

Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Education

Minutes – Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, September 30th, 2025

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

Valarie Smith (Board Secretary), Lorna Hassel (Head of School), Dawn Cobb-Fossnes (Middle School Principal), 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 pm by President Anita Lepelstat

Salute to the Flag

Action Agenda

Public Session:

Old Business

Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes by Dave Corso

Second by Gregory Brandis

Vote: All in Favor

New Business

Introduction to our new Board Student Representative

Dillan Moro was introduced to the Board as our new student representative.

Election of Board Members:

Motion to Go into Closed Session: made by Dave Corso

Second: Raul Orellana

Vote: All in Favor

Discussion in Closed Session

Motion to Return to Open Session: made by Gregory Brandis

Second: Anita Lepelstat

Vote: All in Favor

Aase Hare and Roxanne Martin were given the Oath of Office for their new 3-year Term.

NJSLA Presentation - Presented by Amy LaBarca

Informational & Discussion

Approval of Field Trip – Presented by Valarie Smith

6th Grade field trip to Wildwood Aviation Museum in Cape May - This is a new addition to our list of approved field trips

Motion: Raul Orellana

Second: Jim Muzikowski

Vote: All in Favor

New Hires for K-10 – Presented by Lorna Hassel & Stephen Nichol

Name	Title
Michaela Spain	7 th Grade ELA Teacher
Ada Roman	Re-Hire Para – Part Time
Alexa Schmitz	Middle School SP ED

Motion to approve K-8 New Hires as Presented by Lorna Hassel & Stephen Nichol made by Jim Muzikowski

Second by Anita Lepelstat

Vote: All in Favor

Yearly Contract for Legal Services Presented by Valarie Smith

Board approval of Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, P.C., as the district's legal counsel for the 2025-26 school year, in accordance with the terms outlined in the professional services agreement, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(a)(1) for professional services

Motion: Anita Lepelstat

Second: Dave Corso

Vote: All in Favor

Yearly Contract for Auditing Services Presented by David Block

Board approval the appointment of Jump, Perry and Company LLP of Toms River to provide seq., and as a professional service exempt from public bidding under N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(a)(1).

Motion: Dave Corso

Second: Jim Muzikowski

Vote: All in Favor

Property Tax Exemption – Presented by David Hespe

Lakewood Issue

Discussion focused on the issue that Lakewood Municipality is insisting that Ocean Academy provide documentation that the school is a public school in order to avoid paying property taxes. Ocean Academy is working with our legal team on this issue.

Update on Reauthorization – Presented by Valarie Smith

Valarie reported on the time line for reauthorization; There will be a visit by NJ DOE representatives on Friday, November 7th and then a virtual visit on December 17th. All schools up for reauthorization will get the final determination on or before February 1st, 2026.

High School Sports Agenda – Presented by Oscar Orellana

Oscar reported that we have built and continue to build upon a high school sports program. Overall, things are going well. Ocean Academy is partnering with Georgian Court University to use the University's physical educational facilities.

Monthly Financials: Presented by David Block

Motion to Approve the above cited financials as presented by Board Secretary David Block made by Jim Muzikowski

Second by Sharon Hollander

Vote: All in Favor

Board Comments: For those attending the NJ School Boards Association's convention, there will be a reception sponsored by Porzio's on October 22nd, Wednesday at Caesar's. More information will be sent as we move forward.

Announcements: None

Motion to Adjourn: Made by Dave Corso at 7:45 pm

Second: Gregory Brandis

Vote: All in Favor

Minutes Approved at the November 18th, 2025 Board Meeting