

LEAP ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

March 25, 2021

MINUTES

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Meeting called to order by Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago at 5:05 pm.

**Attendance:**

**Present:**

Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago  
Dr. Mathew Closter  
Mathew Goodwin  
John Hall  
Cal Maradonna  
Bette Mengesha  
Héctor Nieves  
Brenda Ortiz  
Michael Palis  
Dr. Yozmeris Roman  
Omar Samaniego  
Lisa Wright

**Excused:**

Jonathan Gonzalez  
Dr. Anthony Lowman  
Margo Venable

**Staff Present**

Stephanie Rogers  
Yusein Durakov  
Dana Pila  
Wanda Garcia

***Public Count on Virtual Meeting:*** 59 people

- I. **Welcome/Declaration of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act:** Dr. Santiago opened the meeting and indicated that the meeting was announced with the Open Public Meetings Act. Due to the COVID-19, the meeting was held using a virtual platform. The Governor and the Commissioner of Education have provided several flexibility measures for schools and boards to continue doing business while also complying with the social distance and building closure measures. Members of the public were asked to submit any public comments via email to the Board Liaison for prompt attention. Dr. Santiago thanked everyone in the Board, the staff and the public for the support and flexibility in a very difficult time for all.
- II. **Approval of Minutes of February 18, 2021:** Dr. Matt Closter presented item 1 for Board approval:

**Item 1:** Resolved that the Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the meeting of February 21, 2021, as prepared by Wanda Garcia, Board Liaison.

**Seconded by Dr. Yozmeris Roman.**

**Roll Call:**

**Attendance:**

	<b>Item 1</b>
Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago	YES
Dr. Matthew Closter	YES
Mathew Goodwin	----
John Hall	YES
Dr. Anthony Lowman	YES
Cal Maradonna	YES
Bette Mengesha	YES
Hector Nieves	---
Brenda Ortiz	---
Dr. Michael Palis	YES
Dr. Yosmeriz Roman	YES
Omar Samaniego	YES
Lisa Wright	YES

**III. Welcome/Declaration of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act:**

Meeting was announced in the newspaper and disseminated to school community.  
Due to the COVID-19, the meeting will be held using a virtual platform.

The Governor and the Commissioner of Education have provided a number of flexibility measures for schools and boards to continue doing business while also complying with the social distance and building closure measures.

We will proceed with the meeting. Public comments can be submitted in writing via email at [wandag@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:wandag@camden.rutgers.edu). For the duration of the business portion of the meeting, I ask that you mute your computer or phones to avoid noise.

Thanks to everyone for being flexible on these difficult times.

**IV. Chairperson's Report**

- A.** Dr. Santiago announced that the Annual Alfredo Santiago Scholarship Fundraising Gala has been rescheduled for December 3, 2021 at the Curtis Atrium in Philadelphia. More information will follow.
- B. Membership Renewal - NJ Charter Schools Association** – Hector Nieves presented item 2 for Board approval.

**Item 2:** Resolved that Board authorizes renewal of LEAP academy’s membership to the NJ Charter Schools Association at the membership rate of \$14/students for FY 22.

**Seconded by Dr. Michael Palis.**

**Roll Call:**

**Attendance:**

	<b>Item 1</b>
Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago	YES
Dr. Matthew Closter	YES
Mathew Goodwin	YES
John Hall	YES
Dr. Anthony Lowman	YES
Cal Maradonna	YES
Bette Mengesha	YES
Hector Nieves	YES
Brenda Ortiz	----
Dr. Michael Palis	YES
Dr. Yosmeriz Roman	YES
Omar Samaniego	YES
Lisa Wright	YES

**V. Chief Operations Officer Updates** – Stephanie Rogers provided a progress report on the following operational areas:

- Operations Update /Risk Management
- Fire Drills
- Enrollment
- Building Infrastructure and Maintenance
- Health Center
- Family Support/Parent Engagement
- Fab Lab

**VI. Finance Committee Actions:** John Hall presented items 3-25 for approval.

**A. LEAP Cramer Hill LLC Financials**

**Item 3:** Resolved that the Board approve the Financial Reports for the LEAP Cramer Hill LLC for the period of January and February 2021 as provided by the Chief Financial Officer/SBA. Further resolved the Board approve payments as provided in the report.

**Item 4:** Resolved that the Board approve transfer from the LEAP Cramer Hill LLC in the amount of \$10,000 to be used as seed capital for the Fabshop.

**B. LEAP Financial Reports**

**Item 5: Approval of Board Line-Item Status Report**

Whereas, the members of the LEAP Board of Trustees, voting on this resolution, have reviewed the Board Secretary's and Monthly Financial Reports for the months of January and February 2021 and have consulted with the Chief Financial Officer/SBA as deemed appropriate.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the members of this Board of Trustees voting (By recorded Roll call) on this Resolution do hereby certify that based on the monthly certification of the Board's Secretary concerning "Budgetary Line Item Status" N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(c) 3 no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23-2.11(a) 3 and based on such report and the status of budgetary amount and expenditures as of the date of the adoption of this Resolution there appears to be at this time sufficient funds available to meet the School's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

**C. Approval of Expenditure Report/Bill List**

**Item 6:** Whereas, the Business Administrator certifies that there are sufficient funds to pay bills and payroll for March 2021.

Therefore, be it resolved that the LEAP Academy University Charter School Board of Trustees authorizes payment of vouchers and payroll as provided by the Chief Financial Officer.

**D. Adoption of 2021-2022 Operational Budget**

**Item 7:** Resolved that the Board approves the recommendation of the Business Administrator and the Finance Committee to approve the 2021-2022 School Year Budget as presented and authorizes submittal to the NJDOE Office of Charter Schools.

**E. Authorization to Solicit, Receive and Evaluate RFP for Health Insurance Packages**

**Item 8:** **WHEREAS**, the District is authorized under the Public Schools Contracts Law at N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(10) to solicit requests for proposals in lieu of formal bids to obtain insurance contracts for its employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the District has previously engaged the services of Conner Strong & Buckelew pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(a)(10) to assist the District in evaluating potential vendors to provide health insurance coverages; and

**WHEREAS**, the RFP has been prepared and reviewed by the District's counsel and the counsel confirms that the proposal solicitation conforms to the requirements of the Public Schools Contracts Law and other appropriate bidding requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, because the anticipated value of the insurance contract is less than \$12,500,000, the RFP and Exhibits will be provided to the Office of State Comptroller in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:15C-10; and

**WHEREAS**, the District determines to evaluate insurance options with of the dual goals of providing the District employees equal coverage to the current Health Benefits Plan while simultaneously protecting the cost to taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, when the proposals arrive, the District, through its counsel, will ensure compliance with the Public Schools Contracts Law and other state procurement requirements and the Business Administrator and CSB will evaluate the merits of each proposal;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Leap Academy University District that the Business Administrator shall solicit proposals pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(a)(10) and the same shall be evaluated by the District and Conner Strong & Buckelew to determine which proposal, if any, meets the District’s dual goals of providing health care and creating economies for the taxpayers;

**F. Contracts and Financial Transactions**

- Item 9:** Resolved that the Board retroactively approve a contract with All American Entertainment in the amount of \$7,500, ESSA Title II funded, to provide literacy professional development.
- Item 10:** Resolved that the Board approve a contract with McTighe and Associates, Consulting in the amount of \$9,000, RFP21-11, ESSA Title II funded, to provide backwards design curriculum writing for NJSLs in all K-12 professional development.
- Item 11:** Resolved that the Board approve a contract with Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES in the amount of \$10,543, lower quotation, ESSA Title II funded, to provide PD Reading Program for Students with Disabilities.
- Item 12:** Resolved that the Board approve a contract with Teaching Strategies, LLC in the amount of \$9,600, RFP21-14, ESSA Title II funded, to provide Teachers and Administrators PD for K-12 Assessments in ELA and Math.
- Item 13:** Resolved that the Board approve the recommendation of the Business Administrator to execute the following inter-appropriation transfers made in February 2021 on the financial records of the Board affecting 2020-21 budget:

Source Account Code from	Amount	Target Account Code to	Amount
<b>Special Revenue Fund</b>			
20-235-200-340	\$10,789.00	20-235-200-600	\$10,789.00
20-235-200-340	\$20,000.00	20-235-100-600	\$20,000.00
20-244-100-890	\$3054.57	20-244-100-610	\$3054.57
20-281-100-610	\$800	20-281-100-300	\$800
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$34,643.57</b>		<b>\$34,643.57</b>

- Item 14:** Resolved that the Board approve the purchase of Fab Lab equipment from Trox, INC on NJ State contract T0114-17-Food-00244, in the amount of \$34,680.12, \$17,299 to be paid with ESEA Title I Reallocated funds and \$17,381.12 Title I funds.
- Item 15:** Resolved that the Board approve the purchase of specialized student laptops for college bound students from Trox, INC on NJ State contract T0114-17-Food-00244 in the amount of \$ 127,675, to be paid with ESEA Title I funds.
- Item 16:** Resolved that the Board approve the transfer of \$1,500 fabrication lab- Extra Curricular account to treasurer account (deposited to Extra Curricular instead of treasurer account).
- Item 17:** Resolved that the Board approve the transfer of \$21,157 from general fund to food service to cover the costs of the FY20 Extended Day Program.

### **G. Grants**

- Item 18:** Resolved that the Board accept the following grants allocations for the FY21 and to authorize the submission of the grant applications:
- ESSER II (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund) - \$3,272,131.00
  - Learning Acceleration - \$209,988.00
  - Mental Health Support and Services - \$45,000.00
- Item 19:** Resolved that the Board approve submission of the School Security grant application for Alyssa's Law Compliance expenses in all buildings.
- Item 20:** Resolved that the Board approve submission of the CTE Health Science Program of Study grant application.

### **H. Reimbursement Procedure**

- Item 21:** Resolved that the Board recognizes that certain vendors do not accept purchase orders and that certain purchases can only be made through those vendors and therefore authorize the Business Administrator to approve/reimburse for certain budgeted purchases made by staff with prior approval from BA.

### **I. SHIP Dividend**

- Item 22:** Resolved that the Board accept the dividend generated from the SHIF (School Health Insurance Fund) for \$91,354.

### **J. NJSIG Refund**

- Item 23:** Resolved that the Board accept the Refund of member contributions due to COVID-19 for workers comp and auto liability FY20 insurance premiums from NJSIG in the amount of \$8,798.06 and to apply it as a credit to future contributions.

**K. SEMI Corrective Action Plan**

**Item 24:** Resolved that the Board approves the SEMI Corrective Action Plan and authorizes the SBA to submit to the NJDOE accordingly.

**L. RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF LEAP ACADEMY UNIVERSITY CHARTER SCHOOL, INC. (“LEAP ACADEMY”) APPROVING A FOURTH MORTGAGE ON 528 – 544 COOPER STREET AS SECURITY FOR A FINANCING FOR LEAP SOCIAL ENTERPRISE INC. (“LEAP SOCIAL”) OF A CHARTER SCHOOL IN PUERTO RICO OPERATED BY LEAP SOCIAL.**

**Item 25:** **WHEREAS**, LEAP Academy is a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey for the purposes of operating and maintaining a Charter School, which, among other things, promotes comprehensive educational reform under a curriculum that highlights mathematics, science and technology utilizing innovative teaching and learning methods;

**WHEREAS**, LEAP Social intends to operate and maintain a Charter School in Puerto Rico, utilizing the same teaching and learning methodologies that have been successful under LEAP Academy’s model;

**WHEREAS**, LEAP Social has requested that LEAP Academy provide certain subcontracted services to LEAP Social that allow it to utilize LEAP Academy’s teaching and learning methodologies;

**WHEREAS**, LEAP Academy desires to generate additional revenue for LEAP Academy by providing these subcontracted services to LEAP Social; and

**WHEREAS**, in consideration for the revenue that LEAP Academy will generate by providing these subcontracted services to LEAP Social, LEAP Academy is willing to issue a fourth priority mortgage interest on the property located at 528-544 Cooper Street in the City of Camden, together with an assignment of all rents and leases on all real estate pledged (the “Mortgage”) in connection with the financing that LEAP Social is obtaining for the purposes of funding certain costs related to the operation and maintenance of the Charter School in Puerto Rico (the “Puerto Rico School Financing”).

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF LEAP ACADEMY (THE “BOARD”), AS FOLLOWS:**

- a) In return for the consideration to be generated by the provision of subcontracted services, the issuance of the Mortgage in connection with the Puerto Rico School Financing is hereby authorized.
- b) The Chair of the Board (“Chair”) or Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver the Mortgage and any other documents, certificates or instruments required to be executed and delivered in connection therewith on behalf of LEAP Academy in such form as may be approved by the Chair or Chief Financial Officer

and directs each of the Chair and Chief Financial Officer to take all action in furtherance of the Puerto Rico School Financing.

- c) All prior resolutions and parts thereof, to the extent inconsistent herewith, are hereby rescinded and repealed.
- d) This resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Seconded by Hector Nieves.**  
**Roll Call: (Y=Yes; N=No; A=Abstain)**

	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago	Y	Y	Y	Y A- Rutgers and Metz	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dr. Matthew Closter	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mathew Goodwin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
John Hall	Y	Y	Y	Y A- Republic	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cal Maradonna	Y	Y	Y	Y A- Rutgers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bette Mengesha	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hector Nieves	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Brenda Ortiz	Y	Y	Y	Y A- Rutgers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dr. Michael Palis	Y	Y	Y	Y A- Rutgers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dr. Yosmeriz Roman	Y	Y	Y	Y A- Rutgers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Omar Samaniego	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lisa Wright	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y



**VI. Personnel Committee:** Bette Mengesha presented items 26-30 for Board approval:

**a. New Appointments**

**Item 26:** Resolved that the Board appoints the following individuals:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Building Location</u>	<u>Contract/Start Date</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Account Numbers</u>
Alexandra Mercer	Elementary (2nd Grade Teacher)	3/15/21	\$ 55,000.00	11-120-100-101-01-043
Yahaira M. Perez	Office Manager K-3	3/15/21	\$ 35,000.00	100-000-240-105-01-053
Vanessa Cruz	College Access 4 - 5	3/15/21	\$ 50,000.00	11-000-218-110-00-066
Jessika Szatny	Social Worker Child Study Team	3/15/21	\$ 62,000.00	11-000-219-104-00-066
Jayson Love	HS English	4/1/21	\$ 55,000.00	11-140-100-101-04-043
Luz Alcazar	Parent Ambassador	3/8/21	\$12/hour	20-011-200-110-00
Jennylyz Soto (rehire)	PT Bus Driver	3/1/21	\$22/hour	11-000-270-160-00-066
Carly Hecht	2nd Grade Teacher	3/29/21	\$ 50,000.00	11-120-100-101-01-043
Tugba Hoguet	Principal	7/1/21	N/A	11-000-240-103-02-052
Michelle Ettore-Williams	Teacher Fellow	4/1/21	\$ 45,000.00	11-12010010101043

**b. Resignations/Terminations**

**Item 27:** Resolved that the Board accepts the following resignations/terminations:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective Day</u>
Chandra Barzey	Instructional Assistant	3/5/21
Emily Sularski	6th Grade Science Teacher	4/16/21
Jeffrey Thomas	High School Teacher of Biology	4/30/21
Anabel Estevez	Teacher Fellow	4/25/21
Tierra Arnold	2nd Grade Teacher	4/25/21

**c. FMLA Leave**

**Item 28:** Resolved that the Board approves the following FMLA Leave of Absences:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>-</u>
Raul Agosto, Intermittent FMLA (Spouse)	Facilities Mechanic	2/26/21
Summer Coles, (Self)	4th - 5th grade English/Social studies	3/2/2021-3/29/2021
Maria Gonzales	Bus Driver	4/11/2021 - 4/28/2021

**D. Tenure Recommendations**

**Item 29:** Resolved that the Board approves the recommendations for tenure for the following teachers based on the criteria set forth for Streamline Tenure.

Brooke Bivona  
 Rachel Caione  
 Amanda Carpenter  
 Patricia Hawkins  
 Sandra Heintz  
 Tiyana Hicks  
 Ashley Hudock  
 Katherine Jankowski  
 Christine Skalka  
 Robin Vicino

**E. Professional Development – External Offerings**

**Item 30:** Resolved that the Board ratifies participation of staff on the PD events listed below:

NAME	NAME OF WORKSHOP/SEMINAR	LOCATION	DATE (S) & TIME	COST
Shannon Covington	Instructor CPR Re-Certification	Fairfield, NJ	2/22/2021	\$0
Alicia Crump	Instructor CPR Re-Certification	Fairfield, NJ	2/22/2021	\$0
Tugba Hoguet	Using Option 2 with ELL's as an Instrument of Equity	Virtual	2/17/2021	\$75.00 11-000-223-500-00-068

**Seconded by Omar Samaniego.**

**Roll Call:**

	Item 26	Item 27	Item 28	Item 29	Item 30
Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Dr. Matthew Closter	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Mathew Goodwin	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
John Hall	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Cal Maradonna	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Bette Mengesha	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Hector Nieves	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Brenda Ortiz	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Dr. Michael Palis	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Dr. Yozmeris Roman	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Omar Samaniego	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

	Item 26	Item 27	Item 28	Item 29	Item 30
Lisa Wright	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

**VII. Academic/Curriculum and Instruction Update**

**A. Updates:** The following administrators presented progress reports for areas of curriculum and instruction:

- **Academic Update** – Jozian Molina
- **Curriculum Update** - Dana Pilla
- **College Access Update** – Marchelle Roberts
- **Early College Update** - Khary Golden

**VIII. Public Comment:** Dr. Santiago indicated that all members of the public wishing to send public comments can submit them to Wanda Garcia (Bord Liaison to: [wandag@camden.rutgers.edu.](mailto:wandag@camden.rutgers.edu))

No comments were received.

**IX. Adjournment**

**Item 31:** Hector Nieves presented a motion to adjourn.

**Seconded by Dr. Mathew Closter.**

**Roll Call:**

	Item 31
Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago	YES
Dr. Matthew Closter	YES
Mathew Goodwin	YES
John Hall	YES
Cal Maradonna	YES
Bette Mengesha	YES
Hector Nieves	YES
Brenda Ortiz	YES
Dr. Michael Palis	YES
Dr. Yozmeris Roman	YES
Omar Samaniego	YES
Lisa Wright	YES

**Meeting adjourned at 6:12 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

**Wanda Garcia, Board Liaison**