

**New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees**

**October 28, 2025**

**11:00 a.m.: 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  
547-505-9101**

**Board Members present:** Brian Baer, Secretary, Mr. Jeffrey Casio, Vice-Chair, Mr. Daniel Lewis, board member.

**Board Members Absent:** Ms. Katharine Urbati, Treasurer, Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson

**Staff Members/ Visitors Present:** NDCS: Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director; Mr. Steve Ramkissoon, Director of Finance and HR; Ms. Emily Predmore, Data Specialist, NDCHS II: Donna Lobato, Principal; NDCHS II: Mr. Muhammad Bilal, Principal

**General Meeting**

Mr. Brian Baer presided over the Board of Trustees meeting in the absence of Mr. Tabano and Ms. Urbati. In this capacity, Mr. Baer welcomed all and called the board meeting to order. Mr. Baer then asked if there was a motion to accept and approve the October 2025 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

**I. Resolution: October 2025 Agenda—Mr. Brian Baer**

**Motion:** Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the October 2025 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

**Motion Seconded:** Mr. Daniel Lewis seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the October 2025 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Mr. Baer then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the August 2025 Board minutes.

**II. Resolution: September 2025 Minutes—Mr. Brain Baer**

**Motion:** Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the September 2025 Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

**Motion Seconded:** Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The board voted unanimously to accept and approve September 2025 Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

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

Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board members that the Brooklyn school currently has more students enrolled than at this time last year. He also reported that the Brooklyn school was on track to meet its budget goals for the year. Mr. Ramkissoon asked if there were any questions pertaining to the Brooklyn school. There were no questions from the board members.

Mr. Ramkissoon continued in the report that the Queens school was also on track to meet its budget and financial objectives for the year. Mr. Ramkissoon also stated that although it is only the first quarter, the Queens school is also doing well. Mr. Ramkissoon then asked if the board members if there were any questions regarding the financials for the Queens school. There were no questions from the board members.

Mr. Brian Baer then asked the board members if there was a motion to approve and accept the September 2025 financials.

**Motion:** Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the September 2025 financials.

**Motion Seconded:** Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the September 2025 financials.

Mr. Brian Baer asked Mr. Casio to comment on the results of the audit report meeting which Mr. Casio attended.

**a. Audit Discussion**

Mr. Casio reported to the board members that he attended the audit report meeting with the school's partners, Saxe Inc., and Accounting Solutions, Inc. Mr. Casio stated that there were many great points that were discussed in that meeting which support a very clean financial audit report for both schools. In short, both schools are meeting the necessary financial metrics. Mr. Casio also stated that there were no negative comments from the auditors pertaining to the audit. Mr. Casio also reminded the board members that Saxe Inc. is one of the most stringent auditors and is very detailed. Mr. Casio also stated that Saxe Inc. also provided valuable feedback regarding New Dawn's accounting company, Accounting Solutions, Inc., and complimented Mr. Bahl, head of Accounting Solutions Inc.

Mr. Brian Baer then asked the board members if there was a resolution to approve and accept the audit for submission.

**b. Resolution: Approval of Audit for Submission**

**Motion:** Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the audit for submission.

**Motion Seconded:** Mr. Dan Lewis seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the audit for submission.

**IV. Contracts/Policies—Dr. Sara Asmussen**  
**Benchmark 1: Student Performance**  
**Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning**  
**Benchmark 5: Financial Management**  
**Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance**

Dr. Asmussen informed the board members that there was an RFP created for the purchase and installation of a new security camera system in the Queens school since the current one needs to be replaced. Dr. Asmussen also mentioned that, in the meantime, there will be additional cameras installed in the new culinary kitchen in the Queens school. Mr. Obregon confirmed that the installation of the additional cameras and a new NVR, which will replace the one currently in use and which is faulty, will cost less than 5K. Dr. Asmussen also stated that the intercom system at the Queens school needs to be replaced and that she will inform the board when all the necessary requirements are in place including the funding.

**VII. Staff Recruitment—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon**  
**Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning**

**a. Brooklyn: Aspiring Teacher, Guidance Counselor**

We are still looking for an Aspiring Teacher and Guidance Counselor in Brooklyn, but we do have interviews lined up. An Art teacher has been hired.

**b. Queens: Behavior Specialist, SPED, Aspiring Teacher**

Mr. Ramkissoon stated we are looking for the four positions above (2 SPED). A Global History teacher has been hired. Due to the fact we have been unable to identify any SPED candidate a career fair will be held tomorrow and the focus will be on SPED teachers, especially for the Queens school.

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

**a. Status of Current Recruitment**

Due to a shift in demographics of the students who enrolled in the past year, enrollment is being closed down to reanalyze how we do recruitment because we are recruiting students who are too close to being on track to graduate—we must figure out a way to get back to servicing the most at-risk over aged and under-credited students. Dr. Asmussen also informed the board members that after doing an analysis based off ATS and Jupiter data, the schools are, on average, enrolling sophomores who are on track to be sophomores. Dr. Asmussen stated that this must stop until clear guidelines are established. Dr. Asmussen also stated that according to ATS, both schools have at least 350 students enrolled which means we are at census according to our charter. Dr. Asmussen further stated that a plan will have to be implemented on how to get back on track. Dr. Asmussen finally stated that New York City has an excellent template that specifies how much “at risk” a student is based on age credit accumulation and number of Regents passed. Dr. Asmussen stated that New Dawn will begin to use that template to start looking at which students will be enrolled in the future. She will reach out to CSO for approval.

## **X. Charter School Conference Update—Mr. Jeffrey Casio**

Mr. Jeffrey Casio stated that he had the opportunity to spend some time with the NDCS team at the New York Charter School conference in Rochester. Mr. Casio stated that he had an opportunity to introduce the NDCS team to a few school leaders. Mr. Casio hosted an event at a restaurant called Tapas 177 and the NDCS team was introduced to a few of Mr. Casio’s clients that are tenured charter school leaders. Mr. Casio also stated that some of the themes at the conference included increasing enrollment and budgeting. Mr. Casio also stated that there were also conversations regarding fundraising. Mr. Casio also stated that he introduced Jose Obregon to a vendor that Mr. Casio met who is donating equipment to charter schools. Mr. Casio stated that recently, the vendor has donated approximately ninety (90) Chromebooks to three (3) different charter schools. The vendor specializes in procurement of tech equipment including Chromebooks and laptops. Mr. Casio stated that this vendor provides those types of products to charter schools. The vendor collects the tech equipment that the schools are disposing of, refurbishes it, and then donates those refurbished products to schools that are in need. Mr. Casio asked the vendor to keep NDCS in mind if there are Chromebooks, laptops, or iPads that they may have ready for donation. Mr. Casio stated that this is his third year attending this conference and he has obtained a much information. Finally, Mr. Casio stated that regarding funding, the schools need to make sure that enrollments are continuously increasing and meeting the required metrics, so that NDCS can continue to fund its programs.

## **XI. School Updates**

### **a. Brooklyn**

Mrs. Lobato informed the board members that the peer mediation program is starting in both schools. This is funded by grant monies and will help students who are in conflict. Training for this program will start the week before Thanksgiving. Students will be involved in the training, and they will be meditating with each other. Ms. Lobato also informed the board that the NYPD will begin a program at the school focusing on leadership. The training will begin in the first week of December 2025 in Brooklyn. Ms. Lobato also informed the board that she continues to

conduct department meetings and is working on strategies for Regents exams that all classes can use. Ms. Lobato also informed the board that several staff members will be attending various conferences between now and February 2026.

**b. Queens**

Mr. Baer informed the board members that he and Jose Obregon are in the process of gathering quotes for the fire alarm upgrade at the Queen's location. Jose Obregon confirmed that is the case and he may have two more vendors who are interested in the project. Mr. Obregon stated that he could not get fire alarm mechanical drawings for the system in place. Mr. Brian then stated that Erik Jester was able to get floor plan drawings that the fire alarm companies may be able to use.

**XII. Facilities—Mr. Brian Baer**

**a. Update on Kitchen work in Queens**

Mr. Obregon informed the board members that there are still some small items that need to be completed in the Queens kitchen. He will get with Barone management and Mr. Brian Baer to go over those items.

**b. TCO versus COO**

Mr. Baer informed the board members that this morning he received some unwelcome news including that the FDNY had moved the Fire Alarm inspection date from the 5th of November to the 17th of December and the TCO is expiring on the 22nd of December 2025. Mr. Baer stated that he is recommending that the school entertain a proposal from one of two FDNY Expeditors and try to get the final inspection done sometime in November 2025. Mr. Baer also stated that he can get the school a proposal and perhaps the board can vote on it via email to expedite the process. Mr. Baer reminded the board members that this is the final step required to get the permanent certificate of occupancy for the Brooklyn school. Mr. Obregon had a concern that he would be out of town if the FDNY rescheduled to an earlier date. Mr. Baer stated that he believed that Mr. Obregon's absence would not be a showstopper.

Dr. Asmussen asked how much the expeditor will cost and Mr. Baer replied that it would be under 5K. Dr. Asmussen stated that she felt it was worth paying the fee to move the process along before the New Year.

**c. Roof in Brooklyn**

Mr. Baer informed the board members that the repricing of the paver material is being conducted, and it should be available by this time next week. Discussions are being held with Eric Jester and the vendor about where the pavers will be stored. Mr. Baer stated that he is thinking of the courtyard area in the back of the back of the building.

**XIII. New Business**

No new business was discussed.

**XIV. Public Comment**

No public comment was made.

**XV. Adjournment**

The board members agreed to meet again on November 25, 2025, at 11:00 A.M. The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 A.M.