APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday January 27, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Location
ZOOM LINK

New Heights Board of Trustees
Starting Time: 5:00pm
Location: 1105 West Chestnut Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Join Zoom Meeting

ZOOM Meeting:
Description:
LINK

Trustees Present
G. Phillips, N. Christ (remote), S. Bernard, S. Jackson (remote), W. Lyttle

Trustees Absent
G. Bengen, J. Charnel, J. Radzevich, V. Marturano

Ex Officio Members Present
O. Walker

Guests Present
Alexandra Harvey (remote), Delroy Dennis, J. Geier, L. Delgado (remote), Lourdes Pires (remote), M. Fernandes, M. Jean, N. Jones (remote), R. Lewis (remote), rjoneshyde@massasoit.mass.edu (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Phillips called a meeting of the board of trustees of New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees to order on Tuesday Jan 27, 2026 at 5:06 PM.

B. Approved Board Members List

C. Roll Call

D. Reading and Approval of Minutes

S. Bernard made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 12-02-25.
N. Christ seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Executive Director's Report

A. Nutrition Summary

Dr. Dennis updates the group on the DESE visit for the Nutrition visit at the school on January 21st which identified several compliance gaps and recommended corrective actions. The review highlighted issues with meal service accuracy, documentation, and vendor performance, leading to a $60,000 deficit last year. The board agreed to implement an "offer versus serve" model to ensure full meal reimbursement, and Dr. Dennis presented a plan to address the review findings within three weeks. The meeting also touched on the need to hire a Director of Nutrition to consolidate and improve the nutrition program's operations.

Questions:
How often do we get audited?
It can happen anytime within five years, it just so happens that our name is percolated on a list of schools to visit.

What is the revenue that comes in?
$250k and an additional $60k is reimbursable.

How many people are on staff for compliance and how are they involved in the operation of compliance?
There are 2 people on staff.

Further discussion included talks about a pending vendor payment issue for November, with Suzanne explaining that meal losses were a significant factor in nutrition costs due to historical consumption patterns.

Do you anticipate that you will want to recoup some of the money?
The loss in nutrition is that meals aren't consumed and we order food based on consumption and that costs us. The loss may or may not be related to meals not consumed.

B. Mid-Year Update

Dr. Jones shares updates on of what is happening at New Heights

- 10th Grade Trip to Philadelphia from June 9th -12th
  - Amenities provide for this trip inclide a tour guide, security, and hotel for staff.
  - The trip itself will cost $1150 per student with a $150 deposit so that parents can pay over time. Dr. Jones did incorporate a lot of African American history to the agenda so for our students. All meals will be provided for students with a Jazz-B card that will have additional funds for students to get snacks or food.
  - Financial support: $25k for families who may need financial support for the trip as well as snacks for all students on the trip

Questions/Comments:
Steve Bernard asks about last year's spending of $15k and suggesting the ask be upped to $25k?
Dr. Jones states that the 25K be the ask for funds.

Culture Events at NH
Dean Harvey presented a comprehensive overview of New Heights' cultural and extracurricular activities, including Phoenix store rewards, perfect attendance raffles, community days, and various student engagement initiatives.

Athletics:
Mr Wright presented on the current success of the school's basketball teams, with the boys' team being undefeated in the conference and ranked 8th in Division IV, while the girls' team remains undefeated but has a lower power ranking. The school is planning senior night events next Tuesday and Wednesday, followed by a rivalry game against Foxborough Regional Charter on Friday, with a "whiteout" theme.

Questions/Comments:
Do we play other schools or just charter schools?

We do play 10 schools during regular season.
S. Bernard made a motion to to support the ask of $25k of financial support towards student activities/school trip.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Old Business

A. H1-B Visa Update

Dr. Dennis presented an update on immigration matters, requesting $20,000 in contingency funds, which was approved by the board. The pending cases have generated a 12k but more funds are needed for any further unforseen costs. So far only one teacher has been approved for a visa. Others are still awaiting a response from USCIS.
G. Phillips made a motion to approve $20k.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. New Business

A. AI at New Heights

Omari opens the discussion of using AI for good measures within our academic sector in terms of many bebeficial factors for our students. The meeting focused on exploring the potential of AI tutors, particularly Conmigo, as a tool to enhance education and address socio-economic disparities in learning opportunities.

During an activity with AI, the group is introduced to how AI can pull information from the internet to pull a full description on a board member using key facts about their life and skilled employment background. Omari continues to outline other ways AI can be used such as resumes, recommendation letters tailored to different jobs held, and random questions asked on any individual or topic.

The question or comment is raised about how students at our school can utilize AI without compromising the validity of information thought of. The answer or response is that we are looking for ways our students use this critically and in a smarter way that will embrace the use of this software verses denying it. Essentially, it helps our student use their own critical thinking of how to use it correctly.

Khan Academy does allow students to use AI, not to cheat, but how to apply what they learn. Omari shows the group a 1-hour video from **60 Seconds segment.** In the video, Sal Khan, the creator of Khan Academy, discussed the development of Conmigo, an AI tutor designed to provide personalized learning experiences similar to those afforded by private tutors. The video highlighted how Conmigo could assist teachers with automating

lesson planning and offering real-time feedback to students, while also tracking student engagement and progress.

Questions/Comments:
Steve Bernard says it is transformative. How are we going to effectively use this software?
This is what we will be discussing in many strategic planning. How do we use it since there are very few schools that are using this tool for good.

An important question is raised by asking how we get teachers to buy into this? Our teachers are always looking for new ways to teach so being able to use this technology, it embraces the things they already know despite the battle between traditional learning and this software.

Judge Phillips asks how Omari plans to keep the Board informed of this and Omari responds by keeping members of the board abreast of the journey to introduce this to our school and through our strategic planning efforts.

V. Finance Committee Meeting

A. YTD (through December)

W. Lyttle made a motion to accept the Finance Committee Report which contains YTD report from July 1 - December.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The Finance committee reported stable finances with a plan to move $1.578 million in funds.

B. Approve Money in CD Account

W. Lyttle made a motion to approve the allocation of funds in both the CD and Money Market accounts.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Tuition Assistance

The Board approved expanding tuition assistance by $5,000 for up to 25 teachers. This is in support of teacher retention efforts at NHCSB.

N. Christ made a motion to approve $25k to create 5 more slots in Tuition Assistance Program.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Academic Excellence Committee

A. Academic Excellence Report

Lourdes Pires begins the presentation with her Enrollment Report.

We were at 731 as of January 21 and will be at 734 by this upcoming Monday.

6th: 113
7th: 114
8th: 114
9th: 116
10: 101
11th: 84
12th: 89

Enrollment numbers for incoming applicants for SY26-27
6th: 99
7th: 28
8th:23
9th: 75
10th: 14
11th: 16

Renee Lewis presents on Instructional Priority which include H**igh-quality Curriculum** (implementing instructional materials, training and coaching, and the addition of ST-Math as digital curriculum in middle school), R**eading across the content area** (high expectations for literacy instruction, common practices) and **Early College Alignment** (create clear and transparent structure, additional scholar success learning time, as well as Junior and Seniors given the opportunity to attend MCC).

Kaitlin gives her data breakdown presentation with grade distribution of college courses

- 47% of all college grades were A's
- 59.6% A's at BSU
- 45.7% at MCC
- 1.2% (0% at BSU and 1.3% at MCC)

W. Lyttle made a motion to accept the AEC report for January.
G. Phillips seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Governance Committee

A.

Executive Session

S. Bernard made a motion to enter Executive Session.
N. Christ seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The board discussed a recent settlement of a discrimination lawsuit involving a terminated teacher. Despite having strong documentation of the teacher's poor performance, the insurance company pressured them to settle for $18,000 plus a $10,000 deductible, rather than pursuing the case in court. The board expressed frustration with this outcome and discussed potential strategies for future similar situations, including invoking a "Hammer Clause" in their insurance policy to maintain more control over settlement decisions. They agreed to consult with their insurance broker about modifying their policy to allow more input on settlement decisions, while also considering legal options to challenge such settlements.

B. Potential Board Member

Luci Delgado met with the Governance Committee who was recommended by Board Member, Jeff Charnel. The board approved Luci Delgado as a new board member for a one-year term.
N. Christ made a motion to accept Luci Delgado as a Board Member for a one-year term.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VIII. Good of the Order

A. Update on MCC Partnership

The group briefly touches on the matter surrounding MCC's faculty teaching our students in the near future. President Mitchell responded to the incident that took place in November and December of 2025 with an official letter addressing concerns from our administration.

Judge Phillips and Omari both comment on being pleased with the final outcomes in response to this important matter. He also speaks to future collaboration with providing more of what our students need.

Steve Bernard speaks to the calling of a meeting that was also mentioned in the letter for NH and MCC to meet.

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 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
G. Phillips