



Donna J. Beasley Mission Statement

To support students in achieving a high school diploma and prepare them for college and career success through an individually paced, technology-based, flexibly scheduled program.

Minutes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Wednesday, August 28, 2024, at 4:00 PM at the school:

The chairman called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

1. **Roll Call:** Mark Stichter, Walter McDonald, Robert Hurst, Mrs. Padron (board member/parent liaison), Pastor Jhon Freddy Correa. All present.
2. Welcome visitors.
3. **Review of Public Notice- A notice was posted on the school's website.**
4. **Public Comments:** Anyone wishing to address the board is given 3 (three minutes). If the issue needs to be discussed, it will be placed on the next agenda to give the board time to ascertain all the facts before the consultation.

Speaker #1: Ms. Thomas.

Ms. Thomas asked if there was a final resolution to her emails to the board about her request for a stipend. Mr. Stichter stated that he “didn’t know if there was a final resolution, but he understood that a year or so ago when she took over, she received a raise at that time of about \$3,000”. Ms. Thomas explained that she wasn’t asking for help. She stated that she can fully do all the work she has been doing for the past six years. She stated that the school has always complied with ESOL for the past six years under her work. She explained that everything had gone up for registration. Mr. Stichter explained that staff had received a 3% raise this year. He stated that Mr. Renna and Dr. Torregrasso would work something out and get back to her as soon as possible. He also thanked her for all the years of work and dedication to the school. She stated that she had a letter to give to everyone that explained all she did and what she was asking for. She passed out the letter to everyone.

Speaker #2: Ms. Cannady

Ms. Cannady introduced herself to the board and explained her experience as an educator, school principal, and head of the district's charter school office. She explained that she works to help others if they are willing. She stated that contrary to what we may have heard, she has not attempted or desired to close DJB. She stated that she believes there is a great need for

DJB as an alternative school in this area. She stated that DJB has had many issues that need to be addressed, from record keeping to processes. She stated that there are statutes and DOE requirements that, at times, are just ignored at DJB. She explained that she had addressed several real issues before she retired, but she was sad to hear that things were just as bad, if not worse, than before she retired. She stated that she had been there to answer unofficially since she retired. She stated that she didn't want the board to think there weren't issues at the school. She stated that she did not look to close down the school. She recommended to the board that they meet with the three charter school administrators for the district. She stated that those charter school administrators are previous charter school principals and have a wealth of knowledge. She stated that they would be happy to meet with any board members or the whole board to share any of the existing deficiencies at the school. She stated that she would remain at the meeting so that if we had any questions, she would happily answer them.

Mr. Stichter thanked her for her introduction.

Dr. Torregrasso stated that the school hasn't been told about any deficiencies, and DJB hasn't been informed about any deficiencies coming up. He stated that we have been commended on the communication and effort made with the school district in the last two years. He stated that regarding record keeping, the whole problem is FOCUS; he stated he remembered when Ms. Cannady arrived here with Donna Schroll, suggesting that DJB never took attendance this year. "And Ms. Peters had to into Focus to show you". Ms. Cannady stated that what he just said was not accurate. Ms. Cannady pointed out that she had just met with the charter school coordinators yesterday, and they pointed out deficiencies and other issues at the school, including Dr. Torregrasso, who states that he gives the students recess during the school day, which is not the case. She repeatedly stated that there were issues at the school. A back-and-forth discussion ensued between Dr. Torregrasso and Ms. Cannady. The board chairman stopped the confrontation and moved to the next item on the agenda.

5. **Approval of the minutes from the Meetings:** June 5th annual meeting. Voted 5-0 in favor of approval.
6. **Consent agenda:** 8C (Financials June and July), 10C (School Improvement Plan), 10D (School Safety Plan), 10E (audit), 10i (board training up to date), 10J (Policy and Procedure

Manual), 10K (staging and reunification plan), 10L (staging plan), 10M (salary allocation).

Voted 5-0 to accept the consent agenda.

7. **Changes to agenda:** The board chairman suggested that we have a line item for future agendas for approval or changes to the agenda. He stated that he received a request to rearrange tonight's agenda. Ms. Chin's report and Dr. Torregrasso's evaluation were suggested to move next on the agenda. All agreed.
8. **Dr. Torregrasso's evaluation:** Mr. Renna had sent the evaluation to the board earlier for their review and comments. Mr. Renna reported that the report shows that his overall score is 2.245. Which, based on the scale, means improvement is needed. Mr. Hurst expressed his concern about the line item "parent's evaluation" on the report. It was asked if the zero (0) on the evaluation for parents was because no one returned it. Ms. Peters stated that the parent evaluation was mailed to all parents. Ms. Padron, a parent, said that she did not receive one. Ms. Peters stated that Ms. Padron didn't receive one because she was on the board. Mr. Hurst suggested that if everybody got them in the mail, they threw them away like junk. He suggested we complete the parent evaluation before making Dr. Torregrasso's evaluation official. He also stated that we tested 84%, which should be like a record because many of these kids are not easy to work with.

Mr. Renna explained that last year when the district came out to evaluate the school, they reported that one of DJB's weaknesses was that there were no parent evaluations. He stated that in 11 years, DJB only did parent evaluations once. Mr. Renna explained that he had emailed Dr. Torregrasso the first week of May with a sample parent evaluation and reminded him to send them out this year. When Mr. Renna was doing this evaluation, he asked Dr. Torregrasso to send him copies of the parent evaluations. Dr. Torregrasso never replied to his email. Dr. Torregrasso stated that they were handed out but never got any back.

Mr. McDonald expressed his concern about when he went to parent night when his kids were high school age, very few parents attended, and that wasn't an at-risk high school. He stated that he had met some of our parents several times. He said they seemed very nice, but he didn't see them responding. Mr. Renna stated that we will be able to eliminate the problem in the future. He stated that Ms. Chin is using a new program that allows us to put on Facebook

or email all parents with the evaluation so they can send it back electronically. Ms. Chin stated that we can send evaluations any time during the year. We can have them on the website and social media and have them available at all times. We can send them out whenever we want. It was suggested that Mr. Renna redo the evaluation and remove the parent line item for now. If and when we get some evaluations in, we can add it back into the formula.

Ms. Padron stated that, as a parent, the score on the evaluation is unfair. She said that she knows what Dr. Torregrasso does and what he brings to the school and that the score is unfair to him.

Mr. Renna presented the percentage tested at the other schools:

CITY OF PALMS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	56	48	104	2	52	85	MAINTAINING
PALM ACRES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	70	55	125	2	63	88	MAINTAINING
NORTH NICHOLAS HIGH SCHOOL	46	45	91	2	46	95	MAINTAINING
CORONADO HIGH SCHOOL	50	42	92	2	46	96	MAINTAINING
ISLAND PARK HIGH SCHOOL	48	44	92	2	46	95	MAINTAINING
DONNA J. BEASLEY TECHNICAL ACADEMY	60	52	112	2	56	84	MAINTAINING
NORTHERN PALMS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL	81	62	143	2	72	96	COMMENDABLE

He pointed out that the other at-risk schools had higher percentage ratings and that we were the lowest in the district at 84%. Dr. Torregrasso pointed out that Palm Aces was at 88%, which is closer to us. He said he would check with the other schools to see how they are getting scores in the 90%. Mr. Renna pointed out that we have a full-time testing coordinator who, in his opinion, is doing an excellent job. He said that based on the work he saw from Ms. Crews, he was expecting at least a 95% for our school. He stated we need to figure out what we are doing wrong and fix it. Ms. Crews stated that our kids refuse to take the test. She said they put their foot down and walked out the door.

Ms. Cannady addressed Dr. Torregrasso and stated your grade of an "I" was due to the fact that you had kids who weren't attending and were, therefore, not able to test because they really weren't attending. She stated that she had a conversation with Dr. Torregrasso about the need to disenroll and watch student attendance. She stated that some kids were here only a

couple of days during FTE and never any other days. She stated that as a principal, it is your goal to have 100% of your kids tested. She had 1,100 students at her school; she usually had 99%, but that was a different school.

Ms. Peters stated that the other problem is FOCUS, the district reporting system. She explained the problem with putting five classes into the system and the issues that must be addressed. Ms. Peters stated that we had to edit a lot of kids because FOCUS does not represent what is happening here.

Mr. Renna stated that we needed to finish Dr. Torregrasso's evaluation. It was decided to remove the "0" score and redo the assessment based on that. We decided to continue working on the evaluation as we have a year before we have to do another one. Mr. Renna was directed to redo the evaluation and send it back to the board. There was a vote to remove the parent element from this year's evaluation, and Mr. Renna will redo it and send it back to the board. Voted: 5-0 in favor. It was decided that we need to keep working on this instrument during the year and reevaluate each area. Ms. Cannady stated that we need to get 90% to get a commendable grade. She stated that if other at-risk schools are doing it, we should be trying to be at the top and not at the bottom of the at-risk schools. Item to be added to each agenda.

9. Fundraising

Ms. Chin introduced herself to the board. She stated that she had sent her report prior to the meeting and asked if there were any questions. Mr. Stichter asked if she could send it in larger print. It was explained to him that the email was just a link and that if he clicked on it, he would see a 15-page report of what had been done in the past two months. (see addendum)

Groundbreaking report: We had a successful groundbreaking event, and a report on it was sent to the board, along with our successes and what we need to improve in the future. (see addendum)

Awareness events: She reported that we are moving forward into our next event, the awareness events. The first one will be on November 19th, and the second one will be on March 20, 2025. Then, we'll have our full fundraising event in the fall of 2025.

Rotary: Lehigh Acres does a rotary; although they have no websites or grant applications, they have a Facebook page. Ms. Chin applied to Fort Myers Rotary and Fort Myers South for grant/funding. We would need a Rotary member to help us apply to Rotary International. She will contact Mr. Stichter to apply for the International Grant.

Pastor Correa asked about the report. He stated that he works with many groups and there are always measurables for accountability. He stated that we need fundraising, especially because of the new building. He asked what the goals of our fundraising are. He asked what we expected in six months. What are our targets? They need to be clear and specific. He gave an example of saying that in six months, we will bring in \$100,000 or something like that. He said we need a clear, targeted amount for the next 1-5 years. He asked that we ensure that information is in the next report. Ms. Chin agreed to provide a goal for the next three years.

Ms. Chin reported that we currently have several fundraisers; one is with a company we use called GiveBacks; we just sent out an email asking parents to download the app, which is a constant and will be a consistent giver. Parents download the app and sign up for anything that they spend. We automatically get funds back. They don't have to do anything extra. She explained that all everyone (parent, teacher, staff, or board member) has to download the app and fill out our information. Whenever we go shopping and purchase things at Walmart or other stores, the school gets a percentage of what they spend. It doesn't cost the subscriber anything. They need to sign up.

We use a program called GiveButter. Currently, two campaigns are established—a general fund and our Giving Tuesday. The goal of the latter is to raise \$100,000 by the end of the year through those targeted systems, which include needs for the new building and ongoing capital expenses.

We also have a GoFundMe account which is active and has been shared on social media and email.

She stated that there's an itemized list and that she could provide the link to the board if needed. We have updated our candid profile and are now at a gold standard. The next one is

platinum, which we should be able to get done by the end of next month. We are also now on Charity Navigator, which is specifically toward donors, and our score on that website is 81%, which should be 100% by the end of next month. These are all helping with building the background and story for our school. While we've been in existence for quite a while, our community really does not know Donna J Beasley Technical Academy, and so we need to keep telling our story and be able to have people invite and come on board. Our first awareness event is something other than a fundraising event. This is not a fundraising event but a relationship-building event. Ms. Chin and many board members and staff attended the NANOE training. NANOE suggested we educate our audience, which is what the awareness events are. Ms. Chin stated, "We are building relationships. In doing so, we create a buy-in into the school and find out what we're about. We could take potential donors' passions and align them with the school. In that way, they'll be able to give money. So, it's a whole process that goes on." She stated that she was hoping, by the end of three years, to raise over \$2 million for the school.

Joining Chambers. are part of the Southwest Florida Christian Chamber, the Above Board Chamber, and the Southwest Florida Inc. chambers. In the Southwest Florida Inc. Chamber, there is the Grow Network, which she will attend tomorrow. In addition to that, they are looking to open a chapter in Lehigh. Ms. Chin stated, "As we get our new facility, this would be a great opportunity to fulfill our promises to the community to have weekly meetings here." And should we take this opportunity to be the host and sponsor for that, Ms. Chin offered to lead this initiative. She also said that we would have to wait until the new building was opened so we have room to do that, and we should be able to do that successfully.

New tools to communicate. We have Constant Contact. We developed a database for the school that has over 1500 names. With that, we are able to send out emails, newsletters, surveys, and polls and gather more information that we need. We can tie it back into our donation platform, where we can send out things to align people with what we're raising our money for. Our goal should be to send out at least one quarterly newsletter, keeping our audience informed on events and the changes we have going on, how our students are doing, if we're adding any new programs, what our future entails, and keep our community in the loop. This way, we continue to tell our story, be able to be able to branch out, and build more partnerships within our community.

Lee Pitts show. Dr. Torregrasso stated that no students had developed since the last time. Ms. Peters stated it was a Dunbar-focused show. Ms. Chin stated the show had been syndicated on WINK and is now a daily program. DJB is not just a Lehigh Acres school but a Lee County Charter School for at-risk students. The Lee Pitts show would be another vehicle for getting our story out and creating community awareness. It was decided not to participate at this time.

Access to FOCUS: Ms. Chin requested access to the school's database so that she could access the parents' information to help her complete her job. It was decided that she could be granted access to Edgenuity, the school's academic platform, which contains the same information. Dr. Torregrasso or Ms. Peters will set her up with an account.

Ms. Padron asked that all board members be invited to participate in future events. She was referring to the groundbreaking, where she wasn't recognized as a board member when the shovels were given out.

10. Reports:

a. Student:

- a. Number of students. The 10-day count was 264. Dr. Torregrasso reported that his goal was 310 students and, hopefully, 315.
- b. Busing: We tried to keep all our bus stops for the first ten days. We are putting over 150 miles a day on the bus. They will identify stops so that students can walk to and be picked up in groups instead of one or two students at each stop. Students will walk about a mile to a bus stop. Between 35 and 50 students ride the bus daily.
- c. Open house report: The school had two open houses. They had total of 9 both nights combined. Ms. Peters reported that our parents don't come to the school. A lot of our kids are over 18. When you call a parent for a meeting, they say, no, he's 18. He can handle it himself. That's what we hear—lots of homeless kids.
- d. School grade and Percentage of students tested: Dr. Torregrasso reported that we had a maintaining grade, and 84% of our students were tested. It was stated that last year, Mr. Beckman asked the school to adjust the enrollment, but we didn't get them all in. It was stated that drove our percentage down. Dr. Torregrasso said he

would like to get a commendable grade next year. Ms. Cannady stated that we must test at least 90% to get a commendable grade. Dr. Torregrasso also stated that learning gains were a big part of our school's overall grade.

- e. Staff training (discipline): In the first week of staff training we had a number of trainings. One was using the RCD/Larry Thompson program that the school has adopted over the last three years and is part of our SIP. Dr. Torregrasso expressed interest in having some more training in January.
 - f. Report of our first official summer school. No funding. We spent about \$13,000 on staff and busing. We did not receive any additional funding from the state. There were 74 students enrolled. We had two teachers, and the room was packed. It helped kids graduate. We decided to continue offering summer school as it was a great help for our students.
 - g. Actual graduation numbers/percentage. Twenty-two students graduated with certificates of completion, and 39 graduated with a high school degree.
- b. Staffing update:
- a. The number of staff at the beginning of the year. Dr. Torregrasso reported that we had the same number.
 - b. New staff members. We added some new people: Ms. Chin, the Director of Fundraising, and Ms. Felton, an English teacher. He reported that Mr. Lambert had passed away, and we had replaced him with a new trades teacher, Mr. Derosky. He hasn't started yet, but his background check was completed. We hope to have him start sometime in September. Dr. Torregrasso also mentioned that the district, through Mr. Managan, helped us get \$55,000 worth of electrical items for our trades program.
 - c. Update on Teacher certification issues and plans for ESOL and certifications. The new trades teacher will complete the district's certification program. It was reported that all staff are aggressively working and proactive in pursuing teacher certification and ESOL certification. Staff members are taking college classes.
 - d. Update of PTO time. Mr. Stichter pointed out that this was discussed and decided upon at the last board meeting in February. The complete report can be found in the February minutes. He also reported that it was agreed at the February meeting that Dr. Torregrasso would look further into this and prepare a report for the board

at the June meeting. Mr. Stichter pointed out that Dr. Torregrasso did not prepare a report at the June meeting; he said that this is something that we can reconsider in the future.

11. Reports:

- a. School purchase
 1. Sale: tabled
 2. Cost: tabled
 3. Progress with construction: possible ribbon cutting date: tabled
 4. Concerns: parking once construction begins. Dr. Torregrasso reported that he spoke with Pastor Nick from the church next door, and they are going to allow us, at no cost to allow our students park there, from like seven to noon every day, because we have like 20-30 cars, and there's not that many spots over here.
- b. Financials: Review and approve June and July 2024 financials on the consent agenda.
- c. Review and approve the new budget for the fiscal year. Mr. Stichter asked if everyone had a chance to review the proposed budget and if there were any questions. Dr. Torregrasso said yes, he had a couple of things to talk about regarding the budget. He said, first, that Ms. Chin's position is costing the budget about \$80,000, and his concern is that Mr. Renna says she only answers to him. He stated, "That being the case, I believe she should be an employee of his company, not ours. She's only going to answer to him, and I don't see how our company is paying expense that only answers to him from his company. So, I think that's something that we need to look further at. We need to really watch our budget. The other thing I want to mention is that the two lines that really concern me are Mr. Renna and Ms. Chin together; it's about a quarter of a million dollars on a budget. My concern is moving forward with our, you know, our loan as it is; I'm not sure we can continue to have both of them in the budget."

He said he hopes Ms. Chin and Mr. Renna will raise a million dollars in June. Torregrasso states, "But my concern is that, between them both, they need to raise \$250,000 as close as possible to it to alleviate the stress it's putting on the budget." He also stated that he agreed with Pastor Correa earlier about having some

accountability regarding making sure that this is happening, but that's the only two things he wanted to mention.

He stated that he is watching every penny again. He stated that our monthly rent went from \$5,600 to \$22,000. He stated that they work very hard to get those number of kids in the school.

Mr. Hurst stated that he thinks if Ms. Chin is reaching her goals, then we're good.

Dr. Torregrasso stated, "Absolutely. I hope she hits a million dollars by June. I say, we need it."

Mr. Hurst expressed concern about raising the money. He stated that raising \$1MM by June is not a realistic number.

Dr. Torregrasso, once again, references that Mr. Renna's company and Ms. Chin's \$250,000 hitting the budget was a lot for a very small company. He said, "We're a very small company." Mr. Hurst stated that we need to get back to goal setting. Hurst stated, "We set some realistic goals because I think Ms. Chin is very important to what we're doing."

Mr. McDonald stated that there is no expression of a company that doesn't have an advertiser. Nothing happens! Mr. McDonald said that Dr. Torregrasso hadn't given it a shot. He stated that he has been on every one of these Zoom meetings. He talked about his bosses asking him how he is so successful when he is disorganized. He stated that he was/is a scattergun but successful. He stated, "When I'm on these Zoom meetings, all these spreadsheets and all this data and all this, I'm like, I wish I had an ounce of the organization that Ms. Chin brings to us. We've only just begun."

The board decided that Ms. Chin would report directly to the board and work closely with Mr. Renna. Because she is working with finance, Mr. Renna will be her direct supervisor.

Mr. Stichter asked if there were any more comments or questions regarding the budget. He asked for a motion to approve the budget. It was voted 5-0 to approve the budget. Mr. Renna stated that he would send this to the district in the morning because it has to be there by the 30th. He also stated that he would send it to the school to post on the website.

12. Pastor Correa had to leave, so before he left, there was a quick discussion on new board members, especially someone with an accountant background. Mr. McDonald stated that we really needed an accountant on the board. Everyone decided to check to see if they knew someone with an accounting background. Ms. Cannady stated that one of the concerns of the charter school office was that we did not have enough local representation on the board. Pastor asked if we had a job description.

13. New/Old items:

- a. Item 7b from the June 5th meeting (gift cards). Mr. Renna asked Pastor Correa if his church had donated the gift cards to the school, as reported in the minutes from June. He stated that no, this hadn't been done. He stated that he had mentioned that day that we could create an initiative from the teachers or the school. He explained that we had to name the initiative. We need to market it there, and once he receives it he will sell the idea to his board, collect the cards, and bring them to the school. For example, "best attendance."

He explained that you mark a date and say, by December 15, we are going to gift 10 \$25 gift cards, and then Faith Lutheran Church will fundraise or provide those cards through that initiative. Then you can say another initiative: best scores by November, whatever. He stated that you need to have somebody to do that. He stated that he is still waiting for that.

Our last minutes state that Ms. Peters and Dr. Torregrasso will work with you on this. The board requested that, since this hasn't happened yet, they work with Pastor Correa to complete it.

- b. Item 7c from the June 5th meeting (flyers). Not addressed
- c. Item 7g from the June 5th meeting (certification/ESOL: Cox, Hagan, Peters, Lincke, others?) This has already been covered previously in staff reports.
- d. Item 8b1 from the June 5th meeting (security system): Mr. Renna was supposed to get with Mr. Carballo and work on this. It has not happened yet. The board would ask that he get this done before the next meeting.
- e. Item (Tim Tebow) update: Mr. Stichter reported receiving an email recently asking about our interest in Mr. Tebow. He stated that it is beyond our financial means unless we get a sponsor to cover this cost. He said that he had a conversation with Ms. Chin about the November awareness event and who we might get to be speakers. Ms. Chin reported that she has been in contact with Sherry Armstrong from Fox4 News and the sheriff. She has not confirmed either as of yet.

14. New business:

- a. Lawsuit against the district: Mr. Renna presented the case for this to the board. According to our attorney, we are out \$1,176,544 because they did not include charter schools in the half-penny sales taxes that they received since 2018. A group of charter schools sued the Broward County School Board. The charter schools won. Our board voted 4-0 to approve entering a contract with our attorney: no fees up front, 11% of the settlement; if unsuccessful, the school will have to pay \$8,730 for legal fees.
- b. Joe's recent emails and text messages:

Mr. Renna expressed concerns about the tone of some of Dr. Torregrasso's emails and text messages. Mr. Renna stated that Dr. Torregrasso said in his text messages he was going to call for Ms. Chin's contract. He continues to say that she should be fired. Mr. Renna explained that some things he says when angry jeopardize the school; it's a legal issue. Mr. Renna advised the board to talk to him about what he's putting in writing because it really can hurt the school.

Mr. McDonald stated he could only comment on one of the messages and that he sent a blistering comment to Dr. Torregrasso, and he wasn't going to repeat it. Mr. McDonald stated that he was really disappointed.

Dr. Torregrasso stated that he was disappointed, too. He stated that if you want to open up that Pandora, it's up to you. He stated that Mr. Renna needed to practice what he preaches. He stated that he didn't believe that he said anything that would jeopardize the school in any lawsuits or anything like that. He stated that he was a direct person and had been asked to be nice. He stated that he has been nice for about 11 and a half years.

Dr. Torregrasso stated that he was a good person. He stated that he was professional, but he couldn't be nice all the time. He stated that he is honest. He stated that the board hired him to open the school, to grow the school, to protect the school, and to offer his insights. He stated that his insight is this: "we've had a lot of people promise the school a lot of things no one has really delivered". He stated that he was very concerned about what he had seen over the last couple of months (referring to Ms. Chin). He said he was sorry that he didn't agree with Mr. Renna and Mr. McDonald.

He stated that, she's (Ms. Chin) is here, and he hoped the best for her. He stated to Ms. Chin that he sincerely meant that. He stated that he hopes she just knocks it out of the ballpark.

He stated that as far as his emails and text messages, he has never said anything that would put this school in any type of legal liability. He stated that he was direct.

Mrs. Renna told Dr. Torregrasso that he would stop talking when he got angry. We don't get any calls from him, and there is no communication other than emails. he answers directly to the emails sent from others, but emails are sent asking for information, which he doesn't provide.

Dr. Torregrasso stated that it was not true. "That's not true." He asked how often have these individuals picked up the phone and tried to call him.

Mr. Stichter stated that phone calls are not recorded, but before he could finish his statement, he was interrupted by Dr. Torregrasso. He stated that as far as communication goes, he was there with communication. He continues to state that what

we needed to understand was that they are very, very busy here. He showed the board a paper and stated that this is just what he has been doing this month of August, besides the school matters. He stated that we flood him with emails, and he hears people call us a team. Dr. Torregrasso pointed out that Mr. Renna has been with this company almost 12 years now. He stated that during that time, he had never seen Mr. Renna make the effort to come and know our community, our students, our staff, and our culture. He stated that Mr. Renna comes out maybe once or twice a year.

Dr. Torregrasso stated that if we wanted to be part of our team, it would take more than a slew of emails. He stated that we need to come and know us and our community. He stated that going on social media and doing our slew of emails is not being a part of our team. He stated that is to ensure we're writing as many grants as possible. He stated that as far as communication goes, he responds as best he can. He stated that some of the emails were about fundraising. He stated that he had said this before: if he had that time to do the fundraising, he would do it. We wouldn't have hired Ms. Chin. He also stated that when people are sending him emails and giving him agendas of things to do for fundraising, on top of everything else he does, it gets frustrating and disappointing that it seems like our voices are falling on deaf ears because of how busy they are here. Dr. Torregrasso stated "If you want to do the fundraising, we will help you the best we can, but that's on you guys. You created the position. We will help you the best we can, but you can't come in here expecting to give us an agenda every week, especially now, the beginning of the year; we're pretty busy.

Mr. Renna stated that we expect answers to emails sent three, four, five, and six times. Mr. Renna pointed out that our engineer has been trying to get information about the lift station for four days. Mr. Renna asked if anyone had taken care of this. Mr. Renna pointed out the frustration individuals are feeling; our engineer and our accountant are feeling. He pointed out that there were checks in drawers totaling over \$8,000 that had been there for six or seven weeks and had not been deposited. He pointed out the fact that a check (\$5,000) that Dr. Torregrasso deposited in 2023 was just deposited again for the second time. He stated that our accountant is calling him to ask what is going on.

Dr. Torregrasso explained that Mrs. Lambert was ill and had missed a lot of work. Once again, he stated that he was very, very busy, and he thought he could expect some help from Mr. Renna when he asked if these checks had been deposited already.

Mrs. Renna stated that they notified Dr. Torregrasso that the checks had yet to be deposited the same day. He also stated that after notifying Dr. Torregrasso that the checks had not been deposited, it took him another three weeks to deposit the four checks totaling over \$8,000.

Mr. Renna stated that was the frustration that we were feeling. He also stated that when we piss Dr. Torregrasso off, he sends emails like, "As far as your girlfriend is concerned, this is what I think we should do." Dr. Torregrasso stated that it was a joke. Mr. Renna pointed out that it was inappropriate and unprofessional.

Mr. Renna pointed out that Dr. Torregrasso had planned to send the governor a letter about Ms. Cannady. He was convinced not to send it. Mr. Renna said: "but the point is when you get angry, you write things, and you say things, and you do things that put the school in jeopardy, that hurt us, and that's what I'm saying,"

Mr. Renna stated that when he got mad at Ms. Chin, he sent those incredibly nasty text messages, which were totally inappropriate from a professional point of view. Mr. Renna stated that he is asking that before he does those kinds of things, he sit back, relax, sleep on it for the night, and then come back.

Ms. Cannady stated that Dr. Torregrasso said that his actions had no legal ramifications. She stated that being the executive director for LCD, she does have legal coverage. She spoke about defamation and stated to Dr. Torregrasso that when he sends a letter or attempts to send a letter about her reputation, that is a legal cause. She stated that she has a very good reputation and that she has been nothing but respectful and professional. She stated that she had seen Dr. Torregrasso's anger. She references the time when Dr. Torregrasso went to her office and got angry. He was getting ready to get up and leave; she stated that she asked him to calm down. "We worked it out." Ms. Cannady stated that if something like that continues, "there will be legal recourse." She

stated that she has an attorney. She stated that it was very disheartening to hear that things were being said about her that weren't accurate or true and defamed her reputation.

- c. Approve School Improvement Plan (SIP): approved on consent agenda.
- d. Approval of school safety plan: approved on consent agenda.
- e. Approve Audit (letter) and actual Audit: approved on consent agenda.
- f. A Bob Lambert dedication to the Trades building with plaque: Mr. Stichter thought it was a good idea, but we are going to table this to have time to come up with other things that we can do. He stated that a plaque would be a good start.
- g. Governance conference Saturday, September the seventh: Mr. Renna reminded the board that there was a free conference for governing boards in West Palm Beach next month and encouraged anyone to attend either in person or virtually. He said that the event was taking place at one of the best trade charter schools in Florida.
- h. Use of property by other groups. Mr. Stichter pointed out that everyone has received a copy of the district's guidelines on the use of school property. We decided to follow these guidelines and that anyone using our facilities would have to provide the school with proof of liability coverage that names the school as an additional insured. This was in reference to the Rise church next door that is using the facility on Wednesday evenings. Ms. Cannady stated that there are contracts that we could get from the district to use whenever someone is going to use our property. She said that even if you let someone use it for free there is a legal liability if someone gets hurt. Dr. Torregrasso will have discretion to the fees based on these guidelines and he will make sure that a contract is in place and all legal/insurance documents are on file at the school.
- i. All board members are up to date on training. Approved on consent agenda.
Pastor: 8/18/23 - must complete refresher by 8/18/26
Ms. Padron: 4/21/23 - must complete a refresher by 4/21/26.
Mr. Hurst: 6/8/23 - refresher by 6/8/26
Mr. Stichter: 9/7/22 - refresher by 9/7/25
Mr. McDonald: 9/20/22 - refresher by 9/20/25
- j. Approve updates to the Policy and Procedures Manual. Approved on consent agenda.
- k. Approve Staging and Reunification Plan. Approved on consent agenda.
- l. Approval of Salary allocation/schedule. Approved on consent agenda.

m. New board members with educational leadership experience: There was a discussion that we needed to make an effort to add more board members. It was suggested that one should have an accounting background, a politician, another an education background. It was suggested that Dr. Torregrasso contact Ms. Sardina from TCAA. It was suggested that someone contact Pastor Nick and Pastor Correa to see if they might know someone that might be a good fit. Ms. Cannady suggested that we look at our parent list to try and see who has some of those experiences that we are looking for

15. Board Member Matters:

a. Ms. Padron: School meals for the students. There was a discussion of how important it is for our students to get a good meal. Mr. Cannady stated that he was the SRO at North Nichols, a similar school to ours. He said they set up a pantry where kids could go and pick up food to take home. He stated that many of our kids are only eating right if they get fed at school. Mr. Renna will contact different vendors to see what is available. When would the students be able to get this food? Mr. Renna will present this information to the board at the next meeting. He also stated that companies would pay us rent to use our kitchen. There was a discussion about the Harry Chapin food bank. It was decided that Mr. Stichter would work with Dr. Torregrasso and Ms. Peters so that he could get in touch with his contact at the food bank. One concern brought up was that we will have to consider our school schedule as we no longer do lunch or recess. Ms. Cannady suggested contacting the district for resources to help our students. In particular, she spoke about United Way, which also provides personal items and clothing for students. Ms. Chin said that she has been in contact with the Director of Catholic Charities and the ED asked Ms. Chin to visit to see how they could help our students.

16. Mr. Stichter stated that he would like on behalf of the Board of Directors extend our deep and heartfelt appreciation to the entire staff and especially to Ms. Peters team for your excellent results during this last 10-day count. He said that we appreciate all that you do.

17. Ms. Padron stated that she had one more concern that she wanted to bring to the board's attention. She stated that she was not here to attack anybody. She stated that when we're handling food that is not ours, we have to practice safety and hygiene. When we're making lemonade, we do not use tap water. We use filtered water. When we're handling food, we use tongs or plastic gloves to handle food. We don't use our dirty hands to handle other people's food.

She stated that a lot of food was wasted after the groundbreaking because a staff member and people who were here watched the food being inappropriately handled. Ms. Cannady stated that if you open that door with food, the Health Department gets involved. We have inspections of like, I would have the inspection of the kitchen, but then also, when I had concessions, I had to have the inspection there. But when so bringing in food does create other things, and things like, she's addressing there, right? Safety, yeah.

18. Next board meetings: November 6th, February 26th, June 18th

19. Adjournment: