



NORTH LAWNDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

Board Meeting Minutes

General Information

Name of Meeting	March Board Meeting
Date of Meeting	3/18/25
Time of Meeting (CT)	5:30 - 7:30 PM CST
Number of Attendees	10
Quorum Present (Y or N)	Y

***Call to Order**

Roll Call / Board Members in Attendance

- **Present:**
 - Bruce Miller
 - Carrie Stewart
 - John Horan
 - Alees Edwards
 - Karen Castleberry
 - Hill Hammock
 - James Brooks
 - Rob Werner
 - Wilonda Cannon
 - Robin Steans - Virtual
- **Not Present:**
 - Al Bennett



NORTH LAWDALE **COLLEGE PREP**

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

School Staff Attendees

- **Present:**
 - Jemia Cunningham Elder, Chief Executive Officer - Virtual
 - Genessa Brown, Sr. Director of Operations
 - Keanna Greer, Special Projects Manager
 - Marie Sainvilus-Miles, Chief of Staff
 - Adam Sparks, Director of Academics

Guest Attendees

- **Present:**
 - Joe, Subject.com
 - Blake, Subject.com

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Call to Order
3. Approval of Last Meeting Minutes
4. Public Comment
5. Board Compliance
6. Subject.com - Presentation
7. Strategic Planning Update
8. Finance
9. Academics
10. Human Resources + Talent
11. Governance
12. Closed Session (*discretionary*)
13. Return to General Session
 - a. Vote: Grant approval for forecasted budget
14. Public Meeting Adjournment



NORTH LAWNDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

Approval of the Agenda

- **Motion to Approve Agenda:** John Horan
- **Seconded by:** Hill Hammock
- **Approved/Rejected:** Yes
- **Amendments (if any):** Moved Governance to agenda item 10

Agenda Summary

Agenda Item 2: Call to Order

- **Roll Call:**
- Hill Hammock - YES
- John Horan - YES
- Carrie Stewart - YES
- Rob Werner - YES
- James Brooks - YES
- Alees Edwards - YES
- Karen Castleberry - YES
- Bruce Miller - YES
- Wilonda Cannon - YES
- Robin Steans - Virtual
- Al Bennett - ABSENT

Agenda Item 3: Approval of Last Meeting Minutes

- **Discussion Summary:** All board members reviewed the minutes from the 1/21/25 Board Meeting.
- **Action Taken:** N/A
- **Responsible Party:** N/A
- **Timeline/Deadline:** N/A

Agenda Item 4: Public Comment

- There was no public comment at the board meeting held on March 18, 2025.



NORTH LAWDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

Agenda Item 5: Subject.com

The board discussed how to measure success with Subject.com, focusing on key performance indicators (KPIs) and whether the platform functions similarly to Khan Academy. An assessment is conducted each semester to determine students' progress. Homework expectations were unclear, and there were varying responses about how much of the students' learning takes place on the platform.

Approximately 30–40 students are in the credit recovery group, and individual courses offered include Physics, Algebra 1 and 2, and Pre-Calculus. Some students have been unable to access the courses. The classes are not replacing teachers but are being used to supplement instruction. Students who cannot access the platform are receiving more direct teacher support, and the program is not followed lesson-by-lesson but rather adapted to specific student needs.

Alignment documents are used to tailor content, providing students with a chance to learn the material in new ways. Elective offerings are determined by individual school selections, and the program was originally intended for credit recovery. The payment structure is per seat, and subjects can be transferred between students.

Board members expressed positive feedback about the platform. One stated it is a dynamic and engaging tool that allows course modification to fit school needs. There was also a shared concern about the long-term academic outcomes. The platform's accessibility anytime and anywhere was highlighted as a major advantage. One student was noted to be progressing rapidly, prompting a plan to purchase an additional course for her continued advancement.

Agenda Item 6: Board Compliance

- **Discussion Summary:** All board members have successfully completed OMA! Thank you, Bruce & Al, for completing your board training hours. The rest of the board members have not yet completed their training hours. Please sign up for the next board training session on April 14th. Compliance status emails, along with the 2025 board training schedule, will be sent to you soon.
- **Action Taken:** N/A
- **Responsible Party:** Keanna Greer | Board Members
- **Timeline/Deadline:** 6/27/25

Agenda Item 7: CEO Report SY26 Vision

- **Discussion Summary:**

Where we are: The charter renewal timeline has been pushed back.

- CPS plans to vote on the charter renewal on April 24th.



NORTH LAWNDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

Renderings were shared of the reimagined school space for the 2025–26 school year. As we look ahead, it's essential to stay informed about developments in North Lawndale. Our role in this moment is twofold: to remain the only college preparatory high school in Lawndale, and to graduate students who are equipped to become future homeowners.

As new families move into the neighborhood, we aim to provide a strong school option within the community—eliminating the need for families to seek education outside the area. Despite a declining population, we are committed to maintaining our momentum and ensuring our students have a cohesive educational experience under one roof.

We are actively reimagining our presence on 16th Street and are seriously considering acquiring the entire NLCP building rather than continuing to operate from the park. This presents a transformative opportunity to unify our vision under a single banner: *One Mission, One Campus, One NLCP*.

For SY26, we aim to have an enrollment of 400 to 500 students. We will offer the following programs:

- Academic Enrichment
- Physical Fitness
- Foreign Language
- Driver's Education
- Art + Maker Space
- Business and Marketing
- Colloquium with Senior Project

We also plan to add the following:

- A Director of College and Career Extracurriculars
- Honors at every grade level
- Teachers coming in above grade level to retain students by offering a more challenging curriculum
- Bringing back intersession (a week bridging the gap between two semesters, teacher-led)
- Adding more sports under one roof
- Expanding extracurricular activities
- Providing social and emotional support under one roof with true guidance in that department
- Continuing our work with the Peace Warriors, now with 100 Peace Warriors under one roof, who take their jobs seriously to maintain a healthy school culture
- Supporting students who work, with plans to bring back work opportunities for them.

Student Experience Arc:

- Sophomore year: Take Driver's Ed and experience Young Scholars Professional Day (YSPD)
- Junior year: Wear gold shirts and participate in ACT Mania & ACT Bootcamp. Receive letter sweaters and become eligible for the spring break trip.



NORTH LAWDALE **COLLEGE PREP**

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

- Senior year (Red Shirt): Gain access to the senior wing, take senior seminar, and complete a post-secondary plan. Become eligible for the Phoenix Pact.

Each year, students will meet with their counselor and complete one community service project, known as Odyssey Day.

Facilities for SY26:

- Senior Wing
- Counselor Suite
- Fitness and Weight Room
- Teacher and Staff Innovation Space

Beyond SY26:

- Cafeteria with a café and outdoor greenspace
- Gymnasium, parking structure, and grand entrance
- Sound system in the auditorium
- Maker's Space and Art Room
- Community Partnerships
- Bridge Program for local 7th and 8th grades

Agenda Item 8: Finance

○ **Discussion Summary:**

The Finance Committee presented a recap of the current financial standing. As of the end of January, we are operating with \$2.5 million. It was confirmed that we are running a deficit this year; however, we continue to maintain a healthy cash balance.

A question was raised about whether the potential combination of campuses will impact financial figures. The response emphasized that much of the financial outcome will depend on enrollment numbers.

As of now, 87 eighth-grade students have been offered seats for next year. A question was raised about whether this number reflects first-choice seat selections. Further clarification was requested on how this compares to enrollment numbers from the previous year.

○ **Action Taken:**

Regarding Collins seniors, efforts are underway to engage both scholars and families in completing recommitment forms. The goal is to transition the majority of Collins seniors to the Christiana campus for the upcoming school year.



NORTH LAWNDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

During spring break, students are invited to visit the campus to become more familiar with the environment. The CPS high school application portal opened on March 3. As of April 22, there were 120 students on a rolling waitlist. CPS manages this waitlist throughout the month of April. The portal is expected to reopen in June for additional placements.

- **Responsible Party:** Marie Miles-Sainvilus
- **Timeline/Deadline:** N/A

Agenda Item 9: Academics

- **Discussion Summary:**

Board members inquired whether students are currently achieving a score of 14 on the ACT and asked for clarification on students' starting points. A discussion followed on the importance of cross-referencing PSAT scores to better understand academic growth over time. It was noted that analyzing and presenting this data is a valuable exercise for the Academic Committee, as it helps track progress and identify areas for continued focus.

The team discussed the role of Subject.com in identifying academic strengths and gaps, particularly in supporting scholars who need reinforcement in key areas. It was confirmed that the ACT will take place the week following spring break.

Board members raised the question of how to effectively incentivize students to improve their performance on standardized assessments. Lastly, classroom size was discussed, with the largest current class reported to have 32 students.

- **Action Taken:** N/A
- **Responsible Party:** Adam Sparks
- **Timeline/Deadline:** N/A

Agenda Item 10: Governance

- **Discussion Summary:**

During the Governance Committee meeting, we discussed plans for board expansion and reviewed a proposed recruitment strategy. The goal is to increase board membership from the current 11 members to a total of 15.

As part of our assessment, we identified the need to strike a balance between community representation and individuals who bring specialized governance skills, such as expertise in fundraising and legal matters. To support this effort, we are asking each board member to recommend one potential candidate for board appointment. The Senior Leadership Team will follow the same approach.

Draft Recruitment Strategy:



NORTH LAWNDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

- **Identify Potential Candidates:** Begin identifying qualified individuals who may be a good fit for board membership.
- **Vetting Process:** Each candidate will undergo a vetting process that includes interviews with two to three current board members.
- **Virtual Board Orientation:** Selected candidates will attend a virtual orientation session to learn about board responsibilities and expectations.
- **Financial Commitment:** Board members are expected to make a financial contribution, and we will discuss the specifics of that expectation with candidates.

In addition to these steps, candidates should be prepared to:

- Serve on at least one board committee
- Participate in at least one school-based service activity
- Attend the school's graduation ceremony

After completing the orientation and review process, candidates will be given time to consider the responsibilities before making a final decision about joining the board.

Motions

- **Motion 1:**
 - Motion: Call the meeting to order
 - Made by: Bruce Miller
 - Seconded by: James Brooks
 - Roll Call Vote:
 - Hill Hammock - Yes
 - John Horan - Yes
 - Carrie Stewart - Yes
 - Rob Werner - Yes
 - James Brooks - Yes
 - Alees Edwards - Yes
 - Karen Castleberry - Yes
 - Wilonda Cannon - Yes



NORTH LAWNDALE COLLEGE PREP

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

- Details: N/A

● Motion 2:

- Motion: Approve Agenda
- Made by: Hill Hammock
- Seconded by: James Brooks
- Roll Call Vote:
 - John Horan - Yes
 - Carrie Stewart - Yes
 - Rob Werner - Yes
 - James Brooks - Yes
 - Alees Edwards - Yes
 - Karen Castleberry - Yes
 - Wilonda Cannon - Yes
 - Bruce Miller - Yes
- Details: N/A

● Motion 3:

- Motion: Approve of Last Meeting Minutes
- Made by: Hill Hammock
- Seconded by: James Brooks
- Roll Call Vote:
 - John Horan - Yes
 - Carrie Stewart - Yes
 - Rob Werner - Yes
 - James Brooks - Yes
 - Alees Edwards - Yes
 - Karen Castleberry - Yes
 - Wilonda Cannon - Yes
 - Bruce Miller - Yes



NORTH LAWNDALE **COLLEGE PREP**

1615 S Christiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60623
nlcphs.org | (773) 542-1490

- **Motion 4:**
 - Motion: Public Comment
 - Made by: James Brooks
 - Seconded by: John Horan
 - Details: There was no public comment at the board meeting held on March 18, 2025.

- Motion 4: Public Meeting Adjournment
 - Motion: Meeting adjourned
 - Made by: Bruce Miller
 - Seconded by: John Horan
 - Details: N/A

Adjournment - Public Session

- **Time of Adjournment:** 3/18/2025, 7:30 PM CST
- **Next Meeting:** 5/13/2025, 5:30 - 7:30 PM CST
- **Adjournment Motion Made by:** Hill Hammock
- **Seconded by:** John Horan
- **Approved/Rejected:** Yes