

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

*UNITED CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED MATH AND SCIENCE III (AMS III)  
UNITED CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR ADVANCED MATH AND SCIENCE IV (AMS IV)  
UNITED CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE HUMANITIES IV (HUM IV)*

Minutes of the board of trustees meeting for United Charter Schools (AMS III, AMS IV, and HUM IV) held on Monday, October 21, 2024

**Trustees Present:** Rose DePinto, Lior Evan, Jeremiah Thomas, Sophie Schechter, Eldean Wilson

**Trustees Absent:** Alice L Bruns, Nicole Best

**School Staff:** Nissi Jonathan, Claubentz Dieujuste, Ali Shama

**United Staff:** Curtis Palmore, Tracy Kebatta, Leslie DeWitt, Robert Hiller, Valerie Babb, Samantha Ross, Stephanie Millian, Toli Begum

**Counsel:** Cliff Schneider

Mr. Evan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

### **September Meeting Minutes**

The board unanimously approved the minutes of the September 16, 2024 meeting for United Charter Schools with a motion made by Mr. Evan and seconded by Mr. Thomas.

### **Presentation by BDO Assurance Director Jimmy Wara and Audit Principal Adam Cole**

BDO conducted an audit for New Visions Charter Schools, following professional standards that require communication of any significant audit matters to those overseeing the financial reporting process. The objective was to provide reasonable assurance (not absolute) that the financial statements are free from material misstatements. The audit scope matched the plan outlined in July, and BDO expects to issue an unmodified (clean) opinion on both the financial statements and the single audit and noted that we did not have any corrected misstatements.

### **New Staff Introductions**

**CEO Dr. Curtis Palmore** introduced the new Central Office team members who started during the previous month:

- **Director of Talent Valerie Babb** - Valerie is responsible for managing the search and hiring processes for the United Charter network.
- **Director of External Affairs Stephanie Millan** - Stephanie is responsible for the United Charter network's marketing, public relations and student recruitment efforts...
- **Receptionist Toli Begum** - Toli is the receptionist at the network office and will also assist in the design of various marketing materials.
- **Data Analyst Manager Samantha Ross** – Samantha is responsible for managing the network's student information system, assisting the schools in utilizing it, and creating data dashboards and presentations to ensure that all our stakeholders have access to essential data.

**Chief Executive Officer Updates** - United Charter High Schools are ranked high on the Niche Best New York Charter High School ratings. Our schools are ranked in the top 25. Dr. Curtis Palmore also shared this information during his video interview with BronxNet, to be published on October 23, 2024. Dr. Curtis Palmore announced that Reverend Alfonso Wyatt will be working with United Charter High Schools to support community engagement efforts.

- **Recruitment** - Four pillars of Student Recruitment are introduced: Media, Advertisements, Community Engagement, Engaging Philanthropies. On the note of *Engaging Philanthropies*, CEO Dr. Curtis Palmore and CFO/COO Tracy Kebatta met with a major education philanthropy with the goal of generating funds to support student recruitment. We are in the process of writing a proposal for funding.
- **Principal Residency Program** - UCHS will start a Principal Residency Program to create a pipeline for current certified school leaders to develop core competencies based on the Principals Evaluation rubric.
- **Student Advisory Council** - Dr. Curtis Palmore announced the Student Advisory Council which will consist of two students per campus to receive feedback on network wide initiatives such as the cellphone and uniform policies. The Student Advisory Council will also meet the Board and provide insights.
- **UCHS Central Office Team** - The UCHS Central Office team is fully staffed, with the addition of Director of External Affairs Stephanie Millian and Receptionist Toli Begum.
- Consultant Melissa Marcus is also listed on the organization chart as she continues to help UCHS with charter school authorizer compliance efforts.
- **Principal Award** - Principal Sandy Manassis will receive her second Bronx Powerlist award on October 22nd, 2024.

**Chief Academic Operations Officer Updates** - UCHS Central Office Team and Principals participated in a Learning Walk at AMS IV on September 26th. In preparation for this Learning Walk, Principals and Chief Academic Officer Robert Hiller created a rubric for identifying evidence supporting Critical Thinking in the classroom through three lenses: Task, Teachers, and Students. The next Learning Walk is at AMS II on November 14th and Board members are encouraged to attend.

- **Principals' Development** - Every principal has established three goals. Principals will be evaluated this year using a new rubric centered on school leader priorities.
- **IEP Program Meetings** - This year, the CSE issued a new mandate requiring schools to submit a form for students who are not receiving all of their mandated services as stated in their IEP. Director of Special Populations Angie Torres developed a tool for each school detailing the services students should be receiving and the associated money schools would receive for providing these services. Programmers at each school will meet once a month starting in January to be proactive and to help serve as checks and balances for the schools. In November, Angie will present Lexile data.

- **School Data Dashboard and Data Overview** – The School Data Dashboard will show the schools’ progress towards network goals for attendance, graduation progress, and literacy. The dashboard will also show more granular views of course pass rates and individual student attendance rates, grades, and path to graduation.

**Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer Updates** - Enrollment totals and revenue were shared for each school and the network as a whole.

- Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating Officer Tracy Kebatta reviewed operating reserves for the schools and the Q1 financials which runs from July - September. For Q1, there are no items to flag, and the expenses have no cause for concern. The statement of the financial position as well as the variance reports by school and network are available for Board members to review.
- **BEDS Day Enrollment** - The enrollment figure aligns with the September 30th closing numbers, totaling 2,327.  
The Enrollment and Recruitment calendar are as follows:
  - August - September: Pre-Recruitment
  - October - April: Recruitment, Retention, Lottery
  - May - June: Enrollment
  - July - September: Retention

- **Talent Acquisition**

Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer Tracy Kebatta acknowledged the Director of Talent Valerie Babb for visiting all seven schools in her first month of work with UCHS. Since Valerie joined the organization, UCHS schools have gone from 14 vacancies down to only 7 vacancies. UCHS will continue to use Greenhouse for job postings and will complete a data migration from New Visions by November 15th.

**Chief Executive Officer** Dr. Curtis Palmore proposed for our lottery and applications to be open to accept 11th grade students.

- **Approval of 11th Grade Applications**

The board unanimously approved the acceptance for 11th grade applications for United Charter High Schools with a motion made by Mr. Evan and seconded by Mr. Thomas.

**Chief Executive Officer** Dr. Curtis Palmore proposed that December 23rd be converted to a non-working day and for June 10th and June 11th to be Regents Testing days as per the NYS Memo from June 2024.

- **Approval of Calendar Changes**

The board unanimously approved the calendar changes for United Charter High Schools with a motion made by Mr. Evan and seconded by Mr. Thomas.

### **Adjournment and Executive Session**

The board moved to close the public session and move into executive session at 7:30 p.m.