



Storefront Academy Charter School
May 2025 Board Meeting, Harlem Campus
Thursday, May 22, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES

Trustees: Atta Acheampong, Richard Bayles, Amanda Low, Peter Low, Jewell Stewart **Staff:** Rebecca Brunie, Taleema Chesney, Nidia Evangelista, Julissa Fernandez, Yoselyn Fernandez, Amia Fisher, Robert Keogh, Charisse Carter-Lewis, Marie Lucas, Maryleidy Pimentel, Stephanie Reeder, Yubdeley Ricardo, Newton Richards, Carol Singletary, Desiree Soulet, Matthew Tiwary, Katherine Vasquez **Other:** Aaron Jones, Scott L.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- May 2025 board meeting agenda
- May 2025 financial dashboard

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to order and adoption of meeting minutes (0:00–0:53)

- a. Peter Low called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. EST.
- b. Motion: Mr. Low moved to approve the April 2025 minutes. Motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
- c. Mr. Low mentioned that future meeting minutes should place more emphasis on the discussions surrounding the issues brought forward.

2. Financial report (0:54–7:44)

- a. Robert Keogh said that Storefront is currently meeting or exceeding SUNY standards for "Current Ratio," "Days of Cash," "Quick Ratio," and "Debt-to-Asset Ratio" on an adjusted basis.
- b. SACS will not submit another report to the Department of Education (DOE) until its year-end final reconciliation in July, which precedes an audit.
- c. Profit and loss (P&L) statement
 - i. Assuming SACS spends all of its budgeted dollars, Mr. Keogh forecasts a \$105K deficit for the year versus a budgeted surplus of \$182K. This is a ~\$10K increase since last month (~\$96K deficit), likely due to a transition in SACS's payroll and HR information system provider. Mr. Keogh anticipates that some of this deficit will be offset by savings in other budgeted expense categories.
 1. Key drivers of the deficit are a 13-student enrollment shortfall and an unbudgeted \$150K rent expense to Children's Storefront.
 - ii. The YTD deficit sits at ~\$263K, due in part to the Children's Storefront payment and advanced property tax payments. Mr. Keogh mentioned that SACS has been oscillating between this deficit and breakeven. However, SACS is expecting Summer Boost fundraising revenue in June.
 - iii. There have been no additional changes to the P&L revenue and staffing forecast.
- d. Balance sheet
 - i. April closed with a 49-day cash balance, which is strong.
 - ii. There was a \$100K increase in SACS's security deposit balance (up to \$440K) due to a new security deal that will include intermittent security deposits that should return to SACS over the next ~16 months.
 - iii. There was a decrease in liabilities related to accounts payable (down to ~\$7.3M from ~\$8.6M). The adjusted net asset balance is ~\$2M, driven by assets and days of cash.
- e. Mr. Keogh will present the draft budget for the 2025–2026 school year (SY) at the June meeting.

- f. Richard Bayles asked whether Mr. Keogh anticipates any meaningful changes to the current budgeting process. Mr. Keogh responded that there will be no changes this SY; however, depending on the DOE, changes may be possible for next year, particularly regarding federal funds (which comprise ~10% of SACS's revenue portfolio), large cuts to the national school lunch program (SNAP), etc. However, the state is guaranteeing meals (i.e., breakfast, lunch, and snack) for students for the 2025–2026 SY. It is unclear whether that provision will remain in the subsequent SYs.

3. Development update (7:45–10:45)

- a. Nidia Evangelista stated that she's been working to set up vendors for summer programs. She mentioned a federal grant regarding SACS's food equipment, which is in progress for H + SB.
- b. Grants submitted by Ms. Evangelista
 - i. FY 2025 School Violence Prevention Program federal grant (H + SB): Focuses on improving building security. Prequalification forms were submitted on May 20. Decision/next steps expected May 23, 2025. Ms. Evangelista has been in touch with Altaris and two vendors for security equipment.
- c. Orrick Cares and Sydney Paige Foundation confirmed \$5K for the summer backpack drive. Ms. Evangelista reached out again regarding uniforms and is waiting to hear back about that, as well as how they can maximize the funding. She will report back at the June meeting.

4. Leadership reports (10:46–33:23)

- a. (10:46–16:49) Enrollment
 - i. SB: As of May 16, actual enrollment sits at 264, 11 students under budget. Two new students have enrolled since the last board meeting; none have withdrawn.
 - ii. H: As of May 16, actual enrollment sits at 101, one student over budget. No students have enrolled since the last board meeting; one has withdrawn.
 1. Mr. Bayles mentioned that enrollment tends to increase over the SY, and Carol Singletary confirmed that the enrollment team and word-of-mouth referrals are key. She also mentioned that some students transfer from nearby schools.
 - iii. Working well: Collaborative work session with SB + H enrollment teams and Aengus → project management strategies, templates for social media posts; community partnerships (with Bilingual Head Start and Union Settlement) and events (Jazz on Jackson and 5th-grade spoken word/poetry offering); ongoing immediate follow-up on lottery; incorporating staff and parents in enrollment campaigns.
 1. Fifteen families attended Jazz on Jackson, and 35 students have fully registered.
 - iv. Needs improvement: Lack of robust media presence.
 1. SACS and Aengus are preparing to launch bus ads. Mockups have been designed, and a deal is on the table. More specifics regarding contracts and bus routes will come later.
 2. The budget will allocate a certain amount (~\$1K per school) to advertise online (boosting posts on Instagram and Facebook) throughout the summer. Print advertisements are also being discussed.
- b. (16:50–18:42) SY 2024–2025 staff vacancies
 - i. Three current vacancies at Harlem (SpEd teacher, 3rd grade general education teacher, 2nd grade teacher). No SB vacancies.
 - ii. Working well: Volume of candidates. Needs improvement: Candidate quality. SACS has been posting more often on LinkedIn, NYC Charter Center, and at local colleges.
 - iii. In the interim, SACS is currently working with Swing Education, which provides long-term substitutes with teaching experience and coaching.
- c. (18:43–27:25) Academic highlight: "Math magic"

i. South Bronx

1. A video depicted students explaining why they like math, a student solving a math number story, and a teacher explaining that Math Stories make math lessons meaningful and engaging. Ms. Singletary added that 60% of students prefer Math Stories, but they value EnVision math as well.
2. Working well: Improved pacing and fidelity in use of math curricula (i.e., EnVision Math and Story Problems); First in Math and IXL (two programs that students find engaging); math bees, math gallery walk, math discourse, cross-curricular capstone projects (i.e., learning opportunities that make math relatable).
3. Needs improvement: Forward planning for more math-focused experiential learning and professional development. In response, the 2025–2026 Instructional Pacing Guides and Professional Development Calendar will highlight one or two project-based learning experiences for students and professional learning sessions for teachers.

ii. Harlem

1. A video depicted a first-grade teacher explaining EnVision’s significance in student comprehension via visual learning and problem-solving objectives.
2. Working well: EnVision math (visual learning bridge, interactive student edition, infographics and math models); supplemental resources (SuccessMaker, First in Math, Exact Path) that provide real-time data and targeted interventions.
3. Needs improvement: Time and capacity challenges due to limited staffing and tight schedules that make it difficult to deliver small-group instruction consistently. In response, Harlem is optimizing intervention blocks, reallocating support staff, and employing permanent substitute teachers.

d. **(27:26–33:23)** Culture highlights

- i. SB: A video highlighted the Jazz on Jackson event, mastery learning effort celebrations, field trips, staff appreciation, senior spoken-word presentations at community meetings, and ongoing parent outreach initiatives.
- ii. H: A video highlighted Mathlete regional champions, celebrating mastery, Mother’s Day events, the Our Kids Read Festival, a chamber music event, Teacher Appreciation Week, and other events.
- iii. Upcoming events: NWEA MAP testing (SB + H), SUNY evaluative visit (H, 5/28), Spelling Bee Finals (SB), 2025 First in Math NYS Mathematics Tournament (H, 5/31), Field Day (SB, 6/3), June board meeting (6/12 @ Bronx campus), Heroes for Heroes (SB, 6/13), Science Fair (SB, 6/18), Kindergarten Step Up ceremony (H, 6/17; SB, 6/20), fifth-grade graduation (H, 6/17; SB, 6/20), Staff End-of-Year Celebration (SB, 6/25)

5. **Public comment (33:24–33:41)**

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

6. **Board committee reports (33:42–34:22)**

- a. The Academic Committee will be undergoing structural updates to focus on a data-driven review of students’ performance and test scores to ensure school leaders/teachers have input on how the data might be explained, rather than providing dry numbers to the board.

7. **Closing comments and motion to adjourn (34:23–34:35)**

- a. Mr. Low adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m. EST.