

Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Education

Minutes – Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, June 16, 2026

In Accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act: Public Notice of this Meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given by the Board Secretary in the Asbury Park Press – Paper of Record. Ocean Academy Charter School, 1650 Massachusetts Avenue, Lakewood, NJ. Attendance by virtual or in person.

Anita Raynes Lepelstat – President
Jim Muzikowski – Vice President
Sharon Hollander
David Corso
Raul Orellana
Gregory Brandis
Aase Hare
Roxanne Martin
Cori Scotti

Valarie Smith (Board Secretary), Lorna Hassel (Head of School), Amy LaBarca (Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction), Stephen Nichol (High School Principal), David Block (School Business Administrator), Didi Yencer (Whole School Reform), and Board Attorney, Dave Hespe.

Meeting Called to Order at 6:15 by Anita Lepelstat

Salute to the Flag

Action Agenda

Public Session:

Special presentation in recognition of Marshall Ellison White

Recognition of Marshall White – Presented by Anita Lepelstat

Marshall Ellison White has been a dedicated member of the Lakewood community and an advocate for education for more than five decades. Beginning her career as a classroom teacher, she developed a lifelong commitment to ensuring that all children have access to a high-quality education.

Throughout her distinguished career, Ms. White played an integral role in the Lakewood Public School District, serving as a special education teacher and later as Assistant Principal at Lakewood High School, Oak Street Elementary School, and Spruce Street Elementary School. Her extensive experience as an educator and school leader helped shape the educational experiences of countless students and families throughout the community.

Although she retired from the public school system in 2006, Ms. White has remained actively engaged in educational initiatives and continued to champion excellence and opportunity for all students.

In 2014, Ms. White joined the founding team of Ocean Academy Charter School. Her deep knowledge of education, school leadership, and the Lakewood community has been invaluable to the school's growth and success. She served as President of the Board of Trustees, where she provided leadership and

guidance in advancing the school's mission and strategic goals while ensuring a continued focus on student achievement and community engagement.

Anita Lepelstat expressed her heartfelt appreciation to Marshall White for her unwavering dedication and countless contributions to Ocean Academy Charter School, dating back to the school's initial application process. Throughout the years, Marshall has been a steadfast champion of the school and played an instrumental role in helping it grow and thrive.

Lorna Hassel presented Marshall with a commemorative plaque in recognition of her years of service and commitment. Marshall served on the Ocean Academy Board of Trustees for many years, including an extended tenure as President. Through her leadership, tireless efforts, and genuine belief in the school's mission, she helped lay the foundation for Ocean Academy's success and lasting impact on its students and community.

Old Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 12, 2026

Motion to Approve Minutes made by Roxanne Martin

Second: Sharon Hollander

Vote: Unanimously in the Affirmative

New Business

Principal's Report – Presented by Lorna Hassel

Attendance Month of May

Total Staff: **137**

Full Days Taken Off: **133**

Half Days Taken Off: **57**

Total # of Students #: **592**

Student Absences #: **287**

End of the Year (SY 25-26) Teacher Survey Results – Presented by Lorna Hassel

Discussion Only

Resolution: Approving a Voluntary & Preemptive Corrective Action Plan – Presented by Valarie Smith

Board of Trustees

Resolution Approving Corrective Action Plan for Chronic Student Absenteeism

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Education requires schools to monitor student attendance and implement interventions to address chronic absenteeism; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Ocean Academy Charter School recognizes that chronic absenteeism negatively impacts student achievement, school climate, and overall academic performance; and

WHEREAS, school administration identified deficiencies in attendance monitoring, intervention documentation, and family engagement practices requiring corrective action; and

WHEREAS, school administration developed a voluntary and preemptive Corrective Action Plan (“CAP”) designed to improve attendance oversight, intervention systems, and compliance with applicable New Jersey statutes, regulations, and school policies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustee of Ocean Academy hereby approves the following Corrective Action Plan actions:

1. Administration shall implement a daily attendance monitoring and parent notification system.
2. The school shall establish an Attendance Review Team to meet on a Monthly basis to review attendance trends and student interventions.
3. The administration shall develop tiered attendance intervention procedures for students identified as at risk for chronic absenteeism.
4. Individualized attendance improvement plans shall be implemented for students meeting chronic absenteeism thresholds.
5. Parent conferences and outreach efforts shall be documented and conducted in a timely manner.
6. Staff training regarding attendance procedures and intervention documentation shall be completed during the current school year.
7. Monthly attendance reports shall be provided to the Board of Trustees for oversight and monitoring purposes.
8. The School Leader is authorized and directed to implement all necessary administrative actions to carry out this Corrective Action Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees directs administration to monitor implementation progress and provide periodic updates regarding measurable reductions in chronic absenteeism rates.

Motion Approving Corrective Action Plan for Chronic Student Absenteeism was made by David Corso
Second: by Gregory Brandis

Roll Call Vote:

Anita Raynes Lepelstat – President, Yes
Jim Muzikowski – Vice President, Yes
Sharon Hollander, Yes
David Corso, Yes
Raul Orellana, Not Voting
Gregory Brandis, Yes
Aase Hare, Yes

Roxanne Martin, Yes

Cori Scotti, Yes

I, Valarie M. Smith, Board Secretary of Ocean Academy Charter School, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Board of Trustees at a public meeting held on June 16, 2026.

New Employees – Presented by Amy LaBarca

Priscila Antuna Hernandez – Teacher, ESL, High School

Allison Reiter – Teacher, 5th Grade

Aimee deRonde – Teacher, 5th Grade

Natasha Wilson – ESL Teacher

Jake Nase – HS, History

Motion to Approve Hires as presented by Amy LaBarca made by Gregory Brandis

Seconded by Sharon Hollander

Vote: All in Favor

Increase for SY 26-27 – Student Data Management Consultant & Administrative Secretaries –

Presented by Valarie Smith

Sikemia Wright – An increase of \$2,400 for SY 26-27 (Total Increase)

Front Office Administrative Assistants – Additional \$1,200 Each (4) to the 3.5% Increase

Motion to Approve made by Aase Hare

Seconded by David Corso

Vote: Unanimously Approved

New Neighbor Information – Toms River / Mount Laurel – Presented by Valarie Smith

Discussion Only

Year End Results: Board Self-Assessment & Executive Director Evaluation – Presented by Anita Lepelstat

Board Self-Assessment Results Presented to the Board

Motion to Accept the Self-Assessment Results (SY 25-26) as presented by Anita Lepelstat made by Jim Muzikowski

Second: Gregory Brandis

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Executive Director's Evaluation

Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss the results of the Executive Director's evaluation as presented by Anita Lepelstat made by David Corso

Seconded: Rosanne Martin

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Closed Session Discussion

Motion to go back to Open Public Session made by David Corso

Seconded by Aase Hare

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion made to Accept the Board Evaluation of the Executive Director made by Asse Hare

Seconded by Sharon Hollander

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion to Approve Merit Pay for the Executive Director made by Gregory Brandis

Seconded by Roxanne Martin

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

FINANCIALS – Presented by David Block

 **Bill List for the Month of May**

 **Board Secretary's Report on the General Funds**

Motion to Approve the Bill List for the Month of May and the Board Secretary's Report on the General Funds made by Jim Muzikowski

Second by Roxanne Martin

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion to Adjourn:

Made by Anita Lepelstat at 7:22pm

Second: Sharon Hollander

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Minutes Approved by the Board at the August 25, 2026 Meeting.