

DISCOVERY SCHOOLS GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Type: Combined Regular Monthly Meeting of the Governing Board

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Time: 9:30 AM to 10:50 AM

Location: Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred

Presiding Officer: Nancy Daley, Chairperson

Minutes Prepared By: Tania Sims, Secretary

Board Members Present:

- Kevin Warren, President/Treasurer
- Nancy Daley, Chairperson/Community Member
- Charlotte Butler, Community Member
- Doretha Tillman, Community Member
- John Taylor, Community Member
- Aaron Nangle, Community Member
- Sherry Wells, Community Member
- Tania Sims, Secretary

Board Members Absent:

- None

Others in Attendance:

- Rich Moreno, from Building Hope (via zoom)
- Darryl Jemison, Principal
- Stephen Frabotta, Principal
- Mel Green, DHS Finance and HR.
- Ronnie Robinson

I. Call to Order & Welcome

Nancy Daley, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM and welcomed all board members and attendees.

II. Treasurer's Report

Rich Moreno, representing Building Hope, presented the Treasurer's Report via Zoom. Mr. Moreno serves as the head of the Building Hope organization and provided the board with financial statements and budget updates for both schools.

Combined Review:

Mr. Moreno began by explaining the structure of the financial packet, noting that the first sheet contains the combined statement, followed by the two separate school statements. He highlighted the following key points:

Board Approved
9/22/26
Date

- **Cash Balance Fluctuation:** Mr. Moreno explained that there is no payment in June, DALA & DHS receive their FEFP payment in 11 monthly installments, July through May. This timing caused a significant drop in the cash balance from \$2.2 million at the beginning of June to approximately \$1.15 million at the end of the month. He noted this is a timing issue and not a cause for concern.
- **Revenue:** On a consolidated basis, revenue was right on budget, coming in at approximately \$32,000 in total income, which Mr. Moreno described as "favorable."
- **Expenses and Year-End Position:** Expenses were slightly higher than originally budgeted, resulting in a small loss for the year.
- **Financial Ratios:** Mr. Moreno reported that the coverage ratio is sufficient at 1.1. However, the base cash on hand remains low. This calculation assumed that the \$700,000 land sale proceeds would be counted as available cash.
- **Overall Direction:** Mr. Moreno stated that the financial position is "definitely in a much better position" and "headed in the right direction going forward." He emphasized that the focus for this year will be on building up cash reserves.
- **Next Steps:** Mr. Moreno indicated that Building Hope will continue to monitor the finances, review current and projected enrollment, and work with the team to determine if any budget adjustments are needed. He noted that the first part of the year typically requires more cash usage than the second part, and they will ensure expenses are timed accordingly.

III. Old Business

- **Approval of June Minutes:**
 - **Motion:** Sherry Wells moved to approve the June minutes as presented.
 - **Second:** Aaron Nangle
 - **Vote:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approval of July Minutes:**
 - **Motion:** Aaron Nangle moved to approve the July minutes as presented.
 - **Second:** John Taylor
 - **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

- **Medical Benefits:**

Mr. Warren provided an update on the medical benefits offerings for the upcoming year. He shared the following:

- The board has been meeting with Kevin Mulling from Mulling Insurance to review medical benefit options.
- A representative group consisting of staff from both the high school and the middle school was assembled to identify the plans to be offered this year.
- Mr. Mulling advised that Florida Blue initially proposed a 51% increase. After negotiations, the group identified **UHC (UnitedHealthcare)** as the new medical plan provider with a 16-17% increase.
- Three plan options will be offered:
 - **Plan 1:** Free for the employee.
 - **Plan 2:** \$22.41 per pay period with increased benefits.
 - **Plan 3:** \$81.28 per pay period with additional benefits.

- Staff will have the opportunity to review all three plans and make a decision based on their individual needs.
- A meeting is scheduled for **Friday, September 4th** during the early release day, with Kevin Mulling present to review the plans with staff.

- **Bondholders Call — September 8th:**

Nancy Daley provided an update on the Bondholders Call. She shared the following:

- The Bondholders' Call is scheduled for **September 8th**.
- The bondholders have moved to a quarterly call schedule instead of monthly, which Ms. Daley noted reflects their confidence that the schools are heading in the right direction.

- **Annual Audit — Board Questionnaire:**

Mr. Warren provided an update on the annual audit board questionnaire. He shared the following:

- Mr. Warren distributed the questionnaire to board members without providing specific direction, as he wanted each member to complete it based on their own knowledge and understanding.
- The completed questionnaire will be submitted to the auditor.
- If the auditor has any questions, they will contact Mr. Warren, and he will follow up with the board as needed.
- Mr. Warren noted that this is the same questionnaire that was used last year and that no issues or follow-up questions arose from it. He stated that the auditor simply wants the questionnaire on record and that it is not a document that will be scrutinized indicator by indicator.

- **Contract for DHS Grounds:**

The board discussed the contract for grounds maintenance at DHS. Mr. Jemison stated the following:

- The contract is essentially the same as the previous year with the same grounds company.
- The contract was updated for the current year.
- The terms remain consistent with the existing master agreement.
- **Motion:** Aaron Nangle moved to approve the contract for DHS grounds.
- **Second:** Sherry Wells
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

- **Bus Driver Salaries:**

Mr. Warren introduced a late addition to the agenda regarding bus driver salaries. He shared the following:

- Discovery Schools' salaries are always at least equal to Polk County School Board salaries and in most cases slightly higher.
- Polk County recently increased their bus driver salaries due to a driver shortage.
- To remain competitive and match Polk County, Mr. Warren presented a salary scale for approval that would increase Discovery Schools' bus driver salaries to at least equal those of Polk County School Board drivers.
- **Motion:** Sherry Wells moved to approve the new salary scale for bus drivers.
- **Second:** Aaron Nangle
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

V. Principals' Reports

A. Personnel Action Reports:

- **Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred (DALA):**
Mr. Stephen Frabotta reported that there were **three (3) resignations** and **one (1) new hire** requiring board approval.
- **Discovery High School (DHS):**
Mr. Darryl Jemison reported that there was **one (1) resignation** requiring board approval.
- **Motion:** Aaron Nangle moved to approve the Principals' Report as presented, including all personnel actions for both DALA and DHS.
- **Second:** John Taylor
- **Vote:** Passed unanimously.

B. Enrollment Update

- **Discovery High School (DHS)** – Mr. Jemison reported the following enrollment figures:
 - **9th Grade:** 286 students
 - **10th Grade:** 255 students
 - **11th Grade:** 198 students
 - **12th Grade:** 190 students
 - **Total DHS Enrollment:** 929 students

Mr. Jemison also reported the following waitlist numbers:

- **9th Grade:** 29 students
 - **10th Grade:** 17 students
 - **11th Grade:** 13 students
 - **12th Grade:** 11 students
 - **Total DHS Waitlist:** 70 students
- **Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred (DALA)** – Mr. Frabotta reported the following enrollment figures:
 - **6th Grade:** 352 students (target: 360)
 - **7th Grade:** 341 students
 - **8th Grade:** 328 students
 - **Total DALA Enrollment:** 1,032 students

Mr. Frabotta also noted that the school is looking to solidify an additional **10 to 20 students** over the next week as families complete the enrollment process, which will position DALA well for the upcoming FTE count.

VI. Stakeholder Report

A. Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred (DALA) Teacher of the Year – Mrs. Crystal Adams

Mrs. Crystal Adams provided the following updates:

- **Patriots Point Trip (South Carolina):** An email and phone call will be going home soon regarding the upcoming Patriots Point trip to South Carolina. Mrs. Adams noted that efforts are being made to encourage student participation and increase engagement, particularly for the 7th grade.
- **Keys Trip (8th Grade):** The 8th grade Keys trip is also being promoted. Mrs. Adams stated that the school is hoping to get the numbers needed to maintain the trip.
- **Overall:** Mrs. Adams described both trips as exciting opportunities for students.

B. Teacher Representative Report – Mrs. Karie Schenkenberg

Mrs. Karie Schenkenberg provided the following update:

- **6th Grade Transition:** Mrs. Schenkenberg shared that the 6th grade team is excited to teach the new students "the Voyager way." She noted that the transition requires patience and flexibility, and that parents have been reaching out regarding various nuances associated with the influx of new students.
- **Staff Outlook:** Despite the challenges of the new school year, Mrs. Schenkenberg reported that the team is "holding their own" and looking forward to working with the students and watching them grow.
- **Student Growth:** She expressed enthusiasm about seeing the students' personalities emerge throughout the year and helping them transition to 7th grade, which she described as "a big jump." She noted she is looking forward to positive interactions and their growth.
- **Athletics:** Mrs. Schenkenberg also reported that sports are starting up, with tryouts having already begun for some athletic programs.

C. Discovery High School (DHS) Teacher of the Year – Mr. Jamie Spencer

Mr. Jamie Spencer provided the following updates:

- **Senior Sunrise:** Mr. Spencer reported that last Friday's Senior Sunrise event had a very good turnout from the senior class. He described it as an excellent opportunity for the seniors to bond and start the year off together.
- **Executive Council Activities:** Mr. Spencer noted that Executive Council members have been actively interacting with students across all grade levels, including freshmen, sophomores, and seniors. The council held a formal activity last week and is planning additional events.
- **Campus Camaraderie:** Mr. Spencer shared that one of the goals Mr. Harmon set for the Executive Council this year is to provide more opportunities for camaraderie across the campus. The council is working toward that objective.

D. Additional Principal Report Items – Mr. Frabotta (DALA):

- **Lake Alfred City Government Fundraiser:**
Mr. Frabotta shared that Lake Alfred City Government has been working with the school on a fundraiser to support **BizTown and Finance Park**. Representatives from the city will be coming out at the end of this week or the beginning of next week to present the school with the fundraiser amount. Mr. Frabotta noted that this contribution supports the school's partnership and focus on financial literacy and developing productive citizens in grades 6 and 7.
- **Safe Schools Letter:**
Mr. Frabotta advised the board that a **Safe Schools letter** was included in their packet. He noted the following:
 - The letter is sent out annually and is required by both the superintendent and statute.
 - Mr. Frabotta and Mr. Jemison distributed the letter to their staff.
 - The letter includes a governing board component regarding the adoption of a progressive discipline policy. Mr. Frabotta confirmed that the board adopted this policy in **2023–24**, so a progressive discipline policy is already in place for those not meeting campus safety expectations.
 - A new addition this year includes additional directives for staff members regarding safety protocols for visitors who are not staff members. Mr. Frabotta confirmed that these protocols have been created and communicated to visitors on campus.

VII. Board Member Reports/Comments

Public Guest – Commissioner Ronnie Robinson:

Nancy Daley, Chairperson, recognized a guest from the public, **Commissioner Ronnie Robinson**, and invited him to address the board.

- Commissioner Robinson introduced himself as a representative of benefitsbroker.us and also serves as a **City Commissioner for the City of Lake Alfred**.
- He offered the services of benefitsbroker.us as an alternative or selection broker of choice for the board's consideration.
- He noted that he brought materials based on his prior conversations with Mr. Warren.

After receiving the information, the board asked for the schools to review the information for future consideration.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM by Chairperson Daley.

Respectfully submitted,

Tania Sims

Secretary, Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred Governing Board

Next Meeting: September 22, 2026

Discovery High School

Meeting at 9:30 A.M.