

The Lawson Academy

August 23, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

William A. Lawson Institute for Peace and Prosperity

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Chavon Carr
Terence Frederick
Eric Goodie
Vernon Lewis
Mary Ramos
Yolanda Smith
Champ Warren

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Bryce Kennard

STAFF/GUESTS

Cheryl Lawson, Executive Director
Dr. Delic Loyde
Dr. Jonathan Sutton, Principal

The Lawson Academy Agenda

- 1. Call to Order.** The meeting was opened by Mary Ramos at 9:33 a.m.
- 2. Establishment of Quorum.** The quorum was established at 9:33 a.m..
- 3. Opening Prayer.** Cheryl Lawson led a prayer.
- 4. Public Comment.** There was no public comment.
- 5. Academy Vision (9:34 a.m.).** Champ Warren read the Academy Vision.
- 6. Approval of Minutes (9:34 a.m. – 9:35 a.m.).** Terence Frederick moved approval of the Academy and Board Minutes from June 28, 2025. Yolanda Smith seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Champ Warren moved approval of the Academy and Board Minutes from July 26, 2025. Yolanda Smith seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- 7. Academy Report (9:36 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.).** Principal Sutton described the great turnout for the first Parent Meeting of the year. There was also a Back to School Assembly which was well received by students with Principal Sutton's emphasis on ABCs: Attendance, Behavior and Course Performance. In mid-September, parents will meet with the Principal and will receive information on upcoming skills in Reading/Language Arts and Math. In the first weeks of the new year, Dr. Sutton recognizes that much progress will be needed but he has emphasized listening to student voice about what they like and what changes will make them more engaged. There will be Fun Fridays where students are incentivized to demonstrate positive behaviors. Increasing attention to arts and nutrition and the inclusion of a Student Leader community to learn how to make the year better. For the Career and Technical Education content (CTE), there are resources like Bank of America, Merrill Lynch (Champ Warren) and those are free resources. Board member Chavon Carr has relationships with organizations that can help with arts programming. Board member Champ Warren suggested that ProUnitas would be a resource for family services (Cheryl Lawson was in ALF with its executive and will follow-up). Board member Yolanda Smith suggested that a strong social media strategy to get more students could be useful. The NAACP has a resource that might be able to assist. Board member Vernon Lewis asked what 6th and 7th grade retention was like for the current year (reported by email after the meeting: 58% and 66%). Upcoming events on the calendar was discussed.

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8. Lone Star Governance (10:10 a.m. – 10:22 a.m.). Dr. Loyde indicated that the TEA is discussing whether STAAR will remain. T-TESS (teacher evaluation system) is also under TEA review, along with T-PESS (principal evaluation system) . These changes will dramatically impact student scores in the first year of adoption. The 2026-2030 HB3 goals were presented and discussed. They will be approved by the Board in an upcoming meeting.

9. Superintendent's Report (10:22 a.m. – 11:09 a.m.). Superintendent Lawson presented the TEA Ratings for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. Both years are “D” ratings and reflect the importance of our new principal and the strategies necessary for improving student performance. Student enrollment is lower than it has been, and there was robust discussion about what could be done to improve enrollment. Increasing visibility on social media, selling something that students want to attract a more diverse enrollment and changing the school’s focus to specific academic pathways were all mentioned. Champ Warren suggested that Rice University provide Education Consultants that might be a helpful resource to consider.

10. Executive Session. There was no Executive Session.

11. Adjourn Meeting. Champ Warren moved adjournment at 11:10 a.m. Eric Goodie seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting ended at 11:10 a.m.