

The Trustees in attendance: Rick Rieder, Ezdehar Abuhatab, Nicole Bearce, Ravi Bellur, Lawrence Evans, Trisha Scipio, Scott Sleyster, Ann Borowiec, and Jamey Verrilli.

Also present: Jenn Da Silva, Maya Roth- Bisignano, Timeese Townes-Pratt, Julie Jackson, Mike Mann, Eric Diamon, Mike Taubman, Scott Kern, John Powell, and Onome Ufinomue.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mr. Rieder who noted that the meeting had been duly publicized, as required by law, in *The Star-Ledger* and *The Americano* with updated address information posted on the North Star Academy website.

Mr. Bellur moved to approve the following minutes. Mr. Evans seconded the motion:

- Approval of 12/2/25 Public Session Minutes
- Approval of 12/2/25 Executive Session Minutes

The trustees voted unanimously in approval.

Eric Diamon opened the meeting by providing an early update on the Class of 2026, noting that a more comprehensive college acceptance report will be presented in the spring.

Key Highlights:

- 369 seniors across Lincoln Park High School and Washington Park High School
- 362 students (98%) have submitted at least one four-year college application
- 297 students (80%) have received at least one four-year college acceptance
- 32 students have already enrolled in college
- 1,112 college acceptances from 3,917 submitted applications

North Star currently has the highest number of college acceptances and enrolled students across Uncommon Schools.

Mr. Diamon discussed the importance of Early Decision (ED) in increasing college acceptance and enrollment rates. He outlined common barriers to ED participation, including financial aid uncertainty and concerns about early commitment. He noted that the Office of College and Alumni Support (OCAS) continues to work closely with students to address these concerns. Mr. Diamon also shared several Early Decision student highlights.

Prior to concluding his presentation, Mr. Diamon provided a summary of Alumni Day held at the Washington Park High School campus. He reported that 79 alumni returned, demonstrating strong alumni engagement. Each grade level participated in age-appropriate activities designed to strengthen alumni, student, and staff connections; reinforce a culture of belonging and aspiration; and provide valuable alumni feedback on college preparedness.

Teachers Scott Kern and Mike Taubman presented on the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into classroom instruction at Washington Park High School. They

described a “dual lens” approach in which AI is treated both as a topic of study (including ethics and societal implications) and as a practical instructional and workflow tool.

Mr. Kern and Mr. Taubman introduced the AI Driver’s License Framework, which includes four components: defining learning goals (“choose a destination”); developing practical tool proficiency (“learn to drive”); understanding limitations and risks (“open the hood”); and reflecting on ethical considerations and appropriate use (“rules of the road”).

An AI Literacy Pilot is currently underway with 20 seniors in the HS 2.0 program, focusing on both practical application and critical judgment. A formal research partnership with Stanford University is in place to study outcomes and build evidence for learner-centered AI practices.

Mr. Kern reported early promising outcomes, including a 22% increase in the likelihood of passing AP U.S. History when AI-supported writing instruction was implemented, as well as a cited 94% overall pass rate. Teachers also reported benefits such as faster feedback, clearer instructional models, and shorter student revision cycles.

Mr. Taubman noted that current tools being explored include Google Gemini and NotebookLM. Professional development is being led by Mr. Kern and Mr. Taubman, who are serving as AI Innovation Leads. The goal of this work is to provide educators with guiding principles for responsible AI use, including protecting productive struggle, using AI selectively, and preserving essential human roles such as content expertise, reviewing student work, and providing in-person feedback.

Mr. Taubman shared examples of classroom use, including leveraging AI to streamline time-intensive tasks such as creating infographics, converting spreadsheets into web prototypes, and conducting preliminary analyses, allowing educators to focus more on coaching, discussion, and higher-order learning.

To illustrate the instructional potential of AI, Mr. Kern and Mr. Taubman shared an exemplar website generated by AI, demonstrating how a complete webpage could be created in approximately ten minutes based on provided information.

The presenters concluded by inviting questions from the board. There were no questions.

Mr. Rieder asked for a motion to go into executive session. A motion was made to move to an executive session by Mr. Evans and seconded by Ms. Scipio. The trustees voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:40 pm to discuss legal matters, personnel and real estate.

At the end of the executive session, a motion was made by Mr. Evans and then seconded by Ms. Bearce to return to the public session. The trustees voted unanimously to return to the public session at 6:54 pm.

Ms. Da Silva opened the floor to public comments. There weren't any members of the public in attendance.

Ms. Da Silva then presented the following Personnel items to the board for approval:

- *2.1 NSA Personnel Report*

A motion was made by Mr. Bellur and seconded by Ms. Scipio to approve the personnel items. The trustees voted unanimously to approve.

Ms. Da Silva then presented the following Finance and Facilities items to the board for approval:

- *3.1 FY26 Revised Budget*

A motion was made by Ms. Scipio and seconded by Mr. Verrilli to approve the finance and facilities items. The trustees voted unanimously to approve the financial resolutions.

Ms. Da Silva shared Administrative Resolutions for board approval.

- *4.1 HIB Report*

A motion was made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Bellur to approve the administrative items. The trustees voted unanimously to approve the administrative resolutions.

A motion was made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Ms. Bearce to uphold the recommendations of the Student Hearing Committee.

A motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Scipio and seconded by Mr. Bellur to adjourn the board of trustees meeting. The trustees voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:00p.m.

THE NEXT BOARD MEETING will be held on **zoom on March 23rd , 2026.**