



## MICS Board of Directors Meeting Minutes March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Attendees:** Dawne Dowdy; Glenn Byrum; Eric LaForce, Kevin Wiley, Kim Leppert, Kelly Dempsey, Stephanie Sherer; Mike Ladd, Erica Blackson

Absent: Garrett Tryon; Katie Blixt, Rod Hewlin

Quorum Status: Yes

- I. Call to Order: 5:32
  
- II. Approval of minutes: Stephanie moved to approve; Mike seconded, all in favor to approve the February meeting minutes.
  
- III. Public Comment: MICS high school student representative(s) re: 25-26 theme “MICS: Raise the Bar”  
Dr. Wilson asked 3 AP research students to present on their capstone research projects (elevator pitch) to the Board. Cooper Mazingo, a high school senior, who completed a research project on bacteria growth on classroom surfaces; Paula Cruz researched how TikTok influencers impact teen girls’ purchasing; Olivia Patterson presented her research on trends impacting and influencing American beauty expectations on African American high school girls.
  
- IV. School Report:
  - General Updates
    - i. Charter Renewal
      1. Virtual Site Visit on 3/12/26
      2. Focus Group at 9:30am (click [HERE](#) to join) on 3/12/26
        - a. 25-26 School Goal review
        - b. Committee Chairs take lead on questions
    - ii. Community Engagement
      1. Engage Carolinas Conference @ MICS - 3/14/26
      2. Fresh Take Conference @ Community School of Davidson 3/20/26
      3. Professional Development
        - a. NC Coalition Summit - 3/24-25/26 (ED)
        - b. BoardOnTrack - Governance 101 & Charter Board Fundamentals - 3/27/26, 11am
        - c. Truist Conscious Leadership for Educational Leaders - July 2026 (ES Principal)
  - Student Enrollment and Attrition Reports – 1,783 enrollment; 3 disenrollments in February

V. Officer Elections Upcoming - May 2026

- Start thinking about filling roles for 26/27 school year. Will vote at May board meeting

VI. Board Recruitment for 2026-2027 - ACTION ITEM

- The Board Selection committee recommended offering a Board position to Jeremy Russell; and offering two alternate positions – one to Shay Kelly and one to Kayla Pierce. Kelly moved to approve; Mike moved to approve and all voted in favor. Kevin Wiley to contact each person in the coming days.

VII. Committee Reports:

- Finance: ACTION ITEM (Early Bird Budget) – Kelly moved to approve; Kim seconded, and all in favor to approve early bird budget.
  - February 27, 2026, Finance Meeting 8:30 to 9:30 -- Attendees: Mike, Kevin, Glenn, and Eric.
  - Vendor Review -- The committee reviewed key vendor relationships, including audit services and certain operational contracts. One operational vendor relationship is under evaluation due to service concerns, and alternative models are being considered. The school has discontinued its relationship with its prior insurance broker for workers' compensation and general liability coverage.
  - Current Year Budget -- The committee reviewed updates to the current year budget. Professional Development spending will continue to be monitored. Athletics categories were reorganized to improve reporting clarity. A proposed grounds maintenance adjustment reflects moving a position from part-time to full-time.
  - Revenue assumptions remain conservative, with no improvements assumed beyond current projections. Local and federal revenue updates have strengthened the overall position and helped offset state adjustments. Additional expenses include the replacement of a golf cart and repairs to the Field 2 audio system. Updated projections indicate an estimated surplus of approximately \$625,000.
  - 2026 to 2027 Budget Planning -- The committee discussed early budget approval ahead of the March Board meeting. The draft includes a 2% salary increase, flat revenue assumptions, conservative grant projections, anticipated increases in healthcare costs, selected software additions, Chromebook replenishment, and compliance with new Computer Science course requirements. The projected surplus for 2026 to 2027 is approximately \$326,000. The committee agreed to prioritize employee compensation over discretionary facility enhancements.
- Governance: No report
- HR: No report
- Academics: Meeting held March 2nd, 2026, from 10:00-11:30, with Glenn, Jeremy, Stephanie, Rod, Dawne, Katie.
  - Academic growth is strong in several elementary grades, particularly reading and math in grades 2–5.

- Targeted interventions are addressing early grade literacy and math gaps.
- Middle school culture and discipline trends show significant improvement, especially in 6th and 8th grade.
- Suspension rates have declined significantly across multiple grades.
- Leadership continues to strengthen instructional support systems, curriculum implementation, and teacher development.
- Strategic partnerships and internal coaching are being used to improve outcomes in science and upper-level math.
- Detailed minutes are included in the google drive sent out by Glenn
  
- SOAR: Eric attended the SOAR meeting this morning March 9th. Eric highlighted that fundraising policy is being updated (circa 2018) and will be presented to governance committee; Auction was Friday night and was a successful event with a record \$50K in funds raised; Sponsorships continue to be strong; Community events – Robert Washington has designated a track meet as SOAR track meet on April 16, 2026 with 10 teams.
- Strategic Planning: Closed session was held Feb 19th, 2026, with Jenny, Dawne, Erica, Glenn, Eric, Stephanie, Katie. Went into closed session with Erica motion and Dawne second at 9:02. Came out of closed session with Erica motion and Eric second at 10:30. Under section 143-318.11 (5)

VIII. Closed Session: Erica moved to go into closed session; Eric seconded and all voted in favor. We went into closed session 6:49 pm pursuant to section 143-318.11 (5). Erica moved to leave closed session; Kim seconded and all voted in favor to leave closed session at 6:56 pm.

Next Board Meeting: 4-13-26

Adjournment: Kevin adjourned the meeting at 6:57 pm.