



Storefront Academy Charter School
September 2025 Board Meeting
Thursday, August 25, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES

Trustees: Atta Acheampong (secretary), Amanda Low, Peter Low (chairman), Jewell Stewart (vice chairman)
Staff: Rebecca Brunie, Charisse Carter-Lewis, Taleema Chesney, Nidia Evangelista, Julissa Fernandez, Yoselyn Fernandez, Amia Fisher, Esther Fokuo, Arian Glass, Marie Lucas, Yubdeley Ricardo, Carol Singletary, Desiree Soulet, Matthew Tiwary, Katherine Vasquez **Other Attendees:** Fabiene G., Shelley Jallow

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- September 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 6:02 p.m. EST.
 - b. Motion: Peter Low asked for a motion to approve the August 2025 minutes. Atta Acheampong moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
2. **Board trustee nomination and approval (0:41–2:15)**
 - a. Mr. Acheampong, chair of the Governance Committee, introduced Jasmine Reed, whom he nominated for the board. Ms. Reed 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. Amanda Low added that she has known Ms. Reed for years and is confident that she will be a great addition to the board. Ms. Reed will join the board at the October meeting.
 - b. Motion: Atta Acheampong asked for a motion to approve Jasmine Reed as a SACS board member. He moved, and Ms. Low seconded. The motion carried without dissent.
3. **Development report (2:16–17:49)**
 - a. **(2:16–9:30) Grants**
 - i. Nidia Evangelista gave an update about SACS' partnership with FundEd, a fundraising and strategy consultant firm. The scope of work is occurring in three phases:
 1. Phase 1 (completed): Onboarding and discovery (July 31 to September 1, 2025). School mission and goals, data collection, and project plan development.
 2. Phase 2 (in progress): Fundraising action plan (September 1 to October 1, 2025). Create an outreach strategy and implementation plan for 10 to 15 high-priority prospects.
 3. Phase 3 (forthcoming): Comprehensive grants management (October 1, 2025, to June 26, 2026). Up to 20 concept papers, LOIs, proposals, and reports. Continuing to identify grant opportunities.
 - ii. Awarded grants:
 1. \$525K through the McKinney-Vento three-year grant (awaiting final allocations).
 2. \$50,561 through the Nonpublic School Security Guard Reimbursement Program (Bronx).
 3. Mr. Low congratulated and thanked Ms. Evangelista for these successes.
 - iii. Mr. Low explained FundEd's role with SACS. FundEd will work with Ms. Evangelista and the board to connect with funders (e.g., foundations, corporate sponsors). FundEd will

source relevant grant organizations without invitations. The board will support in situations where an invitation is required.

b. (9:31–17:49) Enrollment

- i. SB: As of Sept. 22, enrollment sits at 242, 23 students under budget. Four students have enrolled since the last board meeting; zero are in the enrollment process.
- ii. H: As of Sept. 22, enrollment sits at 90, 25 students under budget. Three students have enrolled since the last board meeting; zero are in the enrollment process.
- iii. Working well: Onboarding a network enrollment manager (William Pintado); implementing a weekly enrollment dashboard; expanding community partnerships; creating mission-aligned partnerships; cultivating community presence.
- iv. Needs improvement: Heightened student attrition due to family relocations.
- v. There will be a community outreach event in both Harlem and the Bronx every day for the next three to four weeks, accompanied by a Meta-based digital ad campaign. Mr. Low asked Nidia to look into running ad campaigns on other major digital platforms like Google, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter).
- vi. Jewell Stewart brought up a trending TikTok hashtag, “#SurvivingAnotherSchool,” in which parents are looking for schools like SACS for their children. Mr. Stewart suggested that Mr. Pintado and Ms. Evangelista look into leveraging this viral moment.

4. Staff vacancies (17:49–18:24)

a. SY 2025–2026

- i. There are currently no vacancies in Harlem or the South Bronx.
- ii. Working well: Volume of candidates and partnerships with Teach for America and local colleges and universities.

5. Academic and culture highlights (18:25–49:53)

a. (18:25–38:56) Academic highlight: September 24th beginning-of-year academic summits

- i. H: Fall NWEA Map data, percentage of scholars on or above grade-level
 1. ELA: K: 86%; 1st: 64%; 2nd: 33%; 3rd: 50%; 4th: 47%; 5th: 67%
 2. SACS Harlem overall ELA: 67%
 3. Math: K: 79%; 1st: 57%; 2nd: 61%; 3rd: 36%; 4th: 20%; 5th: 47%
 4. SACS Harlem overall math: 51%
- ii. Mr. Low noted his impressions of his visit to SACS Harlem: 1) The depth of teachers’ concentration on each student’s personal needs; 2) every teacher knows every student; 3) the teachers’ passion and care for their students.
- iii. Carol Singletary highlighted teachers’ “intellectual prep,” summits, and student work studies, which help SACS staff diagnose and address each child’s growth needs. She noted that this approach enables SACS students to grow year over year.
- iv. Mr. Stewart suggested starting a book club, an initiative that he would like to spearhead. Ms. Low suggested partnering with Scholastic; Ms. Evangelista recommended the Franklin Templeton literacy program. Mr. Stewart recommended using reading as an advertising touchpoint to prompt SACS.
- v. SB: Fall NWEA Map data, median achievement
 1. ELA: K: 26; 1st: 40; 2nd: 57; 3rd: 42; 4th: 52; 5th: 70
 2. SACS South Bronx overall ELA: 57
 - a. All grade levels performed better in fall 2025 compared to fall 2024.
 3. Math: K: 37; 1st: 57; 2nd: 66; 3rd: 55; 4th: 62; 5th: 65
 4. SACS South Bronx overall math: 57
 - a. SACS performed better overall in fall 2025 compared to fall 2024. Grades 1, 2, and 5 performed better in 2025.

5. No second-grade student scored in the lowest percentile range for math or ELA.
- vi. Mr. Low noted for the parents on the call that a student's performance on the NWEA MAP test has a strong correlation with student performance on state testing. Ms. Singletary highlighted the work of the SACS staff, as well as the social worker and the ELL coordinator.
- b. **(38:57–49:53) Culture highlight**
 - i. South Bronx:
 1. Yoselyn Fernandez presented a back-to-school Instagram reel that performed very well and is currently the highest-viewed video on the platform (>3K views).
 2. Ms. Fernandez also explained the success of the 10-tastic Learning Celebration on September 12, which was attended by 80 families.
 - ii. Harlem:
 1. Taleema Chesney presented a highlight video featuring the SACS jingle and another featuring a data dive. She also mentioned that this is the first year that SAH teachers have all the necessary materials to have a successful launch.
 2. In place of summer school, SAH had an Exact Path summer learning challenge.
 - iii. Upcoming events: Academic summit and BOY data dive (SB + H, 9/24); 10th Year Kickoff town hall meeting (SB, 9/26); Fun Friday Healthy Snacks Workshop (SB, 9/26); Class of 2026 retreat (SB, 9/26); Literacy Across Harlem March (9/27); State of Storefront Academy Harlem town hall meeting (H, 9/29); NWEA MAP data dive (H, 9/30); initial PAWS meeting (H, 10/1); Hispanic Heritage Spotlight (SB, 10/1); Lavinia Science Workshop (SB, 10/15)
6. **Public comment (49:54–50:12)**
 - a. Mr. Low opened the meeting to public comment. Hearing nothing, he closed the meeting to public comment.
7. **Board committee reports (50:13–51:24)**
 - a. Governance Committee
 - i. Mr. Acheampong had nothing more to add.
 - b. Academic Committee
 - i. Mr. Stewart updated the board on his visits to both SACS campuses, highlighting the importance of community-building and creativity for charter schools and public schools in general. He mentioned that he is in talks with leadership to explore this idea in relation to school branding and enrollment.
8. **Closing comments and motion to adjourn (51:25–51:47)**
 - a. Motion: Mr. Low asked for a motion to adjourn the September 2025 meeting. Amanda Low moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
 - b. The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m. EST.