



FREIRE

CHARTER WILMINGTON

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DECEMBER 11, 2025 | 8 AM

ZOOM: MEETING ID: 898 5575 1627

LOCATION: FREIRE CHARTER SCHOOL WILMINGTON | 201 W. 14TH ST., WILMINGTON DE 19801

Board Members Present: Clint Walker, David Singleton, Jilian Mackenzie, Sheela Dattani, Brad Crouch, Khaliah Walker,

Others Present: Leigh Botwinik, Paul Ramirez, Melanie Reiser, Madeline Weckel, Nathan Yufer

Meeting Start, 8:03 AM

- I. **Public Comment**
- II. **Executive Session**
 - A. Personnel Matter
 1. David Singleton motions to enter executive sessions. Sheela Dattani seconds.
 2. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.
 3. David Singleton motions to enter back into regular session. Nathan Will seconds.
 4. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.
- III. **Review & Approval of Minutes**, October 16, 2025 (Attachment 3) *
 - A. The board reviews the minutes from October 16, 2025 board meeting.
 - B. David Singleton motions to approve. Nathan Will seconds.
 - C. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.
- IV. **School Report**
 - A. Staff & Student Update
 1. Rob Healy reports that the Boys Basketball team had a 10 point win over Aspira yesterday and that our first ever Winter Track team has started practicing.
 2. He reports that staff and students have gotten more comfortable with changes made at the start of the year, and feels that the school is getting into a good place educationally and as a community.
 - B. Heads Report
 1. Nate Durant shares that the Boys Basketball team has had three games and first win of the season yesterday. We've had big, lively crowds coming out to support the basketball team. We recently had a school event called Barbershop Talk that brought male students together with community role models and mentors. Everyone dressed in suits and engaged in open dialogue about what it means to be a man.
 2. The VIP Program is up and running again. We've had more students meeting their attendance goals, receiving all A's and B's, or being nominated by teachers and receiving VIP status. Thank you to Sheela for helping to fund a special VIP celebration for those students, in addition to the other perks they receive. As Rob shared, we have our first ever Winter Track team and their first meet is this weekend.
 3. As far as culture in the building, while it's been a time of transition we've gotten our footing

under us. Our staff are resilient and committed to making Freire the best place for students.

4. From an administrative standpoint, we are working to make sure the team is aligned on disciplinary processes and classroom expectations. The leadership team is making sure everyone is upholding standards in and out of the classroom so that students can learn.

C. Admissions Update

1. Nate Durant reports that we have slightly more applications compared to this time last year, and are more on pace with previous years. Thank you to the admissions team and communications team for their support. We have an open house happening this weekend.

D. November Freire Dashboard (Attachment 4)

1. Our attendance is a tick higher than this time last year. Last year we had significant growth over the past year and we are heading in the right direction. In terms of enrollment, at this time last year, we had thirteen students who had withdrawn and this year we only have had two.
2. In terms of STAR benchmark testing, we are at a similar place to last year with slight growth in STAR reading.

V. Financials

A. October 2025 Financial Report (Attachment 5A)*

1. Nathan Yufer reports that as of October 31, 2025, Freire Wilmington received 74% of expected state funding. This is in line with expectations as the state pays a large portion of yearly funding at the beginning of the year. We've received 16% of our local funding and the rest was received in November and December. We received 28% of our federal funding. Freire Wilmington is expected to earn \$9.4M in total revenue in FY26.
2. The school will receive \$365K in unrestricted fundraising. \$200K from the Sonecha Foundation and \$100K from the Freire Foundation. The Freire Foundation will be donating an additional \$65K on top of their normal annual donation of \$100K to pay for 1 FTE and help the school balance their budget. The Freire Network office will also be covering roughly \$90K of expenses related to advertising and payroll consulting to help balance the schools budget. This help is needed due to the school's challenges with enrollment.
3. Nathan also notes someone broke into the building recently through a door in the basement. While they did not steal much of value, we need to replace the door, which is estimated to cost \$10k because it's a metal, fireproof door. This was not in our revised budget. Additionally, due to the recent security incidents at the school, there will be a temporary increase in security costs. We have updated the year end forecast to include this increase in cost.
4. Assuming there are no other large unexpected expenses, Freire Charter School Wilmington ended the year with a surplus of \$40K.
5. David Singleton motions to approve. Nathan Will seconds.
6. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

B. Review & Accept Audit Report (Attachment 5B)*

1. The board reviews the Audit Report.
2. David Singleton motions to accept. Nathan Will seconds.
3. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

C. Review & Approve FY25 990 (Attachment 5C)*

1. The board reviews the Draft FY25 990.
2. David Singleton motions to approve. Sheela Dattani seconds.
3. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

D. CBOC Report

1. Nathan Yufer shares that the CBOC met earlier in the week and there is nothing to report at this time.

VI. Advancement

A. Advancement Report (Attachment 6)

1. Melanie Reiser shares that the network wide Advancement Committee met in October and set the fundraising target of \$675,000-\$125k per Philadelphia campus and \$300k for Freire Wilmington. To date, we have raised \$241,300 in donations and pledges toward that goal. Freire Wilmington received our annual gift of \$200,000 from the Sonecha Family Foundation, for which we are extremely grateful.
2. The Freire Schools holiday appeal was sent out and should hit mailboxes this week.
3. The Advancement Committee decided not to host a Bridge to Wisdom fundraising event this year, but potentially one in fall 2026. Focus instead will be on smaller Board-led fundraising/friendraising events this winter and spring, plus increased grant writing, a second print appeal in the spring, and active personal solicitation of donors.
4. In addition to our unrestricted fundraising, we have received \$91k in smaller restricted gifts to fund an 8th grade academy (FCSW), EITC funding for the Experienceship program, peer mediation training (all three high schools), and athletic uniforms and truancy home visits at FCSW.
5. Melanie requests board presence at the upcoming Student Ambassador Training for those interested and available.
6. Freire Wilmington board giving is at 20%. We are asking that everyone pledge by the end of the calendar year.

VII. Policies & Agreements

A. Approve Minor Modification Application (Attachment 7A)*

1. Leigh Botwinik explains the Minor Modification Application which proposes changing the authorized enrollment to 370.
2. David Singleton motions to approve. Nathan Will seconds.
3. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

B. Approve Authorization to Enter into Agreement with Search Firm*

1. Paul Ramirez explains that the school is interested in entering into a contract with a search firm to support the Head of School hiring process. Paul requests that the board authorize Clint to approve the contract with the search firm.
2. David Singleton motions to approve. Nathan Will seconds.
3. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

C. Approve 2024-2025 Annual Report (Attachment 7B)*

1. Leigh Botwinik reviews the 2024-2025 Annual Report.
2. David Singleton. Nathan Will seconds.
3. Brad Crouch, Sheela Dattani, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, Clint Walker, Khaliah Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against or abstentions.

VIII. Midtown Brandywine Committee Update

- A. Brad Crouch states there is nothing to report at this time.

Meeting Adjourned, 8:51 AM