APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday May 26, 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, J. Charnel, J. Radzevich (remote), S. Bernard, S. Jackson (remote), V. Marturano, W. Lyttle

Trustees Absent
L. Delgado, N. Christ

Ex Officio Members Present
O. Walker

Guests Present
J. Geier, M. Fernandes, M. Jean, M. Mollo, S. Graham

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

S. Bernard called a meeting of the board of trustees of New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees to order on Tuesday May 26, 2026 at 5:05 PM.

B. Approved Board Members List

C. Roll Call

D. Reading and Approval of Minutes

V. Marturano made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 05-05-26.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
V. Marturano made a motion to approve the minutes from December 8th Emergency Board Meeting on 12-08-25.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
S. Bernard made a motion to approve the minutes from Emergency Board Meeting on 02-07-26.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Executive Director's Report

A. Recap of Events

A recap of events at New Heights:

1. Hope Fernandes starts off the discussion on the **Voices in Verse** poetry program, describing its evolution from weekly after-school sessions to monthly coffeehouse-style events featuring writing workshops, open mic opportunities, and guest poets.

2. Shana Cunningham presented an overview of the school's annual **Civics Showcase**, which was held in the gymnasium and marked its fourth year. She explained that the showcase is an integral component of the humanities curriculum, designed to empower students to become agents of change within their communities. The event provides students with opportunities to develop and demonstrate public speaking skills by presenting their work to teachers, families, and community leaders. Shana reported that students developed and led projects focused on issues of personal and community significance, including immigration, climate change, and mental health. She noted that selected students from participating districts are invited to advance to the Regional Civics Showcase scheduled for June 1.

In response to an inquiry from Steve Bernard regarding how the school shares student accomplishments with the broader community, Shana reported that the event was live-streamed by Wadner Pierre and that highlights from the showcase would be featured in the school's May newsletter.

3. **New Student Orientation** took place on May 12th, Omari noted the strong attendance and positive feedback from families regarding the diverse representation among presenters.

Question: how many languages are represented from enrolled students at New Heights.
Omari answered that there is ALOT.

Question: Does it propose a language challenge at home with students who are also learning English. Shana answers that every document gets translated to the student's home language.

4. Maria Fernandes provided an update on the **12 x 12 Early College event**, which was attended by Early College students and organized by the Commissioner and the Early Education Department. Students were recognized for their accomplishments and participated in a photo opportunity with the Commissioner. Maria reported that commemorative certificates recognizing student achievements are expected to be distributed prior to graduation.

5. Omari discussed MCC's **Lift Every Voice and Sing** graduation ceremony, noting that three of the 30 eligible students from our school attended. He reported that the school intends to reassess expectations for participation and seek representation on the event planning committee for future ceremonies.

6. **Senior Capstone**: Renee presented the new senior capstone project, through which graduating seniors reflect on their educational experiences, personal goals, and learning journeys at New Heights Charter School. Student presentations are evaluated by a review panel.

Question: Is this mandatory?
Answer: Yes, is required and apart of a school-wide graduation requirement.

7. **MCC Commencement and Fish-Fry**: Omari reported on the successful Massasoit Community College commencement ceremony and subsequent Fish Fry celebration. He commended staff members for their support and enthusiasm in recognizing graduating students.

B. Power 105 NYC Field Trip

The board received information regarding an upcoming educational field trip to Power 105 in New York City. Nine students enrolled in the music program will participate in a live, one-hour radio program experience under the supervision of Mr. Andrade and Mr. Enoma.

C. Staffing Update

Omari and Renee provided staffing updates for the upcoming school year. They reported that employment letters inviting eligible teachers to return for the 2026–2027 school year would be distributed by May 29.

In response to board inquiries regarding anticipated staff retention, Renee projected an estimated turnover rate of approximately 15 percent, representing an anticipated 11 to 15 vacancies. She expressed confidence in the school's ability to recruit and fill open positions, including hard-to-fill roles, and indicated that administration expects to be well-positioned for the upcoming school year.

The board also discussed educator licensure and compliance requirements established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Administration reported that teachers requiring Sheltered English Immersion endorsements are expected to complete the necessary requirements by the end of the school year. Staff members pursuing licensure have made measurable progress toward meeting applicable standards. Administration further noted that the Department has provided temporary flexibility regarding the Communication and Literacy examination requirement. Based on current projections, the school anticipates remaining in compliance with applicable licensure requirements.

Jess and Marybeth provided an update on the principal search process. They reported that 25 applications had been received and reviewed by members of the Executive Leadership Team. Six candidates advanced to the interview stage, and three finalists were selected to participate in on-site visits scheduled for June 4. Finalists will also participate in a family forum as part of the selection process. Administration anticipates making a final hiring decision by June 9, with a target start date of July 1.

III. Finance Committee

A. YTD (through April)

Suzanne presented the year-to-date financial report through April, reporting revenues at 82 percent of budget projections and expenditures at 79 percent of budget.

The board discussed ongoing negotiations with Massasoit Community College regarding a proposed increase in course costs from $4,500 to $7,500 per course. Administration

reported that a revised memorandum of understanding is being negotiated to ensure that no costs beyond available grant funding are incurred. The board agreed to allow administration to continue negotiations, with a target completion date of June 30.
J. Charnel made a motion to accept YTD.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. FY 27 Proposed Budget w/Narrative

Suzanne presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget, which reflects total projected revenues of $16,979,180 and total projected expenditures of $16,974,628. The budget is based on an enrollment projection of 735 students and estimated tuition revenue of $15,118,817, representing an overall revenue increase of 5.45 percent. Personnel costs, including salaries, stipends, and benefits, total $13,073,308 and account for the majority of projected expenditures.
V. Marturano made a motion to accept the proposed FY27 Budget and Narrative.
J. Charnel seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Buildings and Ground Proposals (Please see Finance Proposal Memo for explanation)

The board approved a capital improvement plan not to exceed $1.1 million for building and grounds projects, including upgrades to the public address system, construction of additional storage space, replacement of the gymnasium floor, and front entry enhancements.

The board further authorized the Finance Committee to review and approve financing terms related to the capital improvement projects during the summer months without requiring additional meetings of the full Board of Trustees.
S. Bernard made a motion to the full board to move forward with the estimated capital improvement plans and that if the estimate exceeds the high-end cost and for finance to approve once we have the final numbers, that it requires full board approval and everything is contingent upon approval from a bank.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

W. Lyttle	Aye
N. Christ	Absent
S. Jackson	Aye
L. Delgado	Absent
G. Phillips	Abstain
S. Bernard	Aye
J. Charnel	Aye
V. Marturano	Aye

Roll Call

J. Radzevich Aye

IV. Academic Excellence Committee

A. Academic Excellence Report

The board received the Academic Excellence Committee report. Administration reported current enrollment of 727 students and noted that approximately 195 students remain on waitlists across multiple grade levels.

The board also acknowledged receipt of an unconditional second charter renewal from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
W. Lyttle made a motion to accept the AEC report.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Executive Committee

A. Executive Session

J. Charnel made a motion to enter Executive Session.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
Staffing and Contracts: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion
personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

- *Legal*
- *Employee Contractural Negotiations*
- *Vendor Contract Negotiation*

J. Radzevich made a motion to exit Executive Session.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Bernard	Aye
N. Christ	Absent
W. Lyttle	Aye
L. Delgado	Absent
J. Radzevich	Aye
G. Phillips	Abstain
S. Jackson	Aye
V. Marturano	Aye

Roll Call

J. Charnel Aye

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 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Bernard