



LEEP Dual Language Academy Charter School
5323 5th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11220
www.LEEPacademies.org | 917-819-LEEP (5337)
*A Public Charter School Authorized by
the New York State Board of Regents*

**LEEP Dual Language Academy Charter School
Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 28, 2025**

Attendance/Roll Call:

- Trustees in attendance: Melody Sosa, Michael Kirkbride, David Estrada, and Alejandro Montoya.
- Trustees absent: Charles Sahm, Magdalena Varela-Hand, and Emily Fernandez.
- Employees Present: Johana Andujar, Luis Ventura, and Yaritza Mendez.
 - Bernard Washington, Diana Ferreira, Margarita Cheng, Ryan Miller from 4th Sector Solutions, and Kyle Pellerin from 4th Sector Solutions attended via video conference.

Call to Order

Board Chair Montoya called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Routine Business

Trustee Sosa made a motion to approve the meeting agenda, Trustee Estrada seconded it, and the motion passed. Trustee Kirkbride made a motion to approve the June 2025 minutes, Trustee Estrada seconded it, and the motion passed.

New Business / Principal's Report

Capital Project Updates

Johana Andujar, School Principal, began the principal's report by sharing some updates on our capital project. The construction team, led by DBI and Roberto Gutierrez, reached a major milestone this week: the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) was issued on Thursday, July 24th, approximately three weeks ahead of schedule. Construction is now 95% complete, with only minor cosmetic items remaining, including painting, lighting adjustments, and limited carpentry. The only substantial item still in progress is the installation of the new ADA lift connecting the bank hall to the 54th Street entrance, which is scheduled for completion this week.

This completion milestone gives us the greatest confidence that our new school facility will open in time for our August 20 school opening. The school team has outlined all necessary "must-haves" for day one operations, and the team is following up on these remaining details for school day opening. LEEP will continue to monitor the progress of the construction and production team to ensure that the school meets our ONE CAMPUS, ONE VISION goals. While the construction has progressed ahead of schedule, due to lead time and supply chain challenges, some scope items were not able to be installed during this phase of construction, primarily the installation of the new elevator.



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The DBI team will continue to support the final installation of the new elevator upgrades. These will NOT be complete until the winter holidays, as the installation requires that the elevator not be in use for an extended period of days.

As of today, DBI has indicated the project is currently tracking approximately 10% under budget, representing an estimated savings of \$1,000,000. These funds will allow us to reallocate resources toward much-needed infrastructure upgrades in the existing school spaces that were not originally included in the initial capital project scope. As the main project transitions into the closeout phase over the coming weeks, DBI will provide a detailed financial update outlining final savings and the proposed allocation of funds to support Day 2 items. LEEP will host a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Wednesday, October 8th, and invites the entire community to participate and LEEP will use the event as an opportunity to boost student enrollment.

Trustee Estrada toured the capital project space last Thursday and shared that the pantry has been expanded to accommodate the additional meal service that is required.

Student Cell Phone Policy

As per NY State Law, LEEP sent out a survey to staff and families regarding its Student Cell Phone Policy. The draft policy will be shared by August 1, 2025, and the final draft will be presented to the Board for approval in the August Board Meeting.

Academic Updates

Ms. Andujar shared the results from the final STEP Assessment. In just one year, LEEP more than doubled the percentage of students reading on grade level—from 20% in SY24 to 40% in SY25. LEEP continues its steady growth in Spanish reading achievement, with SY25 showing the most growth in LEEP’s history. LEEP made extraordinary gains in SY25, with the percentage of students reading on grade level jumping from 20% to 54%—a 34-point increase in just one year. After modest growth over three years, SY25 represents a transformative leap in reading achievement, more than quadrupling our starting point in SY22.

Family Engagement

Margarita Cheng, Director of Family Experience, shared some updates regarding Community Outreach. On July 10, 2025, LEEP participated in a Community Food Bank. On July 12, 2025, I participated in a Cultural Event at Ferry Plaza Park to support student recruitment.

Student Enrollment

Diana Ferreira, Data and Recruitment Manager, shared some updates on student recruitment, including canvassing the Sunset Park community and surrounding neighborhoods. With the support of a digital marketing consultant, LEEP has revamped its social media channels to



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support student recruitment. Ms. Ferreira shared that the LEEP Team has participated in many community events to support student recruitment. Through these efforts, the student recruitment team has been able to recruit 48 potential families who are interested in enrolling, and LEEP staff are following up.

Ms. Andujar shared that LEEP will have facilities ready to open a 4th Kindergarten homeroom should the student enrollment numbers require the space. Ms. Ferreira shared the current enrollment number for LEEP as 421 students (41 - Kindergarten, 80 - 1st Grade, 84 - 2nd Grade, 80 - 3rd Grade, 60 - 4th Grade, 76 - 5th Grade). Ms. Ferreira stated that LEEP will participate in National Night Out with the 72nd Precinct Community Council. LEEP is consulting with NextDoor Pictures to produce 3 recruitment videos. LEEP is also participating in Anthem Healthcare's Back to School Event.

Committee Reports

Academic & Accountability Committee Report

The Academic Committee Report did not meet this month.

Executive Committee Report

The Academic Committee Report did not meet this month.

Finance Committee Report

Ryan Miller from 4th Sector Solutions shared the preliminary audited financials for FY25. There are still outstanding non-cash transactions to record, but these should be close to what will be audited. LEEP is currently forecasting to end the year with a \$1.4M surplus. In regard to the four financial ratios that the state uses to measure financial strengths, LEEP is currently trending better on all four metrics. LEEP's billed enrollment of 428 is compared against the budgeted 452. This represents a 25-student variance from what was budgeted. Lastly, LEEP shows our billed enrollment for SPED of 85 students against our budgeted 107. This represents a 22-student variance from what was budgeted. Even with the negative decrease in student count, LEEP is still showing a surplus for SPED funding. Enrollment numbers will change slightly based on our per-pupil reconciliation to come in September.

Board Development

Chair Montoya shared that there are a few board members whose terms have expired and need to be renewed. Trustee Kirkbride made a motion to re-elect Alejandro Montoya to the Board, Trustee Sosa seconded, and the motion was approved to re-elect Chair Montoya to the Board for a 2-year term. Trustee Sosa made a motion to re-elect David Estrada's term, Trustee Kirkbride seconded, and the motion was approved to re-elect David Estrada to the Board for a 2-year term.



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Trustee Estrada made a motion to re-elect Melody Sosa's term, Trustee Kirkbride seconded, and the motion was approved to elect Melody Sosa to the Board for a 2-year term as a general Trustee and not the Parent Representative since her students have graduated. Trustee Kirkbride made a motion to re-elect Magdalena Varela-Hand's term, Trustee Estrada seconded, and the motion was approved to elect Magdalena Varela-Hand to the Board for a 2-year term. Trustee Estrada made a motion to re-elect Michael Kirkbride's term, Trustee Sosa seconded, and the motion was approved to elect Michael Kirkbride to the Board for a 2-year term.

Trustee Kirkbride made a motion to approve the future Board Meeting dates, Trustee Estrada seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Trustee Estrada inquired regarding Board Retreat dates. Chair Montoya shared that we would poll the Trustees on potential dates to host the Board Retreat. Trustee Estrada shared commentary regarding safety during dismissal and inquired about the concern of double parking by the bus stop and fire hydrant. He recommended communicating with families about the importance of traffic safety.

Principal Andujar shared that the LEEP was approved to close 54th Street between 5th and 6th Avenue for recess and dismissal. Ms. Andujar communicated that school staff, including Operations and Security Guards, are used during arrival and dismissal to promote safety.

Adjournment

Trustee Sosa motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Estrada seconded. The motion was passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.