behind a wall in a classroom where she is planning school wide events and evaluating metrics. Laura thinks that an hour in Watershed's building will inspire service by the Watershed board. Laura asked the Board to install the building and to not accept yet another delay. Laura urged the Board to craft a cogent plan to speed up the modular, urged fundraising to open the building. This is charter advocacy building.

- Charlotte said thank you, to expect a response from the board in 2 weeks and said that Laura's testimony showed Charlotte that the Board has not clearly been communicating what we are doing behind the scenes.
- Ann- asked Laura, "what would you expect fundraising to do?" Laura said that throwing money at things can make it go faster such as getting the construction company to work on weekends.

Consent Agenda (2 min)

- Approval of [September 2025 Board Meeting Minutes](#)

Board Member	Vote to approve consent agenda
Freedman, Laurel	Yes
Keniston, Charlotte	Motion to Approve
Gilbert, William	Seconded
Smolinski, Ann	Yes
McGruder, Sasha	Yes

Old Business (15 min)

- Charter School Funding Advocacy Update
 - #mdcharterschoolscount
 - MSDE Charter School Regulations Working Group Meeting (virtual) October 30, 2025
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
 - Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/fnk-dfiq-tuh>



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- Board Engagement- Charlotte would like to see more Board members at events and said it's important that the school community see Board Members at events. PTO's Fall Fest is happening on Friday, November 7 from 3:15-5 p.m.; Ann and Laurel said that they would attend. Charlotte said that wearing Watershed t-shirts or baseball hats and being available to talk to families would be good. Dave will not be able to be at Fall Fest but will give Christina a Watershed table cloth. Charlotte also said that the Unit 1 Showcase on November 18 from 4:30-6 is another time when Board presence at the showcase would be great.
- December Board Renewal Celebration- Laurel said that traditionally instead of a board meeting in December, the Board has a charter renewal celebration. Laurel said she would need to talk to Sage and Charlotte together to see if the progressive dinner is still something that they want to plan.

New Business

Reports (30 mins)

- [September PTO Report](#) - Laryn Rollhauser said that Fall Fest is next week and the next PTO meeting is next Tuesday. Laryn says that the PTO now has a Room Rep Coordinator who will start after Fall Fest but the PTO is still actively looking for more committee chairs for PTO activities.
- [October 2025 Executive Director's Report 10.28.25](#) - Enrollment and lottery update- yard signs have all been distributed, flyers to preschools and businesses have been distributed this month, 5 open house dates (w/ 20 or more people each the first two open houses and three open houses left this fall). Grants Review- Amazing day on October 16 for Environmental Day at Patapsco State Park for a whole school field trip via Chesapeake Bay Trust, partnered with Patapsco Heritage Greenway. Students enjoyed stations at the river with water tables with macroinvertebrate and bio blitz run on land with hula hoops. Nothing is progressing now with the DOE grant because of the federal government shutdown. However, a representative from TEN (The Efficiency Network) will visit tomorrow. Watershed had discussions today with St. Gabriel re: Baltimore County Community Improvement Grant for exploring the idea of replacing the school's playground; this grant application would have to be spearheaded by St. Gabriel. Upper School Modular Project- forest buffer has been approved, right of way plat and deed are waiting to be recorded, final mylar drawings are being submitted tomorrow, the county water plan is still under review but New Edge doesn't see that as a significant impact to delaying our building permit. We were looking at October 31st for a building permit. Site work is scheduled to begin November 24, modular delivery on December 17 and then final use and occupancy scheduled for February 5. Move plan for March 20-23 with decision deadline on March 6 and if by March 6 we do not have use and occupancy permit, we will bounce the move timeline to spring break. On March 23, grades 5-8 will do an off-campus field trip to fill in suggestions with Ann giving a lot of suggestions. Grades K-4 will stay on campus. If want to do a university tour on March 23rd, Charlotte said that she could schedule a tour of UMBC. The Upper School Move Committee will only reconvene if the March 6 date is approaching without a use and occupancy permit. Construction Financing Update- loan closing documents are finalized and close to being



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ready to be signed. Targeting the loan closing concurrent with building permit. Once we have a building permit, then we can close. Towson University students are volunteering on campus. Facilities- leak in the kitchen with several inches of water had to be fixed in the last month. Financial Summary- allocation did get adjusted down.

- o Ann said that for morale, she would like to go forward with the December 18 modular date. Charlotte offered that she lives nearby and could take pictures of construction progress. Charlotte asked if use and occupancy is when we have to wait to move classrooms in and Dave said yes. Lori said based on experience with the 5th grade trailer the 6 weeks is quick. Inspectors can come out almost daily to sign off on all of the trades and that is all managed by the project manager which is under the loan process. Will has a question of the connectivity of the building.
 - o Ann asked a question about \$5 million- how is that delineated over the year at the school? Is the cash broken down monthly and how is that communicated to Lori? Laurel said that is a very long lesson in charter school financing. District will hold back what they pay for and for BCPS salaries. Laurel said that more would be covered in closed session. Ann said that she was looking for transparency over budgets and operating budget. It was noted that the operating budget is available for any staff to see. Ann asked, "What is our responsibility as a board to make sure we have cash on hand?" Lori said the board created a very detailed budget so that each month the disbursement is budgeted and that there are multiple points in the year for true-uping. In response to Crystal's question about what Ann would like to see, Ann said she would like to know what is the process for sorting out where the buckets of money are coming from.
- [Principal Report October 2025](#)- attendance is still great. Still trying to hire additional support staff. BCPS uses new online system that requests pre-employment verification for the last 10 years and that with a temporary employee, they may have worked 3-8 different employment experiences within that time period and that candidate has to make 3 different attempts with previous employers for verification. The positive is that we have recently hired a School Safety Assistant and he has been a positive space for students to work with. That hire went through because he was already a BCPS employee. STAR Assessment being used for early literacy attainment in Maryland. STAR is not connected to Watershed curriculum. ½ of students would be proficient at state. Significant benchmark difference between state and district in math. Our K-2 students informed how a child did on one singular test. Ready to Read Act- if they are approaching risk or at risk then the teacher has to track it, which our teachers would have already been doing. Crystal asked where we would find the reports as a parent and Lori said in the backpack. Ann asked more about our school proficiency? 50% of our students meet state benchmark and 60% of our students meet district benchmark for ELA. Charlotte asked about the end of SNAP benefits on Saturday, what is the school doing about that? Lori said that we are already noticing food insecurity with our families and Dave said that St. Gabriel runs a food bank on campus.



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- [Teacher Report](#) Ann highlighted the 8th grade field trip that Ms. Durantaye took students to the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center in Grasonville yesterday and students were able to go into the bay. This was a field trip that was entirely funded by the PTO and families last year.

Open session adjourned at: 7:25 p.m. with Motion to Adjourn Open Session and move to Closed Session by Laurel and seconded by Charlotte.

Recorded vote to close the meeting: Date: _____; Time: 7:25 p.m. _____; Location: _____
Motion to close meeting made by: Laurel Freedman; Seconded by Charlotte Keniston;
Members in favor _____; Opposed: _____; Abstaining: _____; Absent: _____

This meeting will only be closed under the provision or provisions checked below, all from General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b):

(1)___ "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2)___ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3)___ "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4)___ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5)___ "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6)___ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7)___ "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8)___ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9)___ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10)___ "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11)___ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; (12)___ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13)___ "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14)___ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process"; (15)___ "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to" (i) "security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology"; (ii) "network security information," such as information that is related to passwords, personal ID numbers, access codes, encryption, security devices, or vulnerability assessments or that a governmental entity collects or maintains to prevent, detect, or investigate criminal activity; or (iii) "deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic -