

EDUCATION BOARD

Tuesday, 10 June 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Board held in Committee Room 2 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 10 June 2025 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Robert Howard
Steve Goodman OBE
Naresh Hari Sonpar
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP
Deputy Anne Corbett

Deputy Caroline Haines
Tim McNally
James Adeleke
Jane Hindle

In Attendance

Officers:

Deborah Bell	- Community & Children's Services Department
Scott Caizley	- Community & Children's Services Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Jack Joslin	- The City Bridge Trust
Torriano Stewart	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
Jayne Moore	- Town Clerk's Department
Kevin Colville	- Comptroller and City Solicitors
Roland Martin	- Headmaster -City of London Freeman's School
Mark Emmerson	- City of London Academies Trust - CEO
Vasima Patel	- Community and Children's Services Department
Melanie Peel	- City of London Schools
Diana Nathan	- City of London Academies Trust
Rebecca Branch	- A New Direction
Veronica Pearce	- City Bridge Foundation
Doreen Channa	- City Bridge Foundation
Charlie Binns	- Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Julia Megone	- City Bridge Foundation

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Floyd Steadman.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT**

The Board received the Order of the Court of the meeting of the Court of Common Council on 25 April 2025.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

A single expression of interest having been received, Naresh Sonpar was duly elected Chair of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

A single expression of interest having been received, Timoth McNally was duly elected Deputy Chair for the ensuing municipal year.

6. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That the minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2025 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.

7. **ACTIONS**

The Board received the report of the Clerk.

8. **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT TOOLKITS REPORT**

The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community & Children's Services and the Strategic Education and Skills Director updating Members on the pilot evaluation of the Parental Engagement Toolkits implemented across schools within the City of London Academies Trust.

In response to a question on the cost of the research, the meeting noted that the cost was less than £10K.

9. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2024/25**

The Board received the report of the Director of Community & Children's Services and the Chamberlain setting out the 2024/25 revenue outturn for the Education Board with the final agreed budget for the year, noting in particular that total net local risk expenditure during the year was £897,000k - an overspend of £3,000 when compared to the Final agreed budget of £894,000.

10. **THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (CHARITY NO. 290840) GRANT MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Board received the report of the Acting Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation, noting that the City of London Corporation is the sole corporate trustee of the following Charity which operates, in summary, to further education for the public benefit: the City Educational Trust Fund ("CETF") (Charity No. 290840).

Members noted that at the Education Board in April 2024, Members agreed to award a £3,649,998 grant to A New Direction (Charity No. 1126216) to deliver Primary Arts – a cultural arts programme within London's primary schools, to enhance the education and teaching in and of the cultural arts for the public benefit, spanning 48 months.

Acting collectively for the City of London Corporation as Trustee of the City Education Fund (290840), the Board noted the quarterly update of the work undertaken by A New Direction, agreeing that the report is in the best interests of the charity.

Noting the discrepancy between registered and participating schools, a Member asked what methods are in place to encourage registered schools to participate in the programme. The meeting heard that any discrepancy was due to issues around the capacity to deliver in line with demand, and in some cases due to registration timings that did not align with delivery options, and that registered schools are supported in their placements and options.

A Member asked for more information on registered schools that had subsequently not participated, alongside figures for over-subscribed sessions (see action point).

11. EDUCATION STRATEGY 2024-29 EVENTS UPDATE

The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and the Strategic Education and Skills Director updating Members with a summary of recent activities that the Education Strategy Unit has provided to the Family of Schools since the last meeting (January 2025), noting also the upcoming activities for the remainder of the academic year.

Members were reminded that they are welcome to attend events.

12. VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER REPORT

The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community & Children's Services providing Members with information about the role of The City of London Virtual School. Members noted the School Development Plan.

A Member asked for more granular information on users of the virtual school including age, location and numbers of NEETs. The meeting noted that the information is contained in the annual report provided to Members, and that the information will be circulated to Members (see Action Point).

Members commented on apparent miscommunication between the virtual school and CoLAT in respect of excluded students, and asked for more information on the liaison role of the CoL virtual school with borough virtual schools. The meeting heard that the CoL virtual head liaises with pan-London virtual headteachers on a monthly basis, that communication gaps of that nature will be raised at the next such meeting, and that additional staff training has been offered to CoLAT schools on trauma-informed practices and support, with delivery expected to take place from September 2025.

A Member commented that targeted support should be offered to relevant CoLAT schools where appropriate that would include an early alert system. The meeting heard that affected City resident students are supported.

Members commented on the benefits of tracking students that had been involved in the virtual school and asked whether information on destinations of

young people after the age of 25 was available, including those who had an EHCP that went on to University.

13. LONDON CAREERS FESTIVAL 2025 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board noted the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and the Strategic Education and Skills Director updating Members on the outcomes of the London Careers Festival (LCF) 2025 which engaged primary and secondary school pupils, sixth form and college students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), all from across London and adjacent counties. The Board noted the LCF 2025 evaluation report, and the recommendations for LCF 2026 onwards.

Members asked for more information about the question 'Do you feel you could work in central London?', and the meeting heard that the term 'central London' was chosen rather than 'Square Mile' for the sake of clarity, and that most respondents who were resident in boroughs bordering the Square Mile had responded that they did not feel they could work in central London. Members commented that it was not clear what was meant by the term 'central London'. The meeting noted that social mobility initiatives under way work with City and London-based employers, government and schools to address the perception of central London careers and improve confidence and connections, including among students from varying socio-economic backgrounds, noting also that there is scope for the LCF to further enhance those opportunities working more with organisations such as Young Professionals YP-UK and Pathways.

Members noted the City financial service firms that run online careers-orientated platforms, commenting that there is merit in ensuring that those and other work placement initiatives are communicated to schools.

14. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN - CPG AND CCL FUNDING

The Board noted the report of the Clerk that set out these three decisions approved via the Delegated Authority procedure in line with Standing Order 40A:

- City Premium Grant: To delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Education Board and the Strategic Director of Education and Skills to distribute Round 1 awards from the City Premium Grant: Disadvantaged Pupils Grant, the City Premium Grant: Partnerships Grant, and the City Premium Grant: Responsive Grant to the schools;
- Cultural and Creative Learning: To delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Education Board and the Strategic Director of Education and Skills to distribute the CCL funds to the relevant cultural partners noting that the panel recommends that 11 out of 17 of the applications be awarded funding from the CCL budget; and
- To confirm that these grants will be made available in the usual way.

15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD**
There were no questions.
16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no items of urgent business.
17. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.
18. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
The non-public minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2025 were considered.
19. **ADULT SKILLS EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP – TAILORED LEARNING CHANGES IN COURSE PRIORITIES**
The Board considered the report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services and the Strategic Director, Education and Skills.
20. **INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AT CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL: PROGRESS AND STRATEGIC INSIGHTS**
The Board received the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services
21. **CITY OF LONDON ACADEMY TRUST GROWTH - RECONSIDERATION OF EXISTING STRATEGY**
The Board considered the report of the Executive Director of Community and Children's Services.
22. **FINANCE UPDATE - 1. THE CITY EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (CETF) (290840) & 2. CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION COMBINED EDUCATION CHARITY (CEC) (312836)**
The Board reviewed the report of the CBF & Charities Interim Finance Director
23. **SUMMARY OF CITY EDUCATION SPEND**
The Board received the report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Community and Children's Services
24. **CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION COMBINED EDUCATION CHARITY (CHARITY NO. 312836) MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
The Board considered the report of the Acting Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation.
25. **REVIEW OF FUNDING TO THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC & DRAMA FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**
The Board considered the report of the Principal, Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

26. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no questions.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

One item was raised.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm

Chairman

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