

KŪLIA ACADEMY SCHOOL

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: July 20, 2026

Time: 2:00 PM HST

Location: 2340 Omilo Lane, Honolulu, HI 96819 and via Zoom

Board Members Present: Robert Bley-Vroman, Benjamin Cabrerros, Adam Murat Arabaci, Graham V. Crookes, Salim Ucan, Lisa Letoto-Ohata, Safa Berat Aktepe

Board Members Absent: Graham V. Crookes, Salim Ucan, Robert Littman.

- Meeting called to order at 2:04 PM HST.
- Quorum was present.
- Members of the public participated both in person and remotely.

1. Chair Report and Agenda Overview

- Chair welcomed Board members, administration, parents, and community members.
- Public testimony procedures were reviewed.
- Several parents provided comments regarding the PE program.
- Concerns raised included:
 - Excessive yelling and a "boot camp" style approach.
 - Heavy emphasis on calisthenics.
 - Reports of students becoming anxious, crying, or wanting to avoid PE.
- Other parents supported maintaining a strong physical fitness component while adjusting the approach for younger students.
- Parents requested additional elective opportunities, including:
 - Sports.
 - Music.
 - Clubs.

- Martial arts.
 - Approved off-campus activities.
- Parent volunteers offered to assist with clubs and electives.
- Board requested that administration:
 - Continue addressing PE concerns.
 - Review PE staffing and supervision.
 - Expand elective offerings.
 - Report back at the next Board meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes of June 15, 2026

- Board reviewed the June 15, 2026 meeting minutes.
- Minutes were approved as presented.
- No corrections were noted.

3. School Update

- Current enrollment reported at approximately 282 students.
- School initially enrolled approximately 300 students.
- Some attrition was attributed to military and family relocations.
- Proposed budget was being developed using a conservative enrollment assumption of 270 students.
- All teaching positions have been filled.
- One office position remained vacant.
- Nurse/health assistant was expected to begin in early August.
- Concerns were raised regarding unanswered parent and applicant emails.
- Administration agreed to:
 - Review office communication procedures.
 - Establish a more reliable acknowledgment and response process.
 - Report back at the next meeting.

- Administration reported continued efforts to expand electives, including:
 - Art.
 - Hula.
 - String/orchestra.
 - Athletics.
 - Drone/programming.
- Parent volunteers were also developing:
 - Yearbook.
 - Student council.
 - Other clubs and activities.
- Regarding PE:
 - Administration acknowledged prior concerns.
 - Additional athletic coaches were being considered/interviewed.
 - Administration was evaluating whether additional staffing, replacement, supervision, or other changes were appropriate.
- Administration planned a Parent and Community Advisory meeting to obtain feedback regarding PE, electives, pickup, and school operations.
- Pickup procedures had improved from the first day of school to approximately 12–13 minutes during the main pickup period.
- School had obtained access to the additional convent building.
- The additional space provides:
 - Approximately five classrooms.
 - Office space.
 - Meal-preparation space.
 - Additional room for future growth.

4. Financial Update

- Administration reviewed current revenues, grants, and projected funding.

- Per-pupil funding assumptions were discussed.
- Preliminary state funding was approximately \$12,000 per student.
- Budget planning used approximately \$12,500 per student, based partly on historical funding true-ups.
- Funding sources discussed included:
 - State per-pupil funding.
 - COFA funding.
 - Title I.
 - Federal grant funding.
 - Meal program revenue.
- Rainwater Foundation commitment reported at \$25,000.
- Approximately \$40,000 had been collected in meal payments.
- Federal grant monitoring visit scheduled for August 13–14, 2026.
- Administration will report the monitoring results at the August Board meeting.

5. Presentation and Discussion of Draft 2026–27 School Budget

- Draft budget presented with approximately:
 - \$4.27 million in revenues.
 - \$3.684 million in expenses.
- Major expenditure areas included:
 - Salaries and staffing.
 - Instructional programs.
 - Technology.
 - Elective instructors.
 - Food service.
 - Facilities.
 - Maintenance and renovations.
- Proposed allocations included:

- \$50,000 for student computers.
 - \$20,000 for elective equipment.
 - Approximately \$70,000 for contracted elective/after-school providers.
 - Approximately \$91,000 for food and raw goods, excluding salaries.
 - Approximately \$75,000 for convent building renovations and improvements.
 - The Board discussed the need for additional furniture, equipment, and facility-related purchases associated with enrollment growth and expanded instructional space, and authorized administration to proceed as needed within available funding.
- Board requested:
 - Additional detail for major line items.
 - More conservative revenue assumptions where appropriate.
 - Explanatory notes beside budget items.
 - Removal of personally identifiable student information from publicly posted budget materials.
 - Administration will circulate a more detailed proposed budget before the August meeting.
 - No final budget approval occurred at this meeting.
 - Final consideration was deferred to the August meeting.

6. New Employee Relocation Assistance Policy

- Board discussed creating a relocation assistance program to improve employee recruitment.
- Discussion included:
 - A two-tier structure.
 - One amount for employees relocating individually.
 - A higher amount for employees relocating with dependents.

- Possible repayment or claw-back provisions if an employee leaves shortly after receiving assistance.
 - Possible employee loan provisions.
- Board expressed general support for development of the policy.
- Administration was directed to prepare formal policy language.
- Formal approval was deferred to the August Board meeting.

7. Other Business

- Board and administration discussed continued expansion of electives.
- Parent volunteers will continue assisting with clubs and activities.
- Administration will continue addressing PE concerns and athletic staffing.
- Board discussed school growth and long-term facility needs.
- Current facilities, including the convent building, were considered adequate for immediate expansion.
- Additional facilities will be needed as the school continues adding grade levels.
- Administration continues exploring future facility opportunities.
- Follow-up items for the August meeting include:
 - Final proposed 2026–27 budget.
 - Relocation assistance policy.
 - PE staffing and program update.
 - Elective expansion.
 - Office communication improvements.
 - Convent building renovation costs.
 - Federal grant monitoring results.

8. Adjournment

- Next regular Board meeting scheduled for August 17, 2026 at 2:00 PM HST.
- Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:37 PM HST.