APPROVED

New Heights Academy Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday October 24, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Location
1818 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10031

Trustees Present
A. Vasquez, D. Ortiz, M. Vargas

Trustees Absent
Q. McLain

Guests Present
Crystal Joye, Fred Givens, K. Valbrun, L. Garcia, Maya Roberts, Michelle Anderson (remote), Nikolas Weiss, W. Ramos

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Vasquez called a meeting of the board of trustees of New Heights Academy Charter School to order on Thursday Oct 24, 2024 at 7:03 PM.

C.

Approve Minutes

A. Vasquez made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 08-29-24.
M. Vargas seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Community Comments

Wendy Ramos - shared upcoming school events

- **Haunted Heights:** Join us for our annual event on **Wednesday, October 30, 2025**, from **5:00 PM - 7:00 PM**.
- **Interim Assessments:** Taking place from **November 1 to November 8, 2024**.
- **School Closure**: In observance of **Veterans Day**, school will be closed on **Monday, November 11, 2024**.

II. State of the School

A. Academic Update

Middle School Principal, Dr. Crystal Joye shared:

Our Middle School has had a strong start, with a monthly attendance rate of 95.6% for the end of September. We currently serve 252 students in grades 5 through 8, including 68 English as a New Language (ENL) learners and 56 students receiving additional support services.

According to our recent New York State assessments, 54% of students demonstrated proficiency in Mathematics, reflecting a 15.4% increase, while 51.3% demonstrated proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA), a 9% improvement.

We have completed 95% of our Beginning of Year (BOY) assessments and are now engaged in data analysis to inform interventions, instructional strategies, and professional development efforts. The Danielson Framework is being utilized to guide both formal and informal observations, as well as structured daily walkthroughs, to monitor the overall climate of the school.

Areas identified for growth include teacher recruitment and student enrollment. We are actively recruiting for two teaching positions (English as a Second Language and 8th-grade Science). In addition, we are working to increase student enrollment and seeking partnerships to support these efforts.

Rcruitment efforts has let to full staffing of a new ESL Teacher.

Finally, Dr. Joye shared the details of the middle school's trip to Medieval Times.

High School Principal, Fred Givens shared:

The High School began the academic year with an in-depth analysis of last year's data. Notable areas of strength included:

1. Algebra II, English, and Italian, with over 90% of students achieving a passing score on the Regents exams,
2. 10% increase in Global History Regents scores, rising from 69% to 79%,
3. An average score of 4 on the AP Precalculus exam, surpassing both the New York State and global averages,
4. On the AP U.S. History exam, 14 out of 23 students earned a score of 3 or higher, a marked improvement from the previous testing cycle where no students passed, and 5) a continued increase in the mean score on the AP Literature exam for the fourth consecutive year, from 1.5 to 2.87.

However, there is a significant need for improvement in our science Regents courses, where the pass rate remains around 50% or lower across all exams. To address this, we have adjusted math class placements based on students' previous performance, and in some cases, created smaller sections to provide more targeted instruction. Additionally, we added extra sections of Earth Science and Chemistry to reduce class sizes, particularly in light of increased student enrollment. This week, we also launched 9th-period intervention classes to provide students with additional academic support.

B. TNTP's The Opportunity Makers

Wendy Ramos shared that New Heights Academy Charter School has been recognized as a standout institution in *The Opportunity Makers*, a recent report published by The New Teacher Project (TNTP) in October 2024. She also noted that she will share the press release and report with the board.

III. Finance Update

A. Enrollment & Finance

Li'Esha Garcia provided a general financial update, mentioning the ongoing finalization of the audit. She also shared that she is exploring options for a new financial institution due to a recent line of credit denial.

Additionally, she is looking for ways to diversify income through corporate grant applications.

Maya Roberts suggested considering a grant writer or consultant to assist with these efforts.

IV. Other Business

A. School Safety Plan

A. Vasquez made a motion to Approve the 2425 Safety Plan.
M. Vargas seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Executive Session

A. Vasquez made a motion to To move into Executive Session.
M. Vargas seconded the motion.
To discuss potential board candidates
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. Board Elections

A. Vasquez made a motion to To add Maya Roberts aka Nicky Sunshine as a trustee.
M. Vargas seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
A. Vasquez made a motion to To add Nikolas Weiss as the NHACS Staff Representative as a trustee.
D. Ortiz seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
A. Vasquez made a motion to To add Michelle Anderson as a trustee.
D. Ortiz seconded the motion.
The motion did not carry.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

A. Vasquez made a motion to adjoun the meeting.
M. Vargas seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
W. Ramos