APPROVED

American Dream Charter School

Minutes

ADCS II Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

SY26-27

Date and Time
Monday September 21, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3880187236

Meeting ID: 892 3909 4103

Trustees Present
A. Cabrera, L. Rojas, R. Espinal, Z. Martinez

Trustees Absent
P. Simon

Guests Present
N. Gallagher

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

L. Rojas called a meeting of the board of trustees of American Dream Charter School to order on Monday Sep 21, 2026 at 5:52 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

L. Rojas made a motion to Approve Minutes.
R. Espinal seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Startup Activities

Mr. Gallagher reported that American Dream Charter School II officially opened for instruction on August 31, 2026.

The school had approximately 16 enrolled students at the time of the meeting, significantly below its initial enrollment projections.

Administration reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining operations during the inaugural school year while continuing to recruit additional ninth-grade students.

V. Staffing and Instructional Operations
Mr. Gallagher provided an overview of the school's staffing structure. Given the limited enrollment, several employees were fulfilling multiple responsibilities to maximize available resources.

The staffing team included:

- Cassius Gil, School Principal, also providing history instruction
- Chantal Elie, English Teacher
- Richard Jimenez, Music Teacher
- Eduardo Euceda, Mathematics and Science Teacher, shared with the Bronx campus
- Natalie Madera, School Social Worker, also providing Spanish instruction
- Sakeyah Bell, Dean
- Yvette Alba, Main Office Support

Administration emphasized the importance of maintaining operational and financial efficiency through flexible staffing arrangements during the school's first year.

VI. Enrollment and Student Recruitment
Mr. Gallagher discussed ongoing recruitment challenges and the school's efforts to increase enrollment.

Administration expressed a goal of reaching approximately 30 students by the end of October 2026.

Recruitment strategies included regular staff outreach at One Fordham Plaza to engage families seeking school placements or transitions. Staff members, including instructional personnel when not engaged in teaching responsibilities, were participating in recruitment efforts.

Recruitment for the 2027–2028 academic year was also underway.

Dr. Melkonian expressed optimism that the school's newly opened facilities and growing community presence would strengthen future recruitment efforts by allowing prospective families to visit the school and experience its educational environment.

VII. Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grant
Mr. Gallagher provided an update on the school's Charter Schools Program grant.
He reported that expenditures under the first-year grant allocation had been made and that administration was preparing the required expenditure reconciliation for submission to New York State.

The reconciliation would support reimbursement of eligible grant expenditures and help replenish the school's operating cash balance.
Administration also planned to continue implementation and expenditures under the second-year CSP grant allocation.

IX. Technology and Infrastructure
Mr. Gallagher reported that installation of permanent internet service at the school remained outstanding.

Staff were using temporary mobile hotspots to support instructional and administrative activities.

Administration continued to work toward a permanent connectivity solution and resolution of other remaining startup-related operational matters.

X. Student and Family Engagement
Board Chair Luz Maria Rojas requested an update on the experiences of enrolled students and families.

Dr. Melkonian reported positive feedback from families and enthusiasm regarding the school's opening. She described strong family engagement and highlighted the commitment of the school's inaugural families to supporting the school community.

Dr. Melkonian also noted that a meaningful portion of the school's enrollment consisted of students receiving special education services.

Board members acknowledged the positive reception of the school's facilities and social media outreach, while emphasizing the importance of increasing enrollment and continuing to strengthen community awareness.

XI. Board Discussion and Remarks
Board members discussed the challenges inherent in establishing a new school and expressed encouragement regarding the successful opening and early student and family experiences.

The Board recognized the importance of continued recruitment, strong instructional programming, and prudent management of resources during the inaugural year.
Chair Rojas expressed appreciation to Dr. Melkonian, Mr. Gallagher, and the school team for their sustained commitment to opening American Dream Charter School II despite the challenges encountered during the planning and startup process.

II. Facility

A. The school's facilities were reported to be in good condition, with approximately six classrooms in use.

VIII. Facilities, Fire Safety, and Regulatory Compliance
The school's facilities were reported to be in good condition, with approximately six classrooms in use.

Mr. Gallagher updated the Board on the school's Fire Department of New York (FDNY) inspection and related corrective actions.

The initial inspection identified four violations requiring remediation. The reported issues involved building safety certifications and fire safety infrastructure.

Administration reported the following progress:
The school's self-closing door mechanisms had been serviced to ensure doors properly close and latch.
The required fire panel certification had been obtained.

- D-10 building safety certification cards remained pending following completion of the required training.
- The S-95 Certificate of Fitness for the school's facilities manager remained pending issuance with the appropriate school address.
- Two of the four violations had been addressed, with the remaining matters awaiting documentation.

Mr. Gallagher explained that the school had consulted legal counsel and coordinated with the New York State Education Department regarding the inspection findings and opening requirements.

He reported that the violations did not constitute a determination that the building was unsafe or prohibited from opening. Administration was working toward a follow-up FDNY inspection to resolve the remaining violations.

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
L. Rojas