Amani Public Charter School

Minutes

Amani Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday July 13, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location
Amani Public Charter School
60 South Third Avenue
Mount Vernon, NY 10550

Directors Present
G. Sardi (remote), J. Kuo (remote), M. Smith (remote), P. Morenberg (remote), S. Mayo (remote), S. WuDunn (remote)

Directors Absent
A. Spencer, K. Wigfall

Ex Officio Members Present
D. Stern (remote)

Non Voting Members Present
D. Stern (remote)

Guests Present
C. Stern (remote), J. Ciavirella (remote), T. Cajoux (remote), cgomez@bsk.com (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Sardi called a meeting of the board of directors of Amani Public Charter School to order on Monday Jul 13, 2026 at 6:07 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

II. Chairs Report

A. Retreat Agenda Development

M. Smith provided an overview of upcoming board activities and announced that the annual board retreat would be held in August. The retreat will bring together board members and school leadership to focus on community building, financial matters, schoolwide goals and priorities for the coming year, and opportunities for continued improvement.

The board will also address officer elections and committee assignments. Members were encouraged to review their current committee service and consider where they can best contribute. M. Smith emphasized the importance of active committee participation and noted the particular need for additional support with fundraising.

Full board attendance at the retreat was strongly encouraged.

B. Graduation

M. Smith reflected on attending Amani's recent graduation ceremony and described the occasion as both joyful and emotional as the school celebrated its graduating scholars.

G. Sardi also commented on the strength of the Amani community and the powerful sense of pride among students, families and staff. Board members recognized the graduation as a meaningful celebration of the scholars and the entire school community.

III. Capital Planning Committee

A. General Discussion

S. WuDunn made a motion to enter executive session to discuss capital planning. G. Sardi seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve it.

No minutes were taken regarding the substance of the executive-session discussion.

G. Sardi subsequently made a motion to leave executive session and return to public session. J. Kuo seconded the motion, and the Board returned to public session.

B. Legal Matter

The Board later entered executive session to receive advice of legal counsel concerning a matter under review.

No minutes were taken regarding the substance of the executive-session discussion.

Upon motion by G. Sardi, seconded by M. Smith, and unanimously approved, the Board returned to public session.

IV. Finance

A. Finance Committee Report

T. Cajoux presented the FY2026 Finance and Budget Report through May 2026. Although the school reported positive year-to-date results, it was projecting a year-end deficit of approximately $296,000 before any potential CSP grant revenue.

The projected deficit was attributed primarily to enrollment below budget assumptions and the timing of special-education revenue. Expenses were projected to remain below budget.

B. Cash Flow Status

The Board reviewed cash-flow pressure caused by delayed payments from the Mount Vernon City School District. Management outlined steps underway to collect outstanding amounts and address the school's short-term cash-flow needs.

Detailed discussion concerning financing and legal strategy occurred in executive session and is not included in these minutes.

C. CSP Grant Opportunity

T. Cajoux reported that Amani was next in line for a CSP expansion grant of approximately $1.4 million over three years. Staff were identifying qualifying expenditures that could be reimbursed if the grant were awarded. The award remained pending and could materially reduce the projected FY2026 deficit.

D. Enrollment Updates

The Board reviewed current enrollment projections and ongoing recruitment efforts. The Board also discussed the possible use of available space for Kindergarten and first grade if fifth-grade enrollment remained below capacity.

V. Educational Accountability

A. Instructional Planning and Mathematics

School leadership reported that summer work was focused on the instructional handbook, review of academic data, hiring, and preparation for professional development.

In response to the three-year charter renewal and the need to strengthen mathematics performance, the school has added curriculum resources, hired a Dean of Mathematics, and fully staffed the mathematics department.

The instructional team is reviewing MAP and New York State data, strengthening vertical alignment from Kindergarten through eighth grade, aligning curriculum and pacing calendars with standards and assessments, and defining expectations for strong lesson planning and small-group instruction.

The humanities and mathematics deans will lead professional-development sessions and meet weekly with school leadership. Leadership stated that improved classroom instruction is expected to produce stronger student outcomes and assessment results.

VI. Fundraising

A. Update

The Board discussed whether to hold the next fundraising event in the fall or spring. Additional participation on the Fundraising Committee is needed, and Board members were encouraged to assist with committee work.

VII. Governance

A. CEO Self Evaluation & Board Evaluation

D. Stern and Board leadership are working on the Executive Director evaluation. The Board will also complete its self-evaluation.

D. Stern and Board leadership are preparing a school prospectus for prospective donors. The document may also support recruitment of new Board members.

VIII. School Report

A. Staffing and Enrollment Operations

D. Stern reported that a new enrollment manager and registrar had joined the school. A newly hired in-house human-resources staff member was expected to begin on August 1. The school was also continuing teacher-recruitment planning.

B.

Summer Outreach and School Events

Summer outreach efforts were continuing. The Welcome to the Nest event was scheduled for August 26 to welcome new Kindergarten students and other new scholars, with activities focused on the school garden.

D. Stern also noted the recent visit by artist Lady Pink and related press coverage.

IX. 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 7:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. WuDunn