



## **KIPP New Orleans Schools Board Retreat Minutes: January 16, 2026**

A public meeting of the Board of Directors (the Board) of KIPP New Orleans Schools (KNOS) was held on Friday, January 16, 2026, at KIPP East – 6519 Virgilian Street, New Orleans, LA 70126. The meeting was also hosted remotely via a Team link.

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m. after board members returned from a guided classroom visit.

The following members were present: Michael Balascio, Sherice Clark (arrived at 9:25 a.m.), Barrett Green, Reggie Jackson, Ileana Ledet (departed at 1:10 p.m.), Cianjanae Purvis, Ravi Sangisetty, Jordan Vaughn, Larry Washington (arrived at 10:14 a.m.) and Danielle Willis (departed at 1:00 p.m.).

The following member was absent: Jay Mussell

The following members of KNOS staff were present: Rhonda Kalifey-Aluise, CEO; Todd Purvis, CAO; Katie Walmsley, CFO, Towana Pierre-Floyd, Managing Director of High Schools; and Kristen Chawla, Director of Engagement and Events.

The following guests were present: Joanna Belcher, KIPP Foundation and Stephen Rosenthal (departing at 12:05 p.m.), former KNOS board member.

The meeting was hosted virtually via Teams and there were no remote guests in attendance.

### **Welcome**

Ms. Willis welcomed everyone to the meeting following a school tour hosted by the school leaders.

### **Governance and Nominating Committee Report**

Mr. Balascio notified the board that Shana Handy is no longer eligible to serve on the board as the parent representative due to a change in circumstances. The board will actively start the process of filling this vacancy and Mr. Balascio will keep the board updated regarding the status.

Ms. Balascio encouraged members to engage with Stephen Rosenthal throughout the retreat in hopes of recruiting him to rejoin the board.

Ms. Willis introduced a motion to elect Michael Balascio and Reggie Jackson both to a second term. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Sangisetty and seconded by Ms. Ledet. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

### **KNOS Highlights**

Ms. Pierre Floyd and Mr. Purvis shared current highlights which include Frederick A. Douglass High School earning an “A” letter grade, schools seeing statistically significant increases in math fluency, literacy results putting KNOS at the top performer in growth across all KIPP networks, TNTP data reflecting strong school Academic programs were also highlighted, including the THRIVE, robotics, and debate.

### **Current Landscape and Context**

Ms. Kalifey-Aluise shared an update about the current population (and revenue) decline across the city which is significantly impacting enrollment declines across schools in New Orleans and referenced several recent articles that support this. Estimates suggest that

thousands of seats much be removed from the system to restore sustainability. In addition, high student mobility undermines stability, achievement, and school culture. Other challenges include federal funding losses, stagnant state MFP funding, rising costs, and city-wide fiscal instability. Ms. Belcher shared examples from other KIPP regions that have either closed or merged schools due to similar concerns.

**Executive Session**

At 10:25 a.m. Ms. Willis introduced a motion to address a legal matter in an Executive Session. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Washington and was seconded by Mr. Balascio. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

The board returned to the regular session at 12:48 p.m.

**School-by-School Scorecard**

With the remaining time Mr. Purvis presented the KNOS School Performance Report Card, asking board members to read and share their outstanding school-specific or general KNOS questions. Members engaged in a conversation about schools and heard about a few highlights as well as challenges across campuses.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

In Ms. Willis' absence, Mr. Jackson introduced a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:20 p.m. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Green and seconded by Mr. Balascio. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved by:

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Kristen Chawla

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Danielle Willis, Board President