

New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees

September 16, 2025

11:00 a.m.: Board Meeting

**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: Ms. Katharine Urbati, Treasurer

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

Executive Meeting

I. Legal Issues

The various legal issues around the school were discussed.

General Meeting

II. Resolution: September 2025 Board meeting Agenda—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the September 2025 Board Meeting Agenda.

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the September 2025 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Jeffrey Casio seconded the motion.

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

III. Resolution: August 2025 Board Minutes—Mr. Ronald Tabano

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

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

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

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

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

a. Audit Update

The audit is proceeding and will be ready for the October meeting.

b. Financials

Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board that only two (2) months have passed since the new fiscal year began, but both schools are on track financially. The Brooklyn school's target student enrollment number is three hundred fifty (350) students, and the school currently has three hundred (300) students enrolled. Notwithstanding those numbers, Mr. Ramkissoon stated that the Brooklyn school is still doing well. The school is continuing to draw funds from mental health and STOP grants. Mr. Ramkissoon further stated that the Brooklyn school is allocating anyone's salary that needs to be allocated and therefore the school is accruing liability. Mr. Ramkissoon asked the board members if there were any questions regarding the Brooklyn school financials. There were no questions.

Mr. Ramkissoon then reported to the board members that the Queens' school student enrollment target number is three hundred-fifty (350) students and there are currently two hundred ninety-nine (299) students enrolled. Mr. Ramkissoon also stated that the Queens school is moving to meet its enrollment numbers and that it is in a good financial position. He further stated that he anticipates that the school will meet its enrollment numbers as it has in the past two (2) years.

Mr. Tabano thanked Mr. Ramkissoon and asked the board members if there were any questions pertaining to the financial report. There were no questions.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the August 2025 financials.

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the August 2025 financials.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Jeffrey Casio seconded the motion.

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

V. 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 spoke about the costs for renewing SAM and Jupiter contracts. She informed the board that she believed both programs were beneficial to the schools and asked both school Principals for their input. Ms. Lobato stated that SAM helps track instructional time with teachers and helps identify teachers that need extra support. She also stated that SAM is a useful tool to track which teachers are being supported and how they are being supported. The program also helps to document that support. Ms. Lobato also stated that SAM helps to organize the instructional week as well. Ms. Lobato stated that a constant challenge faced is the scheduling of events throughout the year since many times unforeseen situations may cause a change of plan. Notwithstanding this challenge, Ms. Lobato stated that SAM is an effective way to organize the instructional day and helps to maintain accountability.

Mr. Bilal also agreed with Ms. Lobato and further commented that SAM helps to manage instructional time and for planning the instructional day. Mr. Bilal also stated that having a SAM coach allows you to get feedback and utilize time available more efficiently. Mr. Bilal further stated that the emphasis by SAM on using a calendar and the amount of time required to be spent in the classrooms helps to improve feedback given to teachers. The program also requires that meetings be recorded.

Dr. Asmussen also stated that task analysis tracking is extremely cumbersome and that SAM is an excellent tool to do this tracking and record it for future reference. Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a resolution to continue with SAM.

a. Resolution: SAM

Motion: Mr. Jeffrey Casio motioned to accept and approve the continuation of the SAM contract.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the continuation of the SAM contract.

Dr. Asmussen stated that Jupiter is a must have. Dr. Asmussen also stated that the school has used it for several years now. Dr. Asmussen stated that Jupiter is the schools' information and student tracking system. Dr. Asmussen stated that it is not a perfect system, but it works. Dr. Asmussen also stated that she would like to stay with Jupiter even if the school adopts another program, especially since all the teachers utilize it. Dr. Asmussen also stated that Jupiter is extremely user-friendly. Finally, Dr. Asmussen assured the board that Jupiter is the program that she would like to keep because it is efficient and not expensive.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the renewal of the Jupiter contract.

b. Resolution: Jupiter Ed

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the renewal of the Jupiter contract.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Jeffrey Casio seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the renewal of the Jupiter contract.

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

a. Brooklyn: Guidance Counselor

b. Queens: Behavior Specialist, Global Teacher, SPED

Mr. Ramkissoon confirmed that staff recruitment is going well. He stated that for NDCS Mr. Philip Weiden was hired as the new grants manager; for NDCHS Ms. Janae Brown was hired as an aspiring teacher and Mr. Dwayne Cook was hired as a SPED teacher. Dr. Asmussen commented that Mr. Cook is exceptionally good. Mr. Ramkissoon also stated that a new full-time internship and writing consultant was hired for both schools. Mr. Ramkissoon stated that he received acceptance from a new Global Studies teacher hired for the Queens school today. Mr. Hans accepted the offer. Mr. Ramkissoon re-emphasized that the hiring process is going very well and that there are not many positions that need to be filled.

Dr. Asmussen also commented that this year has one of the lowest staff turnover years ever.

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

a. Status of Current Recruitment

Mr. Ramkissoon spoke about student recruitment, and he informed the board members that student recruitment is going well. He confirmed that outreach continues to happen and that New Dawn continues to partner with other schools to keep the recruiting drive going.

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there were any questions. There were no questions.

X. School Updates

a. Brooklyn

Ms. Lobato also confirmed that new students are continuing to enroll. Many of these new enrollments are students that were attending New Dawn at one time, stopped attending, and are

now returning. Ms. Lobato also stated that staff are continuing to reach out to those students who are chronically absent. Some of those chronic absences are returning and other students are transferring to other programs that meet their needs. Ms. Lobato also stated that she and Ms. Flores are meeting with students that need extra guidance. Ms. Lobato also stated that staff and security personnel are focusing on enforcing dress codes that ban headwear like “Durags” that might be representative of gang affiliations.

Mr. Tabano stated that he believes that students are just starting to come out of the post-pandemic mentality and are returning to their pre-pandemic behaviors. Ms. Lobato and Dr. Asmussen agreed.

b. Queens

Mr. Bilal reported to the board members that the Queens School needs two (2) more SPED teachers and a behavioral specialist. Mr. Bilal also stated that every classroom now has a teacher assigned. Mr. Bilal also reported to the board that, recently, the school had squirrels and pigeons enter the building and a squirrel damaged the copy machine on the second floor by chewing on the copy machine’s wires. The squirrels and pigeons enter the building through windows that are left open or that are not fully closed. Mr. Bilal stated that he will address this issue with teachers and Mr. Obregon to fix the windows that are not closing properly. Mr. Bilal also stated that he is scheduling meetings with teachers for coaching and having them identify areas they want to improve. One of the topics of discussion with teachers will be discussion and questioning techniques. Mr. Bilal also stated that this week he will be conducting walk throughs and will be focusing on the classroom environment.

XI. Facilities—Mr. Brian Baer

a. Update on Kitchen work in Queens

Mr. Baer reported to the board that the school is still waiting for “as built” documentation for the kitchen project in Queens to finish that project. There is also the fire alarm issue that still must be resolved.

b. TCO versus COO

Mr. Baer reported to the board that one of the roof air exchange units failed to turn on during the last FDNY fire alarm inspection. Consequently, the FDNY did not give final approval of the building’s fire alarm. As a result, the fire alarm inspection was rescheduled for November 5, 2025. Mr. Baer stated that he will try to reschedule the inspection to an earlier date.

c. Roof in Brooklyn

Mr. Baer informed the board that the architects are finalizing the drawings, and those drawings should be available by the end of next week. Mr. Baer finally stated that there is still some narrative work that needs to be completed for the change of use of the fifth floor for the land use attorney. Dr. Asmussen stated that she will get that done soon.

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if they had any questions for Mr. Baer. There were no questions.

XII. New Business

No new business was discussed.

XIII. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

XIV. Adjournment

The next board of trustees meeting was scheduled for October 28, 2025, at 11:00 A.M. The board adjourned the meeting at 11:35 A.M.