



Storefront Academy Charter School
August 2025 Board Meeting
Thursday, August 28, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES

Trustees: Atta Acheampong (secretary), Richard Bayles, Amanda Low, Peter Low (chairman), Jewell Stewart (vice chairman) **Staff:** Anibera Abreu, Marcia Alexander, Taleema Chesney, Nidia Evangelista, Julissa Fernandez, Yoselyn Fernandez, Amia Fisher, Milly Jimenez, Robert Keogh, Stormy Kosinski, Marie Lucas, Maryleidy Pimentel, Yubdeley Ricardo, Carol Singletary, Desiree Soulet, Matthew Tiwary, Katherine Vasquez

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- August 2025 board meeting agenda

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Call to order and adoption of meeting minutes (0:00–0:40)**
 - a. Peter Low called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. EST.
 - b. Motion: Peter Low asked for a motion to approve the July 2025 minutes. Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
2. **Distraction-Free Policy (cell phone policy) (0:41–1:52)**
 - a. Marie Lucas reported that the Policy was circulated to the board a few weeks back (*see July minutes for details*).
 - b. Motion: Peter Low asked for a motion to approve the SACS Distraction-Free Policy (cell phone policy). Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
3. **Districtwide Safety Plan (1:53–2:32)**
 - a. Ms. Lucas reported that the safety plan was circulated to the board a few weeks back. The plan was posted to the website for public comment directly following the June board meeting until August 18. There were no comments from the public.
 - b. Motion: Peter Low asked for a motion to approve the SACS Safety Plan. Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
4. **Financial report (2:33–4:49)**
 - a. Robert Keogh explained that he expects the audit will be finalized this week, two months ahead of the November 1 due date.
 - b. There are no financial reports for this meeting because it is the first month of the new fiscal year.
 - c. Richard Bayles will meet with the Finance Committee to discuss financials in depth. No material findings are expected. Mr. Keogh will compile a dashboard summary for review at the September board meeting, as well as a forecast based on per-pupil data.
 - d. Annual state grant applications were submitted on August 25, ahead of the August 31 due date.
5. **Development report (4:50–7:14)**
 - a. Nidia Evangelista explained SACS' partnership with FundEd, a fundraising and strategy consultant firm. The scope of work will occur in three phases:
 - i. Phase 1: Onboarding and discovery (July 31 to September 1, 2025). School mission and goals, data collection, and project plan development.
 - ii. Phase 2: Fundraising action plan (September 1 to October 1, 2025). Create an outreach strategy and implementation plan for 10 to 15 high-priority prospects.
 - iii. Comprehensive grants management (October 1, 2025, to June 26, 2026). Up to 20 concept papers, LOIs, proposals, and reports. Continuing to identify grant opportunities.

- b. FundEd has identified two opportunities due in the next 45 days: the Frances and Edwin Cummings Memorial Foundation and the Glenn W. Bailey Foundation.
- c. Amanda Low expressed that the FundEd material seems very boilerplate. She would like a representative to visit SACS to gain a better understanding of its ethos. Ms. Evangelista and Ms. Low agreed to connect about this topic outside the board meeting.

6. Leadership reports (7:15–24:31)

a. (7:15–11:47) Enrollment

- i. SB: As of August 22, enrollment sits at 252, 13 students under budget. Six students have enrolled since the last board meeting; seven are in the enrollment process.
- ii. H: As of August 22, enrollment sits at 98, 17 students under budget. Three students have enrolled since the last board meeting; seven are in the enrollment process.
 - 1. Harlem created and presented an enrollment-oriented video.
- iii. Working well: Community partnerships and events (SB + H); Kindergarten Bridge Summer Program (SB); persistent follow-up on accepted seats and new applications (H + SB); media presence in the Bronx and East Harlem (H + SB); active leadership presence (H); unified staff and parent support (H).
- iv. Needs improvement: Harlem does not have a dedicated enrollment team.

b. (11:48–15:31) Staff vacancies

- i. SY 2025–2026
 - 1. H: There are currently no vacancies at Harlem.
 - 2. Jewell Stewart asked if there was a time that could be set up to meet the new hires in Harlem. Taleema Chesney clarified that the campus has an open-door policy to parents and board members.
 - 3. SB: One current vacancy (5th-grade special education teacher).
 - 4. Working well: Volume of candidates and partnerships with Teach for America and Monroe; one new hire at Harlem is a Monroe graduate.
 - 5. Needs improvement: Candidate quality. SACS has begun posting on LinkedIn, at the NYC Charter School Center, and at local colleges, as well as taking staff referrals.
 - 6. Peter Low suggested making a goal to add two or three more partnerships like Monroe. Ms. Lucas agreed.

c. (15:32–23:42) Academic highlight: Professional development summer institute

- i. Harlem staff have been doing in-depth analyses of NWEA data and reviewing SUNY goals, instructional priorities, classroom essentials, and curricula.
- ii. South Bronx focused on team building, refining the mission, and celebrating growth. SB also welcomed six new teachers to campus. SB is also celebrating 10 years of serving. Carol Singletary expressed her excitement about SB's position going into the new year.

d. (23:43–24:31) Culture highlights

- i. Upcoming events: First day of school (SB + H, 8/25); Dive into the Deep (H, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10); Back to Books Bash (SB, 8/28); Exact Path Summer Impact Celebration (H, 9/5); NWEA MAP fall testing window (H, 9/8–9/19); Making Waves: Kickoff Celebration (H, 9/12); 10-tastic Learning Celebration (SB, 9/12); Class of 2026 retreat (SB, 9/26)

7. Public comment (24:32–24:52)

- a. Mr. Low opened the meeting to public comment. Hearing nothing, he closed the meeting to public comment.

8. Board committee reports (24:52–28:13)

a. Governance Committee

- i. Atta Acheampong spoke with one prospective board member this week, and progress is



looking promising. She has worked with the city council and has many potential connections and resources that could benefit SACS—Harlem, in particular. She also has experience with fundraising and community engagement. Mr. Acheampong hopes to bring her on board at the September board meeting.

b. Academic Committee

- i. Jewell Stewart reported that the Academic Committee used the summer to analyze the structure and operations of the board. Mr. Stewart spoke with both SACS principals and expressed an interest in visiting the campuses, meeting parents, and attending upcoming events before determining a final course of action, which should be ready for the board's review by the end of the quarter.
- ii. Mr. Stewart emphasized the importance of collaboration among SACS staff, parents, and the board in strengthening academic outcomes.

9. **Closing comments and motion to adjourn (28:14–28:46)**

- a. Motion: Mr. Low asked for a motion to adjourn the August 2025 meeting. Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
- b. The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m. EST.