



Storefront Academy Charter School
July 2025 Board Meeting
Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES

Trustees: Atta Acheampong (secretary), Richard Bayles, Amanda Low, Peter Low (chairman), Jewell Stewart (vice chairman) **Staff:** Rebecca Brunie, Taleema Chesney, Julissa Fernandez, Yoselyn Fernandez, Amia Fisher, Aria Glass, Milly Jimenez, Robert Keogh, Marie Lucas, Maryleidy Pimentel, Stephanie Reeder, Yubdeley Ricardo, Carol Singletary, Desiree Soulet, Matthew Tiwary

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- July 2025 board meeting agenda

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Call to order and adoption of meeting minutes (0:00–0:44)**
 - a. Peter Low called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. EST.
 - b. Motion: Peter Low asked for a motion to approve the May 2025 minutes. Richard Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
2. **Board votes and new NYSED policy (0:45–6:27)**
 - a. Mr. Low informed Atta Acheampong that his term as a board member had expired.
 - b. Motion: Mr. Low asked for a motion to renew Mr. Acheampong's role as a board member. Mr. Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent. Mr. Acheampong will begin his second term.
 - c. Mr. Low informed those present that the board had unanimously approved the FY26 budget, and Robert Keogh has filed it.
 - d. Motion: Mr. Low asked for a motion to approve the FY26 budget. Mr. Bayles moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
 - e. Marie Lucas reported that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) now requires all charter schools to implement and publicly post a cell phone policy mandating the collection of all students' smart devices during the school day. SACS must post its policy on the school website by August 1, 2025. The operations team will work with Dean Lewis to finalize a standardized policy, which will be posted with a statement noting that it is pending board approval at the August board meeting. Ms. Lucas noted that NYSED has not clarified whether the policy must extend beyond the regular school day, though the focus appears to be on school hours rather than after-school or summer programs.
 - f. Mr. Low observed that the mandate codifies an existing SACS practice supported by staff, who hope that NYSED's directive will help address parental concerns.
3. **Financial report (6:28–9:37)**
 - a. Robert Keogh explained that he is preparing for the annual financial audit in mid-August. He expects to provide audit-ready financials (final trial balance, balance sheet, and profit and loss statements) at the August board meeting. He said there is no risk of clawback for attendance.
 - b. Mr. Keogh also shared that he circulated annual financial disclosures to the board via DocuSign, which are due back before August 2, 2025.
4. **Development report (9:38–20:01)**
 - a. Nidia Evangelista stated that the South Bronx (SB) campus was granted \$15,000 to launch the Primary Project, a tier-two program that assists K-3 students with behavioral issues in adjusting

to school environments through play therapy.

- b. She also shared that the principals, Mr. Acheampong, and Mr. Keogh met with FundEd, a development consulting firm, which provided an overview of their plans for SACS for SY 2025–2026. SACS will meet with them monthly going forward. FundEd provided tentative figures, including a per-pupil estimate of ~\$19K, private school tuition of ~\$39K (the benchmark SACS seeks to match for students), and a preliminary funding goal of \$700K. The final strategy will be presented at the September 2025 board meeting.
 - i. The development consulting firm will also survey the staff and provide a new, prioritized list of school needs. This sparked a conversation about the board's increased involvement in private funding and foundations.
- c. Ms. Evangelista also mentioned working with Aengus to implement new marketing strategies to support outreach and enrollment.

5. Leadership reports (20:02–54:38)

- a. (20:02–28:37) Enrollment
 - i. SB: As of June 23, enrollment sits at 252, 18 students under budget. Five students have enrolled since the last board meeting; 11 are in the enrollment process.
 - ii. H: As of June 21, enrollment sits at 95. Seven students are in the enrollment process.
 - iii. Working well: Community partnerships and events; Kindergarten Bridge Summer Program; persistent follow-up on accepted seats and new applications; media presence in the Bronx and East Harlem. Ads for both schools are being posted.
- b. (28:38–32:10) Staff vacancies
 - i. SY 2025–2026
 - 1. H: One current vacancy (part-time physical education teacher). All classroom teaching positions have been filled.
 - 2. SB: Two current vacancies (4th grade general education teacher and science/media lab teacher).
 - 3. Working well: Volume of candidates and partnerships with Teach for America and Monroe. Needs improvement: Candidate quality. SACS has begun posting on LinkedIn, at the NYC Charter School Center, and at local colleges.
- c. (32:11–48:50) Academic highlight: End-of-year NWEA MAP data
 - i. South Bronx campus:
 - 1. Achieved the best raw scores in three years. Staff were commended.
 - 2. Median achievement percentiles (math and reading) improved across most grades. Schoolwide median rose from 50 (math and reading) in spring 2024 to 72 (math) and 75 (reading) in spring 2025.
 - 3. There was significant student growth, with the schoolwide median increasing from 55 to 82 in math and from 71 to 88 in reading year over year. The largest gains were observed in kindergarten math growth (from 19 to 99).
 - 4. In 2025, median achievement and growth scores were concentrated in the 61st–80th and 80th+ percentiles, with some need for support in fifth-grade math.
 - 5. Working well: Leveraging communication and engagement to nurture staff investment in school improvement; K-2 teams implementing/progress monitoring Lavinia RedThread; more consistent/deeper teacher engagement in student work study, data use, and responsive planning; varied celebrations of social-emotional and academic learning.
 - 6. Needs improvement: Efforts to cultivate greater academic investment among 5th graders yielded mixed results; math-focused experiential learning needs growth.
 - ii. Harlem

1. Schoolwide achievement: Whole class: 53% in math, 55% in reading; SpEd: 28% in math, 28% in reading; ELL/MLL: 31% in math, 8% in reading.
 - a. Math: Kindergarten (71%) and fourth grade (64%) show the highest whole-class achievement. SpEd and ELL/MLL results lag in most grades.
 - b. Reading: Fourth grade leads in whole-class (79%) and SpEd achievement (67%).
 2. Schoolwide projected growth: Whole class: 69% in math, 57% in reading; SpEd: 59% in math, 52% in reading; ELL/MLL: 77% in math, 23% in reading.
 - a. Math: Kindergarten (75%–100%) and fourth grade (83%–100%) show the strongest growth across all subgroups. Consistently high growth for ELL/MLL students (often 100%), indicating substantial progress even where achievement lags.
 - b. Reading: Strong growth in third grade. Lower growth in early grades.
 3. Math, fall 2024 vs. spring 2025: All grades made gains. Kindergarten scores more than doubled, increasing from 38% to 83%. The overall school average increased from 35% to 46%.
 4. Reading, fall 2024 vs. spring 2025: Kindergarten, second, third, and fourth grades showed significant improvement. The overall school average increased from 38% to 47%.
- d. **(48:51–54:38) Culture highlights**
- i. SB: Shared a video highlighting Summer RISE trip to the Interactive STEAM Museum.
 - ii. H: Shared a video highlighting the Kindergarten Step-Up and fifth-grade graduation, enrollment efforts, and the “A Seat at the Table” enrollment brunch.
 - iii. Upcoming events: Lights, Camera, Enroll (H, 7/30); National Night Out (H, 8/5); Community Connections Fair (SB, 8/5); U.S. Family Day (H, 8/8); Icee and Enroll Extravaganza (H, 8/10); new staff orientation (SB + H, 8/14-8/15); Summer Institute (SB + H, 8/18-8/28); Back to Books Bash (SB, 8/29); First day of school (SB + H, 8/29)
6. **Public comment (54:39–54:49)**
- a. Mr. Low opened the meeting to public comment. Hearing nothing, he closed the meeting to public comment.
7. **Board committee reports (54:50–56:49)**
- a. Atta Acheampong is in talks with three potential board members.
 - b. There were no other reports from the board committees.
8. **Closing comments and motion to adjourn (56:50–57:23)**
- a. Motion: Mr. Low asked for a motion to adjourn the July 2025 meeting. Amanda Low moved, and the motion was seconded and carried without dissent.
 - b. The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m. EST.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

1. Robert Keogh will email Peter Low the budget for ad spend, etc.