

ELMWOOD VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

# MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026

EVCS HERTEL CAMPUS

**TRUSTEES PRESENT:** *Jacob Piorkowski; Ed Castine; Ken Gholston; George McLean; Nicca Lebeda; Owen VanKerkhove; Patti Anderson; Jennifer Bernacki-Smith; Michael Larry; Kathy Franklin-Adams; Lacle Brumfield; Jason Lang; Anna Sotelo-Peryea*

**TRUSTEES EXCUSED:** *Mimi Barnes Coppola*

**TRUSTEES ABSENT:** *Matt Ryan*

**OTHERS PRESENT:** *Danielle Bruno, EVCS Director of Schools; Liz Evans, EVCS Director of Operations; Anne Wechsler, EVCS Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Sara Carona, Hertel Principal; Christine Cleary, Days Park Principal; Lisa Kirisits, Kirisits & Associates; and the following members of the Hertel school faculty – Katrina Di Gennaro, Eve Johnstone, Katey Syracuse, Alec Siskar, Melanie Tsujimoto, Erica Lindo, and Sean Powers.*

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Jacob Piorkowski called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

## 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the Elmwood Village Charter School Board of Trustees meeting held on February 21, 2026 were presented. There were no changes.

*Owen moved that the minutes be approved, and Ed seconded. Approved unanimously.*

## 3. CHAIR REPORT

Succession planning is going well and continues. EVCS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration is Friday. Hertel school met with SUNY, much appreciation for Hertel Principal Sara Corona and understanding of the course charted to move forward. Attended constructive round table with SUNY at Buffalo State. Jake spent day at Hertel interacting with students and staff. Scheduling day

at Days Park in near future. Board Training with SUNY to be scheduled ahead of renewals, in keeping with past practices.

## 4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Reviewed final financial statements for the eight months ended February 28, 2026, with discussion and analysis presented by Lisa Kirisits.

Budget process continues.

*Lacole moved that the financial report be approved, and Jen seconded. Approved unanimously.*

Lisa Kirisits discussed the need for a second principal loan payment, in addition to the payment previously discussed, prior to closing on the school's mortgage refinancing. A resolution was presented and discussion ensued.

*Ed moved that mortgage refinancing resolution be approved, and Owen seconded. Approved unanimously.*

## 5. DIRECTORS' REPORT

The Directors' Report was prepared jointly by Danielle Bruno, Liz Evans, and Anne Wechsler.

### DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS:

#### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

- SUNY visit at Hertel Campus
- School leaders attended SUNY roundtable at Buffalo State with SUNY Trustee
- Midyear conference completion
- Continued collaboration with Instructional Leadership Team to build on academic gains
- Continued monitoring of students receiving interventions through MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)
- Midyear academic report with AEC \
- Appreciation of Sharon DeTamble for exceptional effort in planning 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

### STAFF SNAPSHOT:

PROMOTIONS: 1

Substitute to IA (Certified)

EXITS: 0

### DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:

STRATEGIC PLAN KEY IMPERATIVE: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

*Student Performance Goal*

***Academic Achievement*** (student performance goal)

*NYS assessment proficiency in ELA and Math*

- *8 percentage point increase in ELA (Percent Increase: Hertel - 26.5%, Days Park - 16.7%)*
- *8 percentage point increase in Math (Percent Increase: Hertel - 26.1%, Days Park - 16.8%)*

- Hertel - based on mid-year STAR results, we put together a plan to provide grades 3-5 with additional time and support for Math. Coaching team built a data-based scope and sequence for spiraled review of priority standards for each grade.
- Trimester 2 Report Cards go out on 3/27
- Academic Excellence Committee will report out

*Excellent Teaching (teacher performance goal)*

- *STAR Student Growth Percentile (SGP) of 65 in both ELA and Math*
- *STAR Proficiency increase of at least 10 percentage points in ELA and Math*
- *All teachers who have been at EVCS for 2 or more years will have attained mastery of excellent teaching strategies, defined as 80% achievement on the Strategies for Excellent Teaching Rubrics for all 5 arcs*

#### COACHING

- Practice Clinic: Show Call (mandatory for new teachers)
- Provide all teachers with feedback around Arc 5 of Strategies for Excellent Teaching: Show Call
- Instructional Rounds focus: Show Call & Engage all Students and Habits of Discussion
- Select teachers are participating peer observations (some cross-campus observations)
- 3/20 - ½ day PD and ½ day recording. Topics include: NYS ELA, Math & Science Administration, Insight Survey, campus specific sessions
- Coaching PD: Continue virtual coaching with our LEAP math coach

#### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

##### OPERATIONS/FACILITIES

**Hertel:** Replacement of an HVAC unit on the first floor was necessary and was undertaken in early March.

**Days Park:** Roof over staff room persistently leaks. Facilities Manager is getting quotes for solutions for replacing that portion and it will be included in the 26-27 budget.

**Shared:** We held a community meeting at EVCS Days Park and had attendees from the Days Park Block Club and the Allentown Association. The designer and representatives from EVCS shared designs, timeline and process.

##### ADMISSIONS/STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Current enrollments are below target at Days Park and are on target at Hertel.

Applications continue to be submitted at double the rate of last year, ahead of the lottery on April 15th. Our first open house is this Saturday, March 21st at Hertel from 10-12. Days Park open house is scheduled for March 28th. Some outreach efforts undertaken by EBC on streaming broadcast outlets have yielded bumps in applications.

#### TECHNOLOGY/DATA

Budget planning for hardware and software purchases is wrapping up and will be included in the 26-27 budget proposal. EVCS is continuing to purchase Chromebook devices for students ahead of the end-of-life cliff coming up in 2029 for devices purchased during COVID.

Accountability reports have been reviewed and submitted to our authorizer, SUNY CSI.

Liz reviewed the AI policy, sent to trustees at the end of last week. Discussion ensued.

*Mike motioned to approve School AI Use & Student Data Privacy Policy, seconded by Ed. Approved unanimously.*

#### GRANTS/FINANCE

GRANTS: Nothing new to report.

#### FINANCE:

First budgeting meeting held today, 2/11/26

EVCS staff are holding more independent work sessions on budget changes for the coming year and will bring changes to Kirisits for inclusion in the 26-27 budget for the board's review. It is due by the end of the fiscal year and must be voted on by the June 2026 BOT meeting.

#### HR UPDATES

Implementation of the new HR/payroll system is continuing with twice weekly implementation and training meetings.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Liz Evans, Christine Cleary, Sara Corona, and Jake Piorkowski attended a SUNY CSI roundtable to talk with school leaders and board members about challenges they're facing. Our local SUNY trustee Eunice Lewin was in attendance, and we invited her to tour the school.

*Respectfully submitted Respectfully submitted by Danielle Bruno, Liz Evans, and Anne Wechsler – March 18, 2026*

## 6. 2025-2026 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

School Principals presented STAR Proficiency data for school year 2025-2026 middle of year proficiency numbers, student growth percentile, student suspensions, and student attendance for both Hertel and Days Park.

## 7. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

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|--|---|
| a. <b>Academic Excellence Committee</b>      | Covered in Academic Excellence report.                        |
| b. <b>Space Planning Committee</b>           | Nothing additional to report.                                 |
| c. <b>Finance Committee</b>                  | Nothing further.  |
| d. <b>Nominating Committee</b>               | Encouraging recommendations for Hertel parent representative. |
| e. <b>Development and Advocacy Committee</b> | Shuttered until needed.                                       |
| f. <b>EVCS Culture Committee</b>             | Scheduling next meeting.                                      |

## 8. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION REPORTS

- DAY PARK: Planning Glow Dance “20 Years and Still Glowing Strong”. Revisiting offering parking for Allentown Art Festival as fundraiser.
- HERTEL CAMPUS: Met jointly with Days Park. Planning Chiavetta’s Chicken Sale and outdoor movie for spring activity with families. Finished preparing baskets for raffle for Evening with EVCS. Planning new Teacher Appreciation in collaboration with Administration. New initiative in collaboration with Sports Department.

## 9. OLD BUSINESS

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary planning continues.

## 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEW BUSINESS

Next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 15 at Days Park.

Projected 2026 meeting dates:

*May 20 (H); June 17 (D); July 15 (H).*

## 10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Mike moved to enter executive session, seconded by George. Motion carried.*

Discussion ensued.

*Lacole moved to exit executive session, seconded by Owen. Motion carried.*

*Ed moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Kathy seconded. Approved unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Anna Sotelo-Peryea  
EVCS Board Secretary*