

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

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

Minutes of the board of trustees meeting for AMS, HUM, AMS II and HUM II held on Monday, September 16, 2024.

AMS/HUM Trustees Present: Peter Cantillo, Lisa Gibson, Nancy Grossman, Fred Levy, Michael Nathan, Edna Vega, Nancy Rosario-Rodriguez

AMS II/HUM II Trustees Present: Peter Cantillo, Lisa Gibson, Nancy Grossman, Fred Levy, Michael Nathan, Edna Vega, Nancy Rosario-Rodriguez

School Staff: Lillian Lopez, Sandy Manassis, David Neagley, Tina Wagenaar

United Staff: Curtis Palmore, Tracy Kebatta, Leslie, DeWitt, Robert Hiller, Valerie Babb, Samantha Ross, Angie Torres

Counsel: Cliff Schneider

Mr. Levy called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m

AMS and HUM August Meeting Minutes

The board unanimously approved the minutes of the August 19, 2024 meeting for AMS and HUM with a motion made by Mr. Levy and seconded by Dr. N. Grossman

AMS II and HUM II August Meeting Minutes

The board unanimously approved the minutes of the August 19, 2024 meeting for AMS II and HUM II with a motion made by Mr. Levy and seconded by Mr. Cantillo.

Chief Executive Officer Updates

Welcome Back Event:

Dr. Palmore provided an overview of the recent Welcome Back professional development event, which marked the start of the academic year. This event featured presentations by senior leadership and guest speakers, including Reverend Wyatt and community organizer Lionel King, who spoke about “the power of the moment.”

- The speaker emphasized the intention to use this event to inspire the network and set a strong foundation for the year ahead.
- Sessions included various presentations led by principals, teachers, and other staff, which encouraged collaboration and knowledge sharing among team members.

Student Enrollment Target:

As of the last update, there are approximately 95–96 students short of their target. However,

enrollment numbers are still fluctuating as there are ongoing enrollment and disenrollment activities.

- The team expects the numbers to continue changing until Beds Day on October 16th, when a more accurate count will be available. This is especially true for grades 9 and 10, which are the most variable in terms of enrollment. The current data shows that the lower grade levels (9th and 10th) are under-enrolled, while the upper grades (11th and 12th) have a surplus in some cases.
- The current figures should not be considered final, as there is still active recruitment occurring. In conclusion, while the initial enrollment is below target, the teams are optimistic that ongoing recruitment efforts will help bridge the gap by the October 16th deadline.

Website: The landing page has been active for a few weeks, and the launch of school-specific pages was initially planned for Friday. However, due to the need for further editing by a professional editor, the launch has been postponed to the following Tuesday.

Additionally, the school is collaborating with a company to establish social media pages for five sites to promote the newly rebranded United Charter High Schools, formerly known as New Visions Charter High School. The team is enthusiastic about these developments and looks forward to presenting the new pages in the next meeting for support in promoting the sites.

New Visions Agreement and Transition: The team is in the final stages of finalizing a contract service agreement with New Visions Public Schools, which involves a payment of nearly \$3 million for support in five specified areas. The ability to sign this contract is expected to be finalized soon.

Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer Updates

Following the last board meeting, Tracy Kebatta the CFO/COO conducted a rigorous search for a Director of Talent and Director of External Affairs.

Director of Talent:

Resulting in the review of over 60 applicants. The search aimed to find a self-starter with an entrepreneurial spirit and relevant experience. After a performance task assessment with three finalists, Valerie Babb was selected for the position and began her role on September 16th. Valerie Babb transitioned from corporate law into recruitment, where she managed talent acquisition at law schools and supported attorney recruitment. Later, she became involved in charter schools after her children attended charter schools, leading her to advocate for the New York City Charter School Center. She co-authored legislation in 2010 to lift the cap on charter schools, ensuring access to quality education. She eventually shifted to in-house recruitment and talent management at a charter school, where she helped grow the team and streamline the hiring process.

Director of External Affairs:

The search for a Director of External Affairs is crucial for student recruitment, and we are close to finalizing the hiring of a candidate.

- An offer will be extended to a candidate -Stephanie Milian from the Red Cross who has experience in crisis management and nonprofit branding.
- The candidate is expected to bring a unique blend of nonprofit and for-profit experience, essential for building a robust recruitment strategy.
- Candidate Qualifications: The new candidate has relevant experience in managing crises and understanding student needs, which is critical for the role.

Chief Financial Officer/Operating Officer Updates

- Tracy Kebatta provided an update on financial operations, specifically regarding access to cash flow data for each school. Dr. Palmore the Chief Executive Officer and Tracy Kebatta the Chief Finance & Operating Officer now have visibility into the actual cash checking accounts, which aids in managing cash flow effectively.

School Safety Policies:

- A motion was made by Mr. Levy to approve the school safety policies for the Bronx Board and seconded by Dr. Grossman seconded the motion. Passed with no objections.

Chief Academic Operations Officer Updates

School Visits:

Robert Hiller visited schools in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx, shared positive student engagement during the Summer Bridge and the first days of school. He noted a lot of smiles and excitement among students.

Network Focus:

- **Continuous Improvement:** The network is analyzing regents data to improve student success throughout the year.
- **Joy, Belonging, and Engagement:** A key focus is fostering a sense of pride and identity through uniforms and engaging students by collecting their phones to minimize distractions. Initial results show increased interaction and engagement among students.

Leadership Development: Robert Hiller met with all principals and established a coaching plan that includes setting individual leadership goals for the first time.

Learning Walks: The first learning walk is scheduled for September 26, focusing on critical thinking and collaboration in classrooms. Board members are invited to participate.

Cross-School Teams: Plans are in place to form cross-school teams to enhance collaboration and focus on specific priorities. This includes a team dedicated to shaping the school's brand and graduate profile in light of potential changes in graduation requirements.

Collaboration Platforms: New email groups and Google Spaces have been established for teachers across subjects to facilitate resource sharing and collaboration.

Data Presentation: Hiller shared preliminary data from June Regents exams, noting improvements in some areas compared to the previous year, but acknowledged the need for ongoing work to enhance overall performance.

Principal Priorities: Each principal will present their priority areas. Themes emerging from school action plans include: Valuing student thinking and learning in classrooms. Civic engagement, which remains a core value of the organization.

Principal Sandy Manassis, AMS II

- Focus on Holistic Student Development
- Student Progress Towards SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) Goals
- Modified SEL Screener
- Advisory Role Enhancement
- Student Support Across All Levels
- Ongoing Conversations and Support

Acting Principal Tina Wagenaar, AMS

- Default Teaching Method
- Collaborative Lesson Study
- Coaching Support
- Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) Initiatives
- Success Metrics
- Leadership Support

Principal Lillian Lopez, Humanities

- Focus on Literacy Improvement
- Back-to-Basics Approach
- Data-Driven Approach and Continuous Practice
- New Structure and Leadership Role
- Ongoing Support and Evaluation
- Literacy Assessments and Interventions

Principal David Neagley, Humanities II

- Focus on Instructional Learning Goals
- Previous Efforts and Context
- Theory of Action for This Year
- Building Core Instructional Practices:
- High-Quality Tasks and Backward Mapping:
- Department PLCs and Instructional Rounds:
- Link to Culture of Learning Goal:

Final Budget Discussion and Approval

Board reviewed in detail and approved

Adjournment and Executive Session

The board moved to close the public session and move into executive session at 8:10 p.m.