



KIPP Atlanta Schools Opportunity Fund Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Meeting Location: 1050 White Street, Suite C, Atlanta, Georgia 30310

Zoom Link: <https://kippmetroatlanta-org.zoom.us/j/85346139094>

Committee Members Present: **Joe Arnold, Salim Bhatia, Kathe Brown, Stephen Council**

Staff Members Present: **Justin Anderson, Irving Williams, Lakeesha Ramdhanie, DaShondra Evans, Yolanda Gantz**

Other Attendees: **N/A**

I. Description of Discussion:

- A. The Opportunity Fund Committee convened to formally launch oversight of the KIPP Atlanta Opportunity Fund, which was initially established in 2009 through Georgia's state-approved Student Scholarship Organization (SSO) program. The meeting included a review of the fund's historical purpose, supporting alumni who cannot matriculate into KIPP Atlanta Collegiate, and addressed past compliance issues stemming from administrative and financial mismanagement, including a 2016 fraud incident.
- B. The fund was recently reinstated and brought back into compliance after years of inactivity, with a current balance of approximately \$254,000 and no new contributions in recent years. The committee discussed the legal obligation to disburse 92% of funds within the allowable timeframe to remain compliant with SSO regulations.

II. Call to Order:

- A. The meeting was called to order at 2:52 pm by elected chair Stephen Council. Salim Bhatia motioned & seconded by Kathe Brown.

III. Welcome & Agenda:

- A. Welcomed committee members and reviewed the agenda.

IV. Consent Items:

- A. Chair Election: The motion to nominate Stephen Council as chair elect for the KIPP Atlanta Opportunity Fund Committee by Joe Arnold. The motion

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to nominate Stephen Council as Chair of the Opportunity Fund Committee was unanimously approved.

- B. Strategic Direction: Motion approved to proceed with Option A: Disburse 92% of funds by June 30, 2026, and sunset the program.

V. Discussion Highlights:

A. Mission Moment - First Day of School 2025

- Leadership shared photos and reflections from recent school visits during the first weeks of the academic year.
- Staff provided on-the-ground support at various campuses, reinforcing KIPP's commitment to direct student impact.

B. Committee Context & Purpose

- The committee's role is defined as providing oversight, guiding disbursement decisions, and meeting annually (or more frequently if needed).
- The committee must ensure fund use remains compliant and aligned with mission-focused student support.
- The election of a Chair was required to formalize the committee's governance structure.

C. Fund Overview & Legal Framework

- The Opportunity Fund, created in 2009, was funded via Georgia's SSO tax credit program to support K-12 private school tuition.
- Past compliance issues, including a fraud case in 2016 and a lapse in reporting, led to the fund's suspension.
- The fund was reinstated in December 2024 after being out of compliance; the current balance is approximately \$254,000.
- Georgia SSO regulations require 92% of donations to be disbursed in the year following receipt.
- The committee reviewed eligible use cases, award limits (up to \$10,959 per student), and audit obligations.

D. Strategic Options & Execution

- Irving Williams outlined the strategic approach for utilizing the \$254,000 in available funds, presenting execution plans aligned to both spin-down and revival scenarios, while emphasizing the legal requirement to disburse at least 94% of the total balance.

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- Option A: Spend down the fund by June 30, 2026, and then sunset the program.
- Option B: Revive the fund for future contributions and continued administration.
- The committee agreed with the staff's recommendation to pursue Option A, citing:
 - a) Limited alumni population eligible for support
 - b) High private school tuition vs. limited funding available
- Administrative burden of ongoing compliance and fundraising
- The disbursement strategy focuses on KIPP South Fulton Academy alumni who are unable to enroll in KIPP Atlanta Collegiate.
- Outreach to schools such as Woodward High School, Cristo Rey High School, and Atlanta Youth Academy is underway.
- Concerns were raised about setting family expectations regarding the one-time nature of this gift.
- The committee also emphasized the importance of documenting the impact of alumni and ensuring equitable use of funds.

VI. Adjournment:

- A. The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Stephen Council. The motion was approved by Salim Bhatia & seconded by Joe Arnold.
- B. The meeting adjourned at 2:54 pm.
- C. Respectfully submitted by DaShondra Evans.

VII. Summary of Actions:

Action Item	Owner	Deadline/ Status
Provide audit history and confirm the year and amount of past fraud	Justin Anderson	September 2025
Confirm final fund balance and disbursement deadline	Finance Team	September 2025

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Identify currently eligible KIPP alumni at private schools (Start with KIPP South Fulton Academy and expand outreach)	Irving Williams	September 2025
Confirm private school eligibility (e.g., Riverwood) (Clarify compliance with SSO regulations)	Irving Williams	
Explore partnership models with private schools (e.g., Woodward, Atlanta Youth Academy, Cristo Rey)	Irving Williams	
Begin outreach and disbursement planning for Fall 2025	Irving Williams & Justin Anderson	
Develop a communication plan for families and past donors	Irving Williams	Immediate
Collect impact stories and alumni outcomes	Irving Williams	
Tentative follow-up committee meeting date set for December 9, 2025, at 11:30 AM	Justin Anderson	Immediate