APPROVED

# Amani Public Charter School

# Minutes

## Amani Board Meeting

**Date and Time**
Monday September 9, 2024 at 6:00 PM

**Location**
Hybrid

**Directors Present**
A. Spencer (remote), G. Sardi, J. Kuo (remote), L. Attis (remote), M. Smith, P. Morenberg (remote), S. Edwards (remote), S. WuDunn (remote)

**Directors Absent**
J. Killoran, P. Smith

**Ex Officio Members Present**
D. Stern

**Guests Present**
B. Tanner, C. Stern, D. Marshall (remote), J. Ciavirella, N. Thurman (remote)

### I. Opening Items

**A. Record Attendance**

**B.**

### Call the Meeting to Order

M. Smith called a meeting of the board of directors of Amani Public Charter School to order on Monday Sep 9, 2024 at 6:05 PM.

### C. Approve Minutes

D. Stern noted that minutes of the prior meetings had inadvertently not been distributed with the meeting materials in time and would be approved at a later date.

## II. Chairs Report

### A. Report

M. Smith provided an update on the Board Retreat last week of August, including a review of the board policies and revisions, Debra's evaluation, establishment of board committees, including educational accountability. M. Smith also gave a brief update on newly elected positions and noted board was now at full capacity. The newest member L. Attis was also approved by the board.

J. Kuo noted that two board members' positions expired J. Killoran, P. Smith so the current full board is now comprised of 8, including: M. Smith, S. Edwards, S. WuDunn, J. Kuo, P. Morenberg, A. Spencer, G. Sardi and L. Attis. The outgoing members should be removed from website masthead and P. Morenberg suggested a certificate thanking them for their service.

## III. Executive Director Report

### A. Report (Executive Director)

J. Ciavirella provided a brief update on the start of the school year and noted there was great attendance at orientation, and that students came back from the Amani's ritual 'rites of passage' trips extremely excited. They seemed to have "had a blast!"

D. Stern thanked the board members who attended orientation, got to sit in on class sessions and enjoy pizza lunch with the students. M. Smith noted all seemed genuinely excited and enthusiastic to be back at school.

D. Stern noted that the school is fully staffed. She said staff turnover last year was 28. This year there were 18 departures, which is more consistent with expectations. The departures, however, did provide the opportunity for the leadership team to develop a cultural revamp, to reassess values and implement innovative practices and foster collaborative ways to retain and manage staff.

On enrollment, D. Stern said there are a total of 331 students - 8th grade was 100% capacity, 7th grade was 88. 6th grade was 85 and 5th grade was 68. Kids are enrolling every day. She noted that her administration worked very hard to boost enrollment in the

past few months, which helped tremendously. The enrollment committee will actively work on improving enrollment and recruitment efforts year-round.

### B. Report (Director of Finance)

N. Thurman on vacation today and will present the Financial Committee forecast next month. In October, auditors will also be present to hear the presentation by MMB. In November, there will be the first fiscal year quarter report.

### C. Report (Director of Operations)

B. Tanner provided an operations update, noting that chrome books were distributed to students, both PA and telephone systems were undergoing some minor issues but were being fixed. He also said the Department of Health inspector came today and found no issues related to food service. Next visit will be in the Spring.

He also was pleased to note that the school received a safe, through a generous family donation, so they can now store the Regents testing materials. Furthermore, he said the school would explore updating its interactive smart boards which are very old and reaching the end of life.

Discussion around cell phones and student storage and usage.

## IV. School Report

### A. Report (Principal)

J. Ciavirella said there has been a positive lift in morale among teacher, student and parent morale. The school has homed in on student attendance and proactively reached out to families to offer support and ensure improved student attendance. Building on transition to ‘meaningful homeroom’ and student independence. Lunch and recess periods have improved so that students have more choice, free movement. She noted lateness to class has dissolved. Choice has improved motivation.

Advisory sessions are held on Wednesdays and Community Circle will be Oct. 2 across street at Church. Sing for Hope and Advisory collaboration to foster stronger school community and engagement. Athletics program kicked off (soccer, cheerleading, flag football tryouts…) all moving in positive direction.

Update on academic programs and student support include rolling out Illustrative Math, Amplify Science, test assessments to inform programs and intervention programs. On Oct. 7 will roll out first exploratory program (academic intervention but also involves different facets of enrichment including physical wellness, social emotional, financial literacy, and specific areas of arts).

Update on NYS Assessment Data.

### B. Report (Director of Finance)

Discussion on lease liability and ceiling reimbursement. Need to research obligations on work done. Also N. Thurman noted that the finance committee is reviewing money market funds to house funds.

### C. Governance Committee

Approved modifications at board retreat. The committee will meet in October.

## V. Other Business

### A. Amani Elementary School Growth

D. Stern provided an update, explaining that the board is built up, enrollment is in check, so now ready to 'incubate in house' elementary school. Will apply Oct. 1 as well as contact "Charter School Growth Fund."

## VI. 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 7:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. WuDunn