

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, November 18, 2024

Trustees Present: Rose DePinto, Lior Evan, Jeremiah Thomas, , Eldean Wilson, Alice L Bruns, Nicole Best

Trustees Absent: Sophie Schechter

School Staff: Nissi Jonathan, 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 6:03 pm.

Executive Session: The board moved into executive session at 6:03 pm. The following items were discussed.

- **Employee relations and other confidential matters**

The board moved to close the executive session and move into public session at 7:35 pm.

Board Chair Mr. Evan Updates: Funding Resolution

Mr. Evan proposed and the board discussed an Intercompany Advance from AMS II to HUM IV, up to \$200,000 in November expected to be repaid upon receipt of the next per pupil funding or future advances.

- Mr. Evan made a motion to approve the Intercompany Advance from AMS II to HUM IV until there is adequate funding or a permanent arrangement is made.
- The board unanimously approved the Intercompany Advance from AMS II to HUM IV with no objections.

Board Chair Mr. Evan clarified that the approved intercompany advance from AMS II to HUM IV is a short-term measure to cover immediate financial needs, specifically the November 30th payroll. Additional funding is expected in December. A formal funding structure will be addressed at the December board meeting, which will include repayment of this advance and redistribution among Bronx schools as necessary.

School Assessment Committee

The board agreed to have a School Assessment Committee. The Committee members include Dr. Palmore, Mr. Hiller; Mrs. Rosario-Rodriguez, Mr. Nathan and Ms. Gibson, together with Rose DePinto from the Bronx, Brooklyn Queens board and perhaps a few United principals.

Principal Evaluation Policy

The board agreed to an official principal grading and evaluation policy, based upon a process proposed by Mr. Hiller, which is to be implemented in this school year.

October Meeting Minutes

The board unanimously approved the minutes of the October 21, 2024 meeting for United Charter Schools with a motion made by Mr. Evan and seconded by Mr. Thomas.

Chief Academic Operations Officer Updates - Mr. Hiller highlighted that October was Principal Appreciation Month. Principals were celebrated with personalized gifts, including posters, gift cards, and dry-wick shirts, as a token of appreciation.

Network Inquiry Teams Launch - Several teams have been established to address strategic initiatives such as:

- Human-Centered AI Team: Testing tools for teachers and students to create a user-friendly resource list.
- Instructional Leadership Team: Developing tools to support a learning culture and leadership playbooks.
- Post-Secondary Team: Setting network milestones and arranging post-secondary experiences.
- Diver Learning Team
- Forward Planning Team

Director of Special Populations - Ms. Torres presented an overview of the process of the literacy milestones from the Lexile Data.

- **Phases: Screening, Diagnostic: Scheduling and Progress Monitoring**
- **Intervention Programs Offered**
- **Screening Data and Challenges**
- **Next Steps** - finalize student assessments and programming. Continue progress monitoring and report year-end Lexile growth data.

Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer Financial Update - Ms. Kebatta provided a financial update, shared insights into our recruitment strategy and updates on HR.

- **Current Year Projections:** Recruitment remains below budget by 153 students. Enrollment updates have shown minor changes, with some schools losing or gaining 1–5 students.
- **Expenses & Staffing:** Expenses increased between September and October. Discussion emphasized the need to align staffing with student enrollment trends to manage deficits.
- **Revenue vs. Expense Projection:** Expenses tied to staff certifications or unexpected raises have minimal but noticeable impacts. Central office expenses are currently accounted at 8% of revenue in projections and need to be updated to reflect the full amount of expenses.
- **Re-forecasting Plans** - A re-forecasting session is scheduled, aiming to incorporate current and expected headcounts, along with accurate expenses for the remainder of the year.

Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer Recruitment Strategy Update - Ms. Kebatta, Dr. Palmore and Mr. Hiller collaborated to develop a focused strategy emphasizing an aggressive approach moving forward. Our strategy is segmented into four primary approaches:

- **Community Engagement**
- **Advertising**
- **Media**
- **Community Engagement**

Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer, Ms. Kebatta Operational Updates - A unified branding strategy is being rolled out across all schools, ensuring consistent messaging and adherence to approved guidelines (e.g., color codes). Materials such as flyers, posters, and newsletters are being developed to reflect this uniformity. The first draft of the United newsletter is underway, featuring success stories from all schools. It will be distributed via *Constant Contact*, including photos for better engagement, with ongoing collaboration to ensure diverse representation of achievements.

HR and Goal Setting:

- An evaluation system is being introduced for central office staff.
- Goals are being set and will be revisited quarterly, with performance evaluations tied to potential raises. Include mid-year reviews and final evaluations.
- Goals will be made publicly accessible within the central office to encourage accountability.
- Be submitted by Thanksgiving next week.

New Visions Transition Plan:

- Transition from New Visions is a priority, addressing technology, human resources, and finance operations.
- Challenges include limited support for the central office, contract sunset timing (June), and additional costs for audit support.
- Vendor options are being explored to automate processes at reduced costs, with a board recommendation expected by January.

Chief Executive Officer Updates - Dr. Palmore congratulated and gave recognition to Nissi Jonathan, who was honored as a Brooklyn Powerlist honoree for her leadership as founding principal of AMS III.

Adjournment : 8:30 pm.