LION LEADERS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL

June Board Meeting Minutes, June 15, 2026

Board Members Present: Talal Rojas Julie Medler Tony Stoupas Catherine Jessup Rosann Santos Ruth Jarmul Nicholas Ober Herb Fixler David Schatsky **Board Members Not in Attendance:** Ana Maria Gomez Deborah Dumont	**Members of the Public LION asked to be in Attendance:** Keveney McCrillis, Director of Communications and Strategic Projects Celia Sosa, CEO Leslie Rich, CFO Maya Severns, Director of Development and Marketing **Members of the Public:**

Tony Stoupas, Board Chair, called for a motion to begin the meeting at 6:05 PM. The motion was seconded by Nick Ober and unanimously approved.

Tony Stoupas motioned to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve the May meeting minutes, which had been shared via email before the meeting. Ruth Jarmul seconded the motion. The May meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Tony Stoupas opened a discussion about the proposed changes to the bylaws, updated versions, and a memo summarizing the changes were emailed before the meeting. A board member asked about previous bylaws and specific questions about board size. There was a discussion about the open meeting law and joining the meeting from home. Keveney McCrillis, Director of Communications, answered that question. There was a question about our board documents being ADA-compliant. There was agreement to follow up and report back.

Celia Sosa, LION's Chief Executive Officer, reviewed the CEO report, which was emailed before the meeting. She began discussing recent LION events, including the spring social fundraiser, family celebration, and elementary theater performance. Celia Sosa shared the senior process the class of 2016 participated in this month and highlighted the college signing day event that happened and the upcoming graduation ceremony.

Celia Sosa announced that she received NYC School survey data and would share once the data was no longer embargoed. She then discussed that LION was approved for regulatory flexibility by NYSED as part of the PLAN Pilot program LION has been participating in. There was a board question about colleges reintroducing SAT testing. Celia gave her opinion and answered that question. Celia then highlighted the anticipated employee retention rate for next year, which is very high. Finally, Celia discussed current enrollment and enrollment for

the 2026-2027 school year. She highlighted the continued push for enrollment in kindergarten and 2nd grade for the upcoming school year.

Celia then asked the board to review the proposed paid family leave policy shared via email before the meeting. There was a board question about the financial impact of this proposal. Celia answered that question given LION averages over time. She highlighted the positive impact on employee culture that she believes this will have. There was a board question about how this compares to the DOE. Celia answered that question and also referenced other charter school policies. Tony asked for a motion to approve the policy. That motion was seconded by Nick Ober and then approved unanimously.

The board then discussed the letter from SUNY, which was sent to Tony and LION leaders and sent to board members via email before the meeting. There were no questions about the letter.

Leslie Rich, LION's Chief Financial Officer, then presented her financial report, which was shared via email along with LION's monthly financials and the most updated draft of the FY 27 budget before the meeting. Leslie Rich discussed the positive variance LION closed May with. She discussed open positions. A board member had a question about the high school building manager position. Celia answered that question. Leslie then shared her year-end projection and forecasted debt service coverage ratio. She ended this part of the presentation with finance team projects and/or items that are on the horizon.

Leslie Rich went on to discuss the FY 27 budget. She highlighted a 10-year lookback at the per-pupil rate. She then gave a comparison of the SpEd billing rate, where it was budgeted and what was received. There was a board question about the federal funding and state funding projections in that area for next year. Leslie Rich answered that question. There was a board question about the proposed voucher system that the NY Times wrote an article about recently, and how it can be used for public schools. LION agreed to get more information and report back. Leslie discussed that LION's budget was developed with two different enrollment targets and, therefore, revenue models. In mid to late September, the board will discuss where the FTE will land and make decisions. Leslie highlighted areas where she proposed keeping budgets flat, where there were increases, and where there were decreases. Leslie discussed insurance cost increases, for which she has received a quote. Finally, she highlighted the contingency and the overall conservative budget. Tony Stoupas said that the Finance Committee has reviewed and approved this budget. A member of the finance committee agreed it is quite conservative and said she was comfortable with it. She asked when we could decide whether to release additional funds if enrollment exceeded the budget. Tony Stoupas asked that we put it on the October board agenda to review this and make a decision. He then moved to approve the FY 2027 budget. Cathy Jessup seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval of the FY 27 budget.

Maya Severns, Director of Development and Marketing, then presented her development report, which was shared with the board via email before the meeting. She highlighted

some of the events happening throughout the school, including an 8th-grade trip to Washington DC.

Maya continued to discuss the FY 2026 fundraising targets and where LION was against these targets. Tony discussed that the board agreed to more aggressive fundraising objectives, higher than ever before, and that the achievement is not a reflection of effort or results but rather the big goals that were set. Maya discussed the summer boost grant and the endowment as driving factors. She discussed her push for monthly donors and her engagement with a new fundraising partner who visited LION this week and is doing an audit of LION's fundraising. Their support will coach Maya, help LION find new fundraising opportunities, and look for major donors. She then highlighted some of the unique aspects of LION's program that the company has already agreed set LION apart from other schools.

Rosann Santos left the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Celia Sosa discussed the ways that LION has shifted resources to the marketing and development team and consultant support. She discussed changes for the upcoming school year and ideas for expansion beyond. The chair of the development committee mentioned the upcoming meeting. Maya Severns then highlighted the 20th Anniversary Spring Social and the money that was raised so far. She discussed the awards distributed at the event. Celia gave board member Herb Fixler an impact award from the event.

Finally, Maya highlighted the graduation campaign LION holds every year. She asked for the board to continue their support with an ad in the commencement program. There was a request for who was going to the graduation, and an email will be circulated.

Tony then asked for committee updates. Keveney McCrillis gave an update about the 730 Bryant classroom redesign project. The Development Committee chair discussed when they would share a development plan for FY27. Celia Sosa discussed the Education Committee meeting that was moved from Q4 to the fall, so there is more updated data to discuss.

Tony Stoupas asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Tony Stoupas motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 PM. Catherine Jessup seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Notes prepared by Keveney McCrillis.