



Sela PCS Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 9, 2026

Via Zoom

5:00 pm

Board Members In Attendance:

Alen Amini
Ezra Karger
Amberine Huda
Bryce Jacobs
Tara Cuevas
King Adjei-Frimpong
Nathan Groce
Marisa Tersey

Others in Attendance

Rachel Sussman

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm EST. No public comment for this session, but anyone can reach out to selapcsboard@gmail.com or any individual Board member.

Approval of Various Items: Alen Amini

Upon motion and second, all Board members present voted to approve the agenda as presented, except for Marisa Tersey, who joined following this vote.

Upon motion and second, all Board members present reviewed and voted to approve meeting minutes from the [June 2026 Meeting](#), except Marisa Tersey and Nathan Groce, who abstained.

Upon motion and second, all board members present voted to approve Ezra Karger and Amberine Huda for a new term, except Marisa Tersey, who joined following this vote.

Head of School Update: Rachel Sussman

- Summer Planning:
 - Leadership Retreat: The board contributed to a breakfast for all staff and included much-needed supplies. Ms. Sussman thanks everyone and particularly Tara Cuevas for their engagement and support.
 - At the instructional leadership team work sessions, the SLT reviewed the SY26-27 JDs and expectations. They also reviewed end-of-year data, what assessments we're using, how we are assessing students, and planning for the summer.
 - The EmpowerK12 Math Acceleration Grant is ongoing, as it is allowing the Math team to work with them and TNTTP to codify math outcomes for K-5.
 - Summer Institute for Garden-Based Teaching is happening in July and focuses on how to incorporate gardening into the curriculum for the year.
- Enrollment Updates:
 - We have a total of 183 students fully enrolled (compared to 210 last year), and 59 students are partially enrolled. 15 students have not begun the enrollment process, totalling 255 students who are either fully enrolled or are in the pipeline.



- Over the summer, we expect there to be continued movement with families that have heard about us and are enrolling as new families, or those that have gotten off the waitlist at other schools and therefore would not be enrolling.
- Recruitment/Retention Strategies:
 - Sela has been working hard to retain families that were enrolled this last school year. For those who are partially enrolled, specific strategies are being implemented.
 - We would need 9 more students to meet our target, but we do have a 5-student contingency for our budget. Those funds are released after Count Day.
 - Ms. Maya and others are leading several family engagement activities later this month for new and returning families.
 - For parents on the board, for families who are on the fence about their enrollment, it's very helpful to have conversations with them and let Ms. Sussman know about anything that may come from those.
 - Other strategies include social media ads, religious and daycare partnerships, and lawn signs.
- Academic Updates:
 - MAP Growth (including ASPIRE floor and targets)
 - K-2 growth: performing better in Math than in ELA. There are two groups of students that are performing at or above the target, in particular Hispanic/Latino students in Math and White students in ELA.
 - Sela is paying close attention to the economically disadvantaged subgroups as they fall below the target.
 - Sela is attempting to dedicate more time to ELA/Phonics based on this data.
 - 4-5 (Grade 3 does not fall under the ASPIRE growth calculations because they did not take CAPE in grade 2): ELA growth is not as strong and is a trend across the entire school. The students with disabilities subgroup falls below the floor; Sela identified this as an area of growth in the Winter and has followed up with a coaching plan.
 - Sela switched to a new ELA curriculum at the beginning of the Spring, while the Math curriculum has stayed the same for a number of years. We have also experienced some staffing changes in ELA and have not in Math, which all could speak to potential reasons why we generally have done better in Math MAP than in ELA.
 - We hired a new ELA coach this year, so it could also be a learning curve.
 - Fall to Spring MAP Math Achievement (CAPE Predictions), 3-5:
 - Math 4+ predictions are above the ASPIRE floor for all reported subgroups.
 - Black/African American, economically disadvantaged, and white students are close to meeting their subgroup targets.
 - Students with disabilities continue to need acute support to get close to their target, as their data is the farthest below the target.

- Fall to Spring MAP ELA Achievement (CAPE Predictions), 3-5:
 - ELA 4+ predictions are above the ASPIRE floor for all reported subgroups.
 - Students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and Black/African American students fall the farthest below the floor data, and will need the most acute support.
- Spring MAP Priorities:
 - SPED 3-5: Sela has hired a new staff member, has increased its co-planning time for collaboration between GenEd and SPED teachers, with an increased amount of time for instructional coaching.
 - Math: Sela is opting into a session with TNTP and EmpowerK12, which will give Math teachers more understanding of the Math content, as it will include 14 hours of coursework and cohort sessions with teachers across the entire district.
 - ELA: Increasing teacher training in the Phonics curricula from PK4-2, and increasing the coaching on integrating arts and letters with the phonics curricula.
 - Sela is increasing planning times during the day and during PD times that are subject-specific, particularly in Math for K-5.
 - Vertical alignment of curricula with planning and increased intellectual prep so as to implement sessions most effectively.
 - Ms. Chanel from PreK4 has shifted her role as an interventionist for Math and literacy, as well as a volunteer (former reading specialist for DCPS) who will be working with Sela daily for K-1.
- Hebrew Assessment: Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)
 - When we adopted ASPIRE, we adopted school-specific performance measures rather than the OPI-specific goals. These scores do not count within the accountability framework.
 - We recorded data for the 2nd and 5th grade assessment
- Hebrew Assessment: AVANT/STAMP
 - Showed listening as a strength across all grades, with higher levels of speaking and literacy in Grade 3. Literacy in Grade 3, however, is still a growth area.
- Sela is refining the vision of the Hebrew program, including the degree to which we are pushing for literacy. The goal is to develop a scope and sequence and align it to the assessment goals, as well as continue regular data collection.
- School Culture
 - The school culture survey showed extreme growth from last year's data, including many improvements in school leadership satisfaction and professional learning.
 - There was a 95% response rate from staff and a 90% student response rate on student culture.
 - Sela hit a historic data landmark on the question about "supportive relationships" and the "importance of attendance."



- Growth areas: The family response rate was 57, which is likely due to multiple surveys out at the same time as well as the HoS search.
 - 10-point drop in the “importance of attendance” marker as well as the “school safety” marker. Possible reasons could include externalities outside of the school, including geopolitical current events, as 95% of families said they felt their children were safe inside the school.
 - Perseverance, emotional regulation, and a sense of safety on their way to school remain student growth areas. There is a focus on SEL curricula and adjusting the morning meeting time for students to participate.
 - Sela has hired a school social worker to do 1:1 counseling and interventions for all students. This is a huge improvement from the part-time support we had from the Department of Behavioral Health.
- Operations/Financing:
 - Hiring for a 2nd-grade Math teacher, Music/Performing Arts teacher, and a SPED teacher.
 - We have hired our interventionist, social worker, a new PreK teacher, and a new PE teacher.

Committee Updates:

- Governance Committee: King Adjei-Frimpong
 - Bylaws were sent out for review by all board members.
 - There were questions about term limits, but overall the bylaws seem like they’re in good shape.
- Finance Committee: Steve Messner (no updates)
- External Relations Committee: Bryce Jacobs (no updates)
- Academic Committee: Marisa Tersey (no additional updates outside of Ms. Sussman’s school updates)
- Middle School Taskforce: Marisa Tersey (no updates)
- Nominations Committee: Amberine Huda
 - Looking to recruit 2-3 strong board members
 - Nearly finalized the interest form, which we plan to launch in the coming days.
 - One critical change to our interest form is including a section on specific competencies and skills that we are looking for so that potential candidates know exactly what skills to speak to.
 - We request that board members use the email, LinkedIn, and text templates to further our communications to anyone you think would be a great fit.

Motion to Move Into Closed Session: Alen Amini

- Upon motion and second, all Board members present voted to close the open meeting and move into closed session, per Section 2-575 of the DC Open Meetings Act: subsections (b) (12), to “train and develop members of a public body and staff.”

Adjournment: Alen Amini

Upon motion and second, all board members present voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm EST.

