

ELP BOARD MEETING NOTES

January 21, 2026
Call to Order: 8:30 am
Adjourned: 9:26 am

Attendance

x Adkins, Sarah	Elliott, Jessica	Keese, Savanna	x Owens, Robin
x Barber, Katie	Farris, Tina	Lisk, David	Pollock, Casey
x Bentley, Daniel	x Faulkenberry, Tom	Mendoza, Dawn	x Taubenkimel, Cindy
x Bush, Niki	Frothingham, Judy	x Moore, Laura	Taylor, Ashley
Close, Will	Green, Carolyn	x Neelands, Angel	Thompson, James
x Echols, Sylvia	Green, Courtney	x Nichols, Erin	White, Jamie
Edwards, Martha	x Hubbard, Rachel	x Owens, Erin	Williams, Lisa-Anne

Minutes

Welcome

Presenter: Laura Moore

- Welcome
- Percentage of board members who've contributed some or all of their pledge: 75%
- Bookmarks reminder
- Approval of November 2025 meeting minutes
 - Motion to approve – [Erin Nichols](#)
 - Second – [Sylvia Echols](#)
 - [November 2025 minutes](#) unanimously approved
- Approval of December 2025 meeting minutes
 - Motion to approve – [Robin Owens](#)
 - Second – [Angel Neelands](#)
 - [December 2025 minutes](#) unanimously approved

Financial Report

Presenter: Rachel Hui-Hubbard

- Bank Balance as of 12/31/2025: \$26,599.61
- Schwab Balance as of 12/31/2025: \$161,273.91
- Total Cash: \$187,873.52
- Total Donations in December: \$3,626.16
 - EW Process: \$1,000
- Endowment Balance 12/31/2025: \$92,791.17
- ROR
 - Credits Spent: \$4,583.84
 - ROR Credits Earned as Income: \$0
 - ROR Credits Remaining: \$ 20,308.22
- Net Income as of 12/31/2025: (\$13,495.95)

Programs Report

Presenter: Nicolette Bush

- ROR: Ordered books for Atrium practices and North Central

NB: We are able to order books from Scholastic now, so our pediatric practices get new titles!

- CBG:
 - YCL story time with Mrs. Claus – very well-attended. We ran out of books!
 - New name suggestions:
 1. Gifted Pages
 2. Read to Rise
 3. Books in Every Home
 4. Books for Budding Bookworms
 5. Other suggestions

Unanimous agreement on Books in Every Home - it describes the program perfectly

- Books for Baby Bumps: New partnership with Mother’s Nest

Executive Director Report

Presenter: Rachel Hui-Hubbard

- Christmasville
- Fort Mill Festival of Trees – made \$100
- Fort Mill Memory Mill event

Laura Moore: the event was run by high school kids; trivia questions all about Fort Mill; kids got scholarships and ELP made around \$300

- Rock Hill School District

Rachel and Nicolette met with Dr. Elder in the fall; Katie checked on donations and updated Dr. Elder

Katie Barber: Right before Christmas break, the school board voted to end some donations and ELP was one; Dr. Elder states that this is temporary and that she does believe in the mission.

Rachel Hui-Hubbard: The previous superintendent, Dr Schmolze, was trying to increase our donation to \$10K. This is a hit due to the missing funds as well as being able to say that we are supported by all four school districts.

Cindy Taubenkimel: I presented to Dr. Elder as well and emphasized the support that ELP provides us. I will speak to her again when I have a chance.

RHH: The good news is that the Lake Wylie Clover Mayday Project came through with \$5K and offered to come up with the remaining \$3K if we really need it.

Robin Owens: When was that (school board) vote?

CT: I listened to the school board meetings and they didn’t vote; it also wasn’t listed on the agenda.

Laura Moore: Investing in children can be a hard sell; we have some important stories to tell about breaking the cycle of poverty and children not succeeding in school due to lack of school readiness. Just having books in their home means children have a greater opportunity to succeed. We need to reach out to other organizations that can help. Our organization is laser-focused to York County and that makes it unique. However, immediate concerns are more pressing to our funders.

Tom Faulkenberry: The Rock Hill school board probably never voted on that specifically; the budget was presented to the board they voted on that as a whole, not a specific item.

KB: Exactly, they eliminated several “yearly donations.”

LM: Being good stewards of our funds means that we have money, we have an endowment. But the need is acute, children need books.

- Reach Out and Read

Sunshine Pediatrics – cancelled program and had Nicolette pick up their books

Tri County Pediatrics – two locations affected; currently seems like they are holding on to the program, but the future is uncertain

RHH: There is clearly a misunderstanding about the program. Isabel (our SC ROR coordinator) and I are going to meet with one of the SouthernMED partners. Per Martha Edwards, SouthernMED is not part of the American Association of Pediatrics. Laura and I are doing some investigative work.

LM: I am doing research about where the money is coming from. SouthernMED bought these practices; where does their money come from? It comes from a private equity firm. Through my contacts, I found someone at Webster (PE firm) and I have a call with them at 3 pm today.

This may have to do with efficiency – shave off 6 minutes here or there to save time. Maybe we can get the story through the pipeline that all we want is a “prescription” for books.

RHH: Chances are the private equity firm does not care; they are the ones limiting doctor-patient time. We are subject to changes in the environment and all we can do is pivot to other programs. We have already surpassed the number of community book giveaway books from last year and we are only halfway through this year.

Daniel Bentley: We go to SouthernMED in Tega Cay. They give out stickers at the end of the visit, so why can't they give out a book then as well?

RHH: The Reach Out and Read model is for the doctor to give out the book. We want to retain this program, but we have also been discussing alternatives if all else fails.

Angel Neelands: What about a video in the lobby that plays that provides the parent with the information that the doctor typically provides?

CT: Or a nurse could give out the book and provide guidance.

RO: Have you heard anything from ROR national?

RHH: We have only been in contact with ROR South Carolina, but they haven't been experiencing issues statewide yet. We have to be sensitive since this is their program and not ours.

Sylvia Echols: These pediatricians are under such pressure to see so many patients; their time is limited. It can take a while for doctors to determine what is going on with a child; children have problems beyond medical issues, so this is really tragic for the children.

LM: These practices with heavy Medicaid client base are juicy for private equity firms because the government pays!

Workgroup Reports

- Fundraising/Events – Rachel Hui Hubbard
 - Share the Love of Reading: The following restaurants have been contacted: Firebirds, Towne Tavern, Dilworth Grill, Jekyll and Hyde, Fish Market, Paco Taco, Brixx Fort Mill, Epic, Napa, and Spice

Judy has been working on fundraising. She has contacted several restaurants, but we have no firm participation yet. If you know anyone that owns a restaurant, please ask them!

- Kentucky Derby race: 2 companies have been contacted. Comparing prices and services, developing sponsorship letter

- In the Know – Katie Barber

The importance of representation in children’s literature

Challenges that exist: diverse collection of books, potential for bias, multi-language books

How can ELP help? Understand danger of a single story; promote diverse authors

Katie will email presentation out to board members

For Your Calendars:

- Next ELP board meeting will be on Zoom- Wednesday 2/18/26 at 8:30 am