

DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING AGENDA

October 31, 2025, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Location for Public Meeting: 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester NY 14615

Remote Attendance for Public Meeting Option: Zoom Link

The meeting information was included in the Public Notice as well as on the school's website:

Topic: **Discovery Charter School- Board of Trustees Meeting
10.31.25**

8:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86450663136?pwd=RkdPU3dTRGJmNkFzKy9CULc2Nys0QT09>

Meeting ID: 864 5066 3136

Passcode: Discovery

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Proof of Public Notice of Meeting**
3. **Conflict of Interest Reminder**
4. **Public Comment**
5. **Consent Agenda (Action Required):**
 - a. Approve Minutes for Meeting from 9.26.25
 - b. Resolution 559: Non-Routine Checks over \$5,000 for September 2025
6. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. Audit & Finance Committee Report
 - B. Governance Committee Report
 - C. Building Committee Report
 - D. Executive Committee Report
 - E. Academic Excellence Committee
 - F. Personnel Committee Report
7. **School Director Report:**
 - a) Hiring Update
 - b) Enrollment Update
8. **Policy Review:** Governance Committee (Board Operations)
9. **Fundraising:** Prospect List (*Confidential*) and Draft Gift Acceptance Policy
10. **Fundraising/Advancement Committee**
11. **Conflict of Interest Policy and Forms**
12. **Motion to Adjourn (Action Required):**

Next Regular Meeting: November 21, 2025



Tracking and Disposal of Items Purchased with Federal Funds

2155

I. Purpose

This policy establishes procedures for the tracking, inventory management, and disposal of equipment and other tangible items purchased with funds from federal education programs, in compliance with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200).

II. Scope

This policy applies to all equipment and tangible property purchased with funds from federal education programs administered by Discoverey Charter School, including but not limited to:

- **Title I, Part A**
- **Title II, Part A**
- **Title III, Part A**
- **Title IV, Part A**
- **IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)**
- **ESSER or other federal relief funds**

III. Definitions

- **Equipment: Tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more.**
- **Supplies: Tangible property with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.**

- **Inventory:** A complete list of all federally purchased equipment, including description, serial number, location, and condition.
- **Disposition:** The process of selling, transferring, donating, or discarding federally funded items that are no longer usable.

IV. Tracking and Inventory Requirements

1. Inventory Records

- **The District shall maintain an up-to-date inventory of all federally funded equipment.**
- **The inventory record shall include:**
 - **Description of the item**
 - **Serial number or other identification number**
 - **Source of funding (including federal program and grant award number)**
 - **Acquisition date**
 - **Cost of the item**
 - **Location of the item**
 - **Use and condition of the item**
 - **Disposition data (if applicable)**

2. Inventory Verification

- **Physical inventory of equipment shall be conducted at least once every two years.**
- **Discrepancies between physical inventory and inventory records must be investigated and resolved promptly.**

3. Tagging

- **All equipment purchased with federal funds shall be tagged with a label identifying it as such.**
- **Labels must include "Purchased with Federal Funds" and the funding source.**

V. Use and Maintenance of Equipment

- Federally funded equipment shall be used only for the purposes authorized under the grant.
- Equipment shall be adequately maintained to ensure continued usability and safety.
- Any loss, damage, or theft of equipment must be reported immediately to the Finance Manager or School Director.

VI. Disposal of Equipment

1. Prior Approval

- Before any federally funded equipment is disposed of, the School must seek prior approval from the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity when required.

2. Disposal Procedures

- If the item is no longer needed for the original program or any other federally supported activities:
 - If the item has a current per-unit fair market value of \$5,000 or more, the district may:
 - Sell the item and return the federal share of proceeds to the granting agency.
 - Transfer the item to another eligible federal program with proper documentation.
 - If the item's value is less than \$5,000, it may be retained, sold, or otherwise disposed of with no further federal obligation, provided proper documentation is maintained.

3. Documentation

- Disposal records must include:
 - Date of disposal
 - Method of disposal (e.g., sold, scrapped, donated)
 - Sale price (if applicable)
 - Name of recipient (if donated or transferred)
 - Authorization for disposal

VII. Compliance and Oversight

- **The School Director and Finance Manager are jointly responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.**
- **Noncompliance may result in corrective action, including potential repayment of federal funds.**

VIII. Review and Revision

This policy shall be reviewed annually and revised as needed to ensure ongoing compliance with federal regulations.

Pending approval by the Board of Trustees

Oct 17, 2025



**DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING Minutes**

September 26, 2025, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Location for Public Meeting: 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester NY 14615

Remote Attendance for Public Meeting Option: Zoom Link

The meeting information was included in the Public Notice as well as on the school's website:

**Topic: Discovery Charter School- Board of Trustees Meeting
9.26.2025**

8:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86450663136?pwd=RkdPU3dTRGJmNkFzKy9CULc2Nys0QT09>

Meeting ID: 864 5066 3136

Passcode: Discovery

Trustees Present: L. Lewis, S. Varhus, L. Bridges, M. Galarza-Ruiz, S. Adair, M. Franklin-McDuffie

Trustees Excused: S. Fazili, C. Wilkens, J. Johnson,

Participating remotely: S. Polowitz, Board Counsel

Also Present: S. Castner, A. Culver

1. **Call to Order:** L. Lewis called the meeting to order at 8:09 am.
2. **Proof of Public Notice of Meeting:** Confirmed
3. **Conflict of Interest Reminder:** L. Lewis issued reminder.
4. **Public Comment:** None
5. **Consent Agenda** (*Action Required*): Approval of Minutes for 9.5.25, Resolution 556: Contract with Empreinte; Resolution 557: Purchase Offer for 133 Hoover Drive; Resolution 558: Checks over \$5000 for August 2025--Moved by S. Adair, seconded by M. Galarza-Ruiz, and approved unanimously with no abstentions.
6. **Committee Reports:**
 - a. Audit & Finance Committee Report: 25-26 Budget is currently on track
 - b. Governance Committee Report: No Report
 - c. Building Committee: The Building Committee will meet to discuss a counteroffer on a building.
 - d. Executive Committee Report: No Report
 - e. Academic Excellence Committee: No Report
 - f. Personnel Committee Report: No report
 - g. Committee on Community Engagement: No Report
7. **School Director Report:**
 - a) Hiring Update: S. Castner noted that she is still trying to fill some positions.
 - b) Enrollment Update: S. Castner reported that enrollments are on track and recruitment is ongoing.
8. **2025-26 Bord of Trustees Goals:** S. Varhus reviewed the 23-25 Board Self Evaluation and noted the following areas for improvement:

- Need a long-term plan with annual goals
- Board Committees could have clear charges and be more active.
- DCS Leadership Succession Plan needs to be updated.
- Revise long term budget to accommodate building purchase/oversight.
- Fundraising?
- Need ongoing oversight of compliance with Benchmark 9.
- Need ongoing Board Orientation
- Need to catch up on SD Evaluation process
- Need to review policies to ensure that they are current.

She also reviewed the benchmarks in the CSO Performance Framework that are the direct responsibility of the Board of Trustees and suggested that the Board's goals for 2025-26 AND 2025-29 should align with those benchmarks. The board agreed that individual committees will be responsible for drafting annual and five-year goals for the work of the committees; these goals will become part of the overall school annual and five-year plans. Each committee will meet to draft goals, and submit them to Carrie Franklin **by October 24.**

It was also agreed that review of policies will be a standing item on board agendas, with individual committees reporting out on the review of policies in their areas in rotation.

9. **Motion to Adjourn:** moved by M. Franklin-McDuffie, seconded by M. Galarza-Ruiz, and approved unanimously with no abstentions.

Next Regular Meeting: October 17, 2025



Gift Acceptance Policies

I. MISSION & VISION

Discovery Charter School was approved by the New York State Education Department in 2010 as a public elementary school serving students in grades K-6. Opened its doors in 2011 in the former Greece Odyssey Academy. To provide a high-quality education in a safe and supporting learning community for students and families, empowers students with diverse talents, delivers rigorous and culturally relevant instruction, and fosters creativity, inquiry and strong character development. All children are inspired and able to reach their full potential.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. **Policies and Guidelines.** It is the role of the Board to consider and adopt general gift acceptance and development policies for Discovery Charter School. Such policies may include this statement of policy, as well as other policies and guidelines applicable to specific types of gifts and development efforts that may be adopted by the Board from time to time.
- B. **Role of Committees.** While the Board has overall responsibility for establishing policies and direction for Discovery Charter School development programs, a committee appointed by the Board shall have roles and responsibilities with respect to gift acceptance:
 1. **Fundraising Committee.** The Fundraising Committee will assist in the creation of development plans and fundraising goals for Discovery Charter School and will actively participate in carrying out Discovery Charter School development efforts and goals. In addition, the responsibilities of the Fundraising Committee include periodic review and recommendation for approval by the Board of development policies and guidelines for gifts consistent with established policies and guidelines.

The Fundraising Committee will also work with the Board Chair and Principal to establish and monitor the annual budget, review the performance of portfolio managers for the organization's endowment funds, review the annual audit, and recommend policies and procedures related to fiscal management.
- C. **Authority to Negotiate.** The Board Chair and Principal will have overall authority to handle inquiries, negotiate with donors, assemble documentation, retain expert and technical consultants, and execute agreements on behalf of Discovery Charter School. Assuming such activities follow approved procedures and assuming Discovery Charter School legal counsel approves such agreements, this authority to act will not require review or further approval by the Board.

- D. **Donor Recognition.** Discovery Charter School recognizes the paramount role of donors/corporate partners and their gifts to Discovery Charter School in fulfilling its mission. In carrying out Discovery Charter School's fundraising program, staff will recognize and acknowledge donors in appropriate ways both publicly and privately, subject to the confidentiality provisions of Section F below.
- E. **Donor Education.** Discovery Charter School staff will establish appropriate ongoing programs and systems for educating and informing donors and prospective donors to Discovery Charter School about the organization, its activities, and the needs of the communities served by Discovery Charter School
- F. **Confidentiality.** All agreements with donors and all information concerning donors and prospective donors shall be held in strict confidence by Discovery Charter School board and staff, subject to legally authorized and enforceable requests for information by governing agencies and courts. All other requests for or releases of information concerning a donor will be honored or allowed only if permission is obtained from the donor prior to the release of such information.
- G. **Disclosure.** Donors shall be provided with appropriate disclosure statements and other background information concerning any gift. During the gift planning process, the role and relationships of all parties involved are fully disclosed to the donor.
- H. **Legal Counsel.** Discovery Charter School shall seek the advice of legal counsel when appropriate in matters pertaining to its development program. All agreements, contracts, and other legal documents relating to the development program shall be reviewed by legal counsel prior to execution or use, except for standard form documents described in Section I below.
- I. **Donor's Counsel.** Discovery Charter School's staff will encourage prospective donors to have the terms of all proposed agreements reviewed by the donor's own legal or financial advisors. The donor should also be advised that it is the donor's responsibility to obtain any necessary appraisals, file appropriate tax returns, and defend against any challenges to claims for tax benefits.
- J. **Promotion and Public Education.** Discovery Charter School's mission, programs and needs of the community will be well served by active promotion and community education concerning such activities and needs. Accordingly, Discovery Charter School's leadership shall develop and implement, on an ongoing basis, and with appropriate Board supervision and involvement, events and materials for public promotion and education. The policy is to inform, serve, guide, or otherwise assist donors who wish to support Discovery Charter School's activities, but never under any circumstances to pressure or unduly persuade.

- K. **Material Restrictions.** Discovery Charter School reserves the right to refuse any gift that it believes is not in the best interests of Discovery Charter School. In conformity with the federal and state regulations governing charities, gifts to Discovery Charter School may not be directly or indirectly subjected by a donor to any material restriction or condition that prevents Discovery Charter School from freely and effectively employing the transferred assets or the income derived there from, in furtherance of its exempt purposes.

III. GIFTS TO DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL

- A. **Types of Donations.** Gifts to Discovery Charter School may take a variety of forms. Many are outright gifts by living donors either on a one-time or a periodic basis. Others are bequests and testamentary gifts that take effect upon the donor's death. Some are other forms of deferred or split-interest gifts.

As a general rule, current, unrestricted gifts are encouraged in favor over restricted gifts.

- B. **Acceptance Policies for Outright Gifts.** Discovery Charter School may accept the following types of outright contributions:

- Cash
- Will or trust bequests
- Beneficiary designation gifts
- Life insurance gifts
- Investment gifts
- Gift Annuity
- Traditional IRA gift
- Zero estate tax gift
- Charitable remainder trust
- Wealth replacement
- Irrevocable life insurance trust

****ALL GIFTS other than cash will be reviewed by Discovery Charter School Board of Directors and Principal must satisfy all Discovery Charter School's requirements.***

IV. PLANNED GIVING ARRANGEMENTS

- A. **Planned Gifts.** Discovery Charter School's planned giving program encompasses gifts whose benefits do not fully accrue to Discovery Charter School until some future time (such as the death of the donor or other income beneficiaries or the expiration of a predetermined period or whose benefits to Discovery Charter School are then followed

by the interests of non-charitable beneficiaries). Planned giving opportunities offered by Discovery Charter School include the following:

1. **Gifts by Will or Trust.** Discovery Charter School may be designated as the beneficiary of a bequest or gift by the terms of the donor's will or by a revocable or irrevocable trust. Sample bequest language for restricted and unrestricted gifts will be made available to donors and their attorneys to ensure that the bequest is properly designated.
2. **Retirement Plan Assets.** Retirement plans owned by the donor may be gifted to Discovery Charter School at death. These include Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA), 401(k), 403(b), and defined contribution plans. (Annuity plans, such as defined benefit plans, in which retirement benefits are paid out as income and principal does not accumulate, generally cannot be used for charitable gifts.) Methods for gifting retirement assets include:
 - a. Required Minimum Distributions: nearly all retirement accounts have a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) at some age under IRS rules. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 created an option for account owners to have their distribution sent *directly* to qualifying public charities and thereby not be included at all on their tax return. It is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). The limit is presently \$100,000. This option has some additional tax benefits for some taxpayers. As with any other tax related option, you should consult your own tax advisor to see exactly how it would impact and possibly benefit you.
 - b. Naming Discovery Charter School as primary, successor or contingent beneficiary for all or part of the assets upon death of either the retirement asset owner or spouse.
 - c. Creating a testamentary charitable remainder trust with the assets upon the death of the asset owner, naming Discovery Charter School as remainder beneficiary and non-charitable heirs as income beneficiaries.

****If you are interested in an IRA distribution or any other type of planned gift, please speak with your financial advisor or a qualified professional from the Discovery Charter School Board of Directors.***

2. Acceptance Policies and Guidelines for Planned and Deferred Gifts

1. **Distribution of Proceeds.** Testamentary bequests and other planned gifts are governed by the language of the will, trusts, or agreements that created them, by relevant law and regulation, and by the laws of Discovery Charter School. Donors may also submit letters and other signed documents to indicate their wishes.

Given the mission of Discovery Charter School, the center encourages donors to choose an unrestricted gift to Discovery Charter School as the ultimate recipient of the future proceeds of their deferred gift arrangements so that Discovery Charter School may best serve its mission as the center's needs change.

Should it be that the donor's intent cannot be reasonably fulfilled by Discovery Charter School, the center reserves the right to re-negotiate its terms with the donor's professional advisor(s), executor and/or next of kin. The intent is to ensure the ability of Discovery Charter School to utilize the donor's gift in a manner as close to the donor's original wishes as possible.

3. **Undesignated gifts.** In the absence of written guidance from the donor, these policies shall prevail:
 1. Testamentary gifts shall be placed in an unrestricted general-purpose account unless otherwise specified by the donor.
 2. Testamentary gifts of a significant size will be addressed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of Discovery Charter School Board Chair or Principal. The Board of Directors will be involved where necessary.
 3. Similarly, lifetime or other gifts that have no restrictions, and that are not donated in response to a specific appeal, will be addressed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of Discovery Charter School's Board Chair or Principal. The Board of Directors will be involved where necessary.

The Board may amend or supplement these Policies and Guidelines at any time.



Fundraising Committee

Roles & Responsibilities

As a Fundraising Committee Member of Discovery Charter School, you are an important representative of Discovery Charter School, and your involvement is critical to the success of our fundraising efforts. In general, you will:

Help us build awareness by creating widespread understanding of the comprehensive needs of Discovery Charter School and how we impact our students and families as well as the entire community.

Help us identify prospective major donors by connecting the Principal and Board Members with people in your personal network, educating and engaging attendees at cultivation events and reviewing specific names of community members and peers.

Serve as a leader by participating in committee meetings to include planning and implementing strategies and related activities in partnership with Discovery Charter School leadership and staff.

Responsibilities:

- Function as an ambassador for Discovery Charter School
- Become educated on the comprehensive priorities, structure, goals, and timeline
- Make a gift commitment which will inspire others to give as generously within their personal means
- Play a role in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting major gifts from select individuals, corporations, or foundations
- Help identify and recruit other volunteer committee leadership as needed
- Provide support and advocacy each year for Discovery Charter School
- Act as enthusiastic spokesperson for Discovery Charter School initiative priorities
- Operate as a member of the team and celebrate each other's success

Time Commitment Summary:

- Represent Discovery Charter School at fundraising committee meetings
- Represent Discovery Charter School at special events
- Help selectively with solicitations
- Term: Minimum of (four) years with option to renew



McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Policy

Purpose

Discovery Charter School is committed to ensuring equal access to education for all students, including those experiencing homelessness. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), the school will identify, enroll, and support students in temporary housing situations so they may fully participate in academic and extracurricular activities.

Definition of Homelessness

Under McKinney-Vento, children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Living in shelters, transitional housing, motels, or hotels.
- Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship (“doubled-up”).
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, or substandard housing.
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances.

Rights of Students

Students experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- **Immediate Enrollment** – Even without required documents (proof of residency, immunizations, birth certificates, or school records).
- **School of Origin or School of Residence** – The right to attend their school of origin (last school attended) or the local school where they are currently staying, based on the best interest of the student.
- **Transportation** – To and from the school of origin, if requested and determined to be in the student’s best interest. Transportation will be provided up to 50 miles each way between the student’s temporary housing and the school of origin. Transportation will also be provided for extracurricular activities and summer school if available to other students.
- **Equal Access** – To all school programs, services, and activities, including meals, Title I services, extracurricular activities, and special education.
- **No Barriers** – To enrollment, attendance, or success due to lack of documents, uniforms, or fees.

- **Continued Enrollment** – Students who are already enrolled at Discovery Charter School and subsequently become homeless have the right to remain enrolled, regardless of changes in housing.
- **Students Outside of LEA Boundaries** – Students temporarily residing outside the boundaries of the LEA are entitled to continued enrollment at Discovery Charter School if it is determined to be in their best interest.

Identification and Enrollment

Discovery Charter School will ensure that all students experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied homeless youth, are identified and enrolled immediately, even if they lack required documentation.

Immediate Enrollment Procedures:

1. Identification:

- During registration, staff will use a McKinney-Vento Student Residency Questionnaire to help identify potential eligibility.
- All staff will receive annual training on identifying and supporting students experiencing homelessness.

2. Immediate Enrollment:

- Students identified as homeless will be enrolled the same day, even if they are missing documentation such as proof of residency, immunization records, birth certificates, or school transcripts.
- Lack of records will not delay enrollment under any circumstances.

3. Follow-Up Actions:

- The school will immediately request academic, health, and immunization records from the previous school.
- The Homeless Liaison will assist the family or youth in obtaining missing documentation.
- Health services will coordinate any necessary immunizations or medical appointments.
- The student will receive all appropriate school supplies, uniforms, and meals to ensure full participation.

4. Unaccompanied Homeless Youth:

- Youth who are not living with a parent or guardian will be enrolled immediately, even without parent signatures.
- The Homeless Liaison will assist in ensuring access to education, services, and community supports.

Homeless Liaison

Discovery Charter School McKinney-Vento Liaison will:

- Ensure identification of homeless students.
- Assist families and unaccompanied youth in enrolling and accessing services.
- Coordinate transportation, nutrition, and other supports.
- Provide referrals to community resources.
- Inform parents/guardians (or unaccompanied youth) of rights under McKinney-Vento.
- Resolve disputes regarding eligibility, enrollment, or school selection.

Foster Care Transportation Procedures

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Discovery Charter School will maintain written foster care transportation procedures to ensure that students in foster care have access to stable education. These procedures include:

- Collaborating with the child welfare agency to determine transportation needs and responsibilities.
- Providing transportation for foster care students to their school of origin when it is in the student's best interest, consistent with child welfare determinations.
- Ensuring transportation is arranged promptly and cost-effectively, with costs shared between agencies as required.
- Guaranteeing that foster care students have the same opportunity to participate in extracurricular and extended learning programs as their peers.

Dispute Resolution

If a disagreement arises about school selection or enrollment:

- The student will be immediately enrolled in the school requested by the parent/guardian, child welfare agency, or unaccompanied youth.
- The Homeless Liaison will provide the family or agency with a written explanation of the decision and information on how to appeal.
- The student will remain in the school of choice until the dispute is resolved.

Confidentiality

All information about a student's housing or foster care status will be treated as confidential and used only for the purpose of ensuring appropriate services.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary to remain compliant with federal and state regulations.



RESOLUTION #559

At a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Discovery Charter School (the “School”) held on the 17th day of October 2025 at **133 Hoover Drive, Rochester NY 14615** with an **in-person quorum present and a link for Zoom attendance via:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86450663136?pwd=RkdPU3dTRGJmNkFzKy9CUlc2Nys0QT09>

Meeting ID: 864 5066 3136

Passcode: Discovery

The Board of Trustees adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED: To authorize the following *non-routine* payments of \$5000 or more for September 2025:

ACH Payment: American Express - \$15,427.79 (Various classroom/office supplies, staff retention, parent communication app)

Check #6130: Mengel Metzger Barr & Co LLP - \$11,000 (Progress billing for FY 2024 annual audit)

Check #6131: New York State Teachers’ Retirement System - \$82,317.17 (2nd of 3 payments for FY24 retirement liability)

Check #6136: CDW-G - \$28,506.18 (Student Chromebooks and Teacher Laptops)

Check #6137: Core BTS, Inc - \$8,409.60 (Wi-Fi Routers, plus licensing & support)

Check #6140: Austin & Co. - \$10,946.50 (Quarterly business insurance)

Check #6144: Curriculum Assoc - \$11,710.96 (iReady Math)

Date: October 17, 2025

Marisol Galarza-Ruiz, Secretary