

New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees

March 24, 2026

11:00 a.m.: Annual Board Meeting Minutes

**New Dawn Charter High School
242 Hoyt Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217**

**New Dawn Charter High School II
89-25 161st Street
Jamaica, NY 11432
347-505-9101**

Board Members present: Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson, Brian Baer, Secretary, Mr. Jeffrey Casio, board member, Mr. Daniel Lewis, board member.

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Members/ Visitors Present: NDCS: Dr. Sara Asmussen, CEO; Mr. Steve Ramkissoo, CFO; Ms. Emily Predmore, Data Specialist; Mr. Jose A. Obregon, COO; Dominique Fuentes, COHR. NDCHS: Ms. Janisha Crawley, Interim Principal. NDCHS II: Mr. Muhammad Bilal, Principal.

General Meeting

Mr. Tabano greeted all the attendees then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the March 2026 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

I. Resolution: March 2026 Board Meeting Agenda—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the March 2026 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Jeffrey Casio seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the March 2026 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the February 2026 Board minutes.

II. Resolution: February 2026 Minutes—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Motion: Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the February 2026 Board of Trustees minutes.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve February 2026 Board of Trustees minutes.

III. Financials—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon
Benchmark 4: Financial Condition
Benchmark 5: Financial Management

a. Monthly Financials

Mr. Ramkissoon reported that regarding the Brooklyn school, the school is above projected enrollment numbers and there is a net surplus which indicates that the school continues to do well. Mr. Ramkissoon further stated that the Queens school is in a similar financial posture and that the school has met its enrollment budgeted numbers of at least three hundred fifty (350) students and stated that the Queens school is on track to meet its financial objectives. He then asked the board members if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the February 2026 financials.

Resolution: Approval of Financials

Motion: Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the February 2026 financials.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the February 2026 financials.

IV. Contracts/Policies—Ms. Dominique Fuentes
Benchmark 1: Student Performance
Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning
Benchmark 5: Financial Management
Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

a. New 32 Hours Unpaid Time Policy

Ms. Fuentes presented a required policy update related to the New York City earned safe and sick time, which was effective February 22 of this year. Ms. Fuentes stated that this is a compliance update with very minimal impact on school operations or financial resources. Ms. Fuentes also stated that this new policy does require the school to formalize and align current policy with payroll tracking and employee communication regarding the changes that this policy brings. The law now requires employers to provide an additional thirty-two (32) hours of unpaid sick time leave for employees and this additional time is available immediately upon hire and at the end of each calendar year. Ms. Fuentes emphasized that this is separate from the existing paid leave policy enacted under New York City Law and is also separate from the current prenatal law. Ms. Fuentes asked the board members if there were any questions regarding this new

requirement. Ms. Fuentes then asked the board members if there were any questions regarding this new law. There were no questions.

Ms. Fuentes then stated that New Dawn Charter schools is well positioned to implement this new requirement. Ms. Fuentes explained to the board members that the school currently provides unpaid leave to its employees. However, Ms. Fuentes explained, the current policy does not explicitly define the new thirty-two (32) hours of unpaid leave entitlement. Subsequently, Ms. Fuentes recommended three (3) key changes to the employee handbook that will define and outline those additional thirty-two (32) hours of unpaid leave. Ms. Fuentes also recommended that the finance department establish a new payroll code. Ms. Fuentes stated that this new payroll code will help differentiate what is categorized as current unpaid leave and what is categorized as the new protected unpaid leave under NYC law.

b. Total Fire Protection—Dr. Sara Asmussen

Dr. Asmussen briefed the board members that the school renewed its contract with Total Fire Protection Company. TFP is a company that inspects, services, and documents compliance of fire control devices such as smoke detectors, the sprinkler system, fire extinguishers, and the kitchen Ansul System as required by NYC law. Dr. Asmussen further stated that Mr. Brian Baer and Mr. Jose Obregon reviewed the contract before it was renewed.

Mr. Tabano acknowledged that he did receive a copy of the contract and all the board members received it as well. Mr. Tabano asked if there were any questions from the board members. There were no questions.

**V. Staff Recruitment—Ms. Dominique Fuentes
Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning**

a. Brooklyn: Aspiring Teacher

Ms. Fuentes confirmed that there is a job posting for an aspiring teacher at the Brooklyn school.

b. Queens: SPED

Ms. Fuentes also confirmed that there is a SPED teacher, Speech Therapist, and guidance counselor position posted for the Queens school.

**VI. Student Recruitment—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon
Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance
Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity**

a. Status of Current Recruitment

Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board members that student recruiting has halted at the Queens school since there are now three hundred fifty (350) students enrolled at that location. He also stated that now there is a student waiting list for future and potential student enrollments.

Mr. Ramkissoon also reported that the Brooklyn school is just fifteen (15) students short of meeting the three hundred-fifty (350) student enrollment goal. Mr. Ramkissoon also informed the board members that Mr. Abraham is continuing to reach out to other schools for potential student recruits, and that Ms. Fields has enrollment appointments scheduled for today. Finally, Mr. Ramkissoon stated that student recruitment is going very well at both schools.

Dr. Asmussen commented to the board members that this is the first year on BEDS Day that New Dawn is within 10/15% of the targeted three hundred fifty (350) student enrollment in fifteen (15) years. Dr. Asmussen further stated that this was excellent, and hopefully, this is an indication of how well the recruitment of students goes when the focus is on such. Dr. Asmussen stated that the school will continue with this effort. Dr. Asmussen also stated to the board members that it is interesting to note that when the school is not adding three (3) new kids every day to classes, the student behaviors are completely different. There is a consistent, stable culture, and it is noticeably different.

VII. School Updates

a. Brooklyn—Ms. Janisha Crawley

Ms. Crawley informed the board members that a C week plan was created along with a C week re-engagement plan. Ms. Crawley also stated that students are now able to stack their early bird credits so they can leave at least one day 30 minutes early instead of the usual 15 minutes early on any given day. Ms. Crawley stated that students are excited about this. Additionally, Dr. Asmussen approved a new retention plan, and it will be implemented soon. Ms. Crawley further stated that April 14, 2026, is Open School Night and parent/teacher conferences. Ms. Crawley also confirmed that teachers and students are aware that the last day of this quarter is April 1, 2026. Additionally, teachers will continue to reach out to parents and students.

Finally, Ms. Crawley also informed the board members that she and Ms. Ramjit will be attending the BARR Conference from April 21 to April 24, 2026. Ms. Crawley also stated that she and Ms. Ramjit will be making a presentation on teacher and student cohorts and how they should align.

b. Queens—Mr. Muhammad Bilal

Mr. Bilal confirmed that all teachers received their observations and he will be finishing post observations with all the teachers by Monday. He will continue to conduct walk-throughs and informal engagements. Mr. Bilal stated that he will be conducting an engagement PD on Wednesday. Mr. Bilal also stated that he will be providing feedback and monitoring, in collaboration with Dr. DiGaudio, scope and sequence. He stated that he will be making sure the math and ELA teachers are following the curriculum since this is where the most growth is needed when it comes to student outcomes on the Regents. Mr. Bilal also informed the board that suspensions are down by 40% from where they were this time last year and he is striving to get them down even further.

VIII. Facilities—Mr. Brian Baer

a. Update on Kitchen work in Queens

Mr. Brain Baer informed the board members that the Queens fire alarm is still in progress. The designer came to the site last week to do a walk-through. Subsequently, the design drawings for the new fire alarm system at Queens is in progress. Mr. Baer also reminded the board members that the pricing for the new fire alarm system is significantly lower than earlier quotes, both of which were priced at over 350K. The current quote and, even on the high side, with a generator or an uninterrupted power supply, will cost between 250K and 290K. Therefore, there are significant savings. Mr. Baer also stated that now there is a design component that must be completed and then get approved by FDNY.

Mr. Obregon mentioned to Mr. Baer that he will get with Mr. Giancarlo De Lellis from Barone Management about a few small punch list items that still need to be addressed in the Queens kitchen.

b. COO update

Mr. Baer informed the board members that FDNY indicated that the ACP 21 asbestos control permit needs to be updated and stated that he is contacting the previous vendor to get a new submission created. Mr. Baer also stated that the temporary certificate of occupancy has been renewed and hopefully the final COO can be obtained sooner than later. He believes that FDNY has slowed the process by demanding numerous requirements, but he believes that the school is getting closer to finalizing the matter. Mr. Baer stated that, in short, it just comes down to paperwork. He also stated that “As built” have been updated and uploaded to the portal. All that is needed now is to get the ACP 21 created, signed off, and submitted.

c. Roof in Brooklyn: on hold until COO

Mr. Baer informed the board members that Brooklyn roof project is in a holding pattern until the COO is finalized. He would like to have an offline conversation with Dr. Asmussen and Mr. Ramkissoon about what needs to get done on the grant funding for the roof project.

Mr. Tabano asked if there were any questions regarding Mr. Baer’s report. There were no questions.

IX. Board Elections—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Mr. Tabano informed the board members that board members are due for election/re-election. He asked the board members if they all agreed to be re-elected to the New Dawn Charter School Board of Trustees. All board members agreed that they would like to be re-elected. Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a resolution to re-elect all the current board members to the NDCS Board of Trustees.

a. Election of Board Members

Resolution: Board Members

Motion: Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to re-elect all current board members to the NDCS Board of Trustees.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the re-election of all current board members to the NDCS Board of Trustees.

b. Discussion about strategies to identify new members.

Mr. Tabano stated to the board members that there is a need for additional Board members and especially since Ms. Urbati was no longer present. Mr. Tabano suggested that the board recruit someone with an accounting/business background and someone who may be a lawyer or who can provide legal advice. Dr. Asmussen stated that Mr. Casio provided her with a resume who might be a suitable candidate for board member. Dr. Amussen also stated that Mr. Baer and Mr. Casio recommended recruiting someone from Newburgh, NY. as a board member.

Dr. Asmussen stated that the CSO NYSED informed her that the ND board needed to add at least two (2) more board members since right now it is out of compliance. New Dawm will comply with board membership requirements as soon as someone is identified. Mr. Tabano then re-stated that the two (2) new board members should be familiar with accounting and a lawyer. Mr. Baer stated that he knew people who were attorneys and asked Dr. Asmussen to send him a job description for the board membership positions so he could start the process of recruiting these new individuals.

X. Evaluations

a. Open School (Board evaluation) and McKinsey & CEO evaluation)

Mr. Tabano reminded the Board that self-evaluation and the evaluation of the CEO need to be completed and suggested this be done in a special meeting following the regular board meeting in April. It was agreed that Mr. Obregon will send out the zoom invite prior to the meeting and then give control to a member of the Board.

Mr. Dan Lewis asked Mr. Ramkissoon why the facility operation and maintenance cost is so much higher at the Queens school than in Brooklyn school. Mr. Lewis also stated that the expenses are almost five (5) times higher at the Queens School. Mr. Ramkissoon replied that rent expenditures were included in that expenditure category as opposed to the Brooklyn school which has mortgage expenses but not rent expenditures.

XI. New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Nt

XII. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 A.M and the next board meeting was scheduled for April 28, 2026, at 11:00 A.M. This will be followed by a special session for the purpose of evaluating the Board and the CEO.