



Storefront Academy Charter School
November 2025 Board Meeting
Thursday, November 20, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES

Trustees: Atta Acheampong (secretary), Richard Bayles, Amanda Low, Peter Low (chairman), Jonathan Stearns, Jewell Stewart **Staff:** Aniberca Abreu, Rebecca Brunie, Charisse Carter-Lewis, Taleema Chesney, Nidia Evangelista, Julissa Fernandez, Yoselyn Fernandez, Amia Fisher, Esther Fokuo, Aariah Glass, Marie Lucas, Tanyshia Phillips, Maryleidy Pimentel, William Pintado, Yubdeley Ricardo, Newton Richards, Carol Singletary, Desiree Soulet, Matthew Tiwary, Katherine Vasquez **Other Attendees:** Arianny Green, Marcia, Matero, Shelley Jallow, Shanelle Smith, Diondra Young

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- November 2025 board meeting agenda

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to order and adoption of meeting minutes (0:00–0:41)

- a. Peter Low called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. EST.
- b. Motion: Peter Low asked for a motion to approve the September 2025 and October 2025 minutes. Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.

2. Development report (0:42–22:44)

- a. (0:42–13:40) Grants and donations
 - i. Nidia Evangelista gave an update about SACS's partnership with FundEd.
 1. Harmony Program (H; \$20K)/Dreyfus Foundation: Draft and LOI underway; target submission mid-December 2025.
 2. STEM (H + SB; \$25K each)/Glenn W. Bailey Foundation: Application delayed. Will reopen in January 2026; draft proposals for early application in progress.
 - a. Identifying a new multiyear opportunity to pursue before holiday break.
 3. Hyde and Watson Foundation (SB; \$20K): Proposal outline in progress; target submission early December 2025.
 - ii. Mr. Low inquired about the next round of FundEd projects. Ms. Evangelista answered that she expects to be able to report on at least two more at the December meeting. FundEd is conducting ongoing research.
 - iii. SACS also received other grants and donations, including \$4,170 for the grades 3–5 spring chess program from the Seventh District Foundation, 30 turkeys for SACS families from the NYPD, and 100 shelf-stable food bags from the NYC Common Pantry.
- b. (13:41–22:44) Enrollment
 - i. SB: As of Nov. 17, enrollment sits at 234, 32 students under budget. Two students have enrolled since the last board meeting; zero are in the enrollment process.
 - ii. H: As of Nov. 17, enrollment sits at 87, 28 students under budget. Zero students have enrolled since the last board meeting; one is in the enrollment process.
 - iii. Working well: Winter enrollment plan and systems, strengthening enrollment systems and winter goals; mission-aligned partnerships; community presence, persistent tablings, consistent follow-up; creation and launch of network digital media plan.
 - iv. Needs improvement: Heightened student attrition due to family relocations and preference for schools that provide longer academic pathways and extracurriculars.

3. Staff vacancies (22:45–23:34)

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 three local universities.

4. Academic and culture highlights (23:35–48:45)

a. **(23:35–38:56)** Academic highlight: RedThread Foundations and Knowledge

- i. “Glows” from Harlem teachers and students
 - 1. K–2 teachers: Strong emphasis on vocabulary/math terms; conceptual focus; high student engagement. K–2 students: Engage with visual learning tools.
 - 2. 3–5 teachers: Engaged scholars; improved class performance (46%→85%). 3–5 students: Confident in standard algorithm and multiplication equations.
- ii. “Grows” from Harlem teachers and students
 - 1. K–2 teachers: Manipulatives→abstract problem-solving. K–2 students: Increased accuracy in problem-solving; building skills in solving word problems.
 - 2. 3–5 teachers: Improve pacing and introduce multiple strategies; support stamina for multistep problems; small-group routines; math vocabulary and reasoning skills. 3–5 students: Guided practice with number lines to solve equations; refreshers on decimals and division skills.
- iii. Responsive next steps from Harlem teachers and students
 - 1. K–2 teachers: Manipulatives→models/number lines; routines for choosing strategies. K–2 students: Strengthen number sense; practice problem-solving.
 - 2. 3–5 teachers: Break math block into timed chunks; teach 2–3 strategies for multistep problems; small-group rotations. 3–5 students: Solve guided problems with smaller steps; reinforce number line strategies/decimals/division.
- iv. “Glows” from South Bronx teachers and students
 - 1. K–2 teachers: Investment in curriculum; use of program resources; GLT efforts. K–2 students: High student engagement in Number Stories/Envision.
 - 2. 3–5 teachers: Strong setup and accountability for math routines. 3–5 students: High student engagement; many students are taking ownership of their learning.
- v. “Grows” from South Bronx teachers and students
 - 1. K–2 teachers: Supporting newer teachers with best practices and work study; tracking of exit tickets. K–2 students: Small-group work; homework; use of platforms to be more consistent.
 - 2. 3–5 teachers: More consistent internalization of lessons for effective feedback and instructional shifts. 3–5 students: Completion of homework and strategic extra practices assigned by teachers.
- vi. Responsive next steps from South Bronx teachers and students
 - 1. K–5 teachers: Aggressive monitoring/work study; improving intellectual prep. K–5 students: Using IXL platform/First in Math to build fluency.

b. **(33:32–48:45)** Culture highlights

- i. Harlem: Taleema Chesney presented a highlight video featuring Spirit Week, the Breast Cancer Awareness Celebration, middle school visit, the Community Resource Fair, Union Settlement.
- ii. South Bronx: Yoselyn Fernandez presented a series of photos (e.g., Basketball Night).
- iii. Upcoming events: Multicultural feast (SB, 11/19); Storefront Thrift/Boutique (SB, 11/19); firehouse community service (SB, 11/20); Schools Giving: Community in Action (H, 11/21); senior home talent show (SB, 11/21); 4th/5th grade Deep Dive Book Club (H, 11/25–12/19); 15 Festive Days of December (H, 12/1–12/19), Queens College K–2 field

trip (SB, 12/4); middle school fair remote (SB, 12/4); Silent Night (Out) for Parents (H, 12/12 or 12/17); K-1 breakfast with Santa (H, 12/10); winter performance (H + SB, 12/18); Winter Wonderland Watch Party (H, 12/19)

5. Public comment (48:46–1:30:31)

- a. Mr. Low opened the meeting to public comment.
- b. **(48:46–1:13:17)** Diondra Young, a parent of a 4th-grade Harlem student, discussed One Network, One Vision, which is Harlem’s academic improvement plan. Ms. Young asked how the plan would support the Harlem location in particular. She later asked about extracurricular activities.
 - i. Jewell Stewart, head of the Academic Committee, explained that resources were allocated with the budget in mind, and the school is turning to Carol Singletary as a resource to improve academic performance. He also mentioned that the Academic Committee is interested in introducing more extracurricular activities in the future. He expressed that he would have a more concrete plan at the December board meeting.
 - ii. Ms. Singletary added that the academic change happened midyear, which is unusual, but she has a proven track record in leading academic reform in the South Bronx.
 - iii. Mr. Low explained why the South Bronx seems to get more funding in comparison to the Harlem campus, and why it’s not necessarily the case. He also addressed the timing based on SUNY’s recommendations.
 - iv. Amanda Low, head of the PAWS Committee, suggested polling parents to see what kinds of enrichment activities they’re interested in seeing at SACS.
 - v. Atta Acheampong emphasized the need for SACS to move as one entity.
- c. **(1:13:18–1:30:31)** Another parent expressed that she hopes the board and leadership will work closely with the teachers and staff to best know the students and their families after the change.
 - i. Mr. Low expressed that the school principals and assistant principals will remain in those roles, and school leaders have been encouraged to weigh in on the way things unfold. He also encouraged parents to express if they feel the school is slipping culturally.
 - ii. Regarding timing, Mr. Stewart explained that, between the enrollment crisis and the SUNY report, SACS could not wait to implement this change. Ms. Low expressed that SACS had to act to ensure that students would get the support they need.
 - iii. Amia Fisher clarified that there were many reasons why Harlem faced difficulties in the prior academic year (e.g., staffing, high SpED rates). The school is not failing.

6. Closing comments and motion to adjourn (1:30:31–1:30:54)

- a. Motion: Mr. Low asked for a motion to adjourn the November 2025 meeting. Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
- b. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m. EST.