

Board Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2025 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACS) met on Monday, June 16, 2025
NYC Autism Charter School East Harlem 433 East 100th St. New York, NY 10029

Attending Trustees:

Alysia Steinmann
Ashley Garrett
Ben Hartman
Carol Santiago-DeJesus
Christine Sandler
Hannah Hoch
Ilene Lainer
Jason Stock
Mark Saretsky
Naeema Livingston
Paul O'Neill
Susanna Kvam Norris

Absent Trustees:

Elaine Florio

Attendees at the Invitation of the Board:

Julie Fisher, Executive Director
Tiffney Jones, Director of Finance
Jessica Seeman, Outreach and Staff Training Specialist
Jennifer Jaye, Clinical Director
Katie Ponce, Bronx Head of School
Sarah Muskat, East Harlem Head of School
Juan Gomez, Director of Operations

1. Call to order

- **Action:** The NYCACS general meeting was called to order at 4:36PM

2. Board Business

- **Minutes from the 05-19-2025 Board Meeting**
 - At 4:37PM, the minutes from the Monday, May 19, 2025 Board meeting were reviewed.
 - **Action:** At 4:37PM, Mr. Hartman made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion, and the Board voted, unanimously approving the minutes. Ms. Lainer abstained.
- **Minutes from the 06-03-2025 Emergency Board Meeting**

- At 4:39PM, the minutes from the Tuesday, June 3, 2025 emergency Board meeting were reviewed.
- **Action:** At 4:40PM, Ms. Garrett identified that there was an error in the time indicating when the meeting was adjourned. She then made a motion to approve the minutes with an amendment to the end-time. Ms. Santiago seconded the motion, and the Board voted, unanimously approving the minutes. Ms. Norris, Ms. Hoch, Ms. Livingston, and Mr. Hartman abstained.

3. School Updates

- **Review of Classroom Assessments and Resulting Changes**
 - At 5:40PM, Ms. Fisher, Ms. Jaye, Ms. Ponce, Ms. Muskat, and Ms. Seeman presented on the recent classroom assessments conducted over the last four months, what was discovered, and what immediate and longer-term changes are stemming from them.

4. Finance Committee

- **Review of YTD April 2025 Financials**
 - At 5:20PM, Ms. Jones reviewed the April 2025 YTD financials. Both schools are operating better than plan due primarily to salary savings.
 - At 5:28PM, Ms. Fisher let the Board know that an additional \$60,000 was granted to the organization by the Parallel Foundation (formerly MBJ Foundation) to go toward further development of our Outreach/Consultation efforts.

5. Governance Committee

- **Parent Members**
 - At 5:29PM, Ms. Lainer discussed the process for recruiting parent members and introduced Mr. Aronson and Ms. Rabello. Mr. Aronson then shared his personal and professional background. Ms. Lainer discussed the fact that the school still needs clarity on allowances for a shared parent member seat and, therefore, suggested that only Mr. Aronson be voted on by Trustees as a new parent member at this meeting. Assuming approval from SUNY is forthcoming, Ms. Rabello will be voted on at the next meeting.
 - **Action:** At 5:37PM, Ms. Lainer made a motion to approve Mr. Aronson as a parent Board member understanding that we will continue to seek permission from SUNY for his wife, Ms. Rabello, to share the board seat out of deference to the challenges of childcare coverage. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion, and the Board voted, unanimously approving Mr. Aronson as a new parent member of the Board.
- **Board Meeting Schedule By-Laws Adjustment**
 - At 5:42PM, Ms. Fisher discussed the potential change in meeting frequency to seven meetings per year (along with a draft Board meeting and event calendar) and presented updated by-laws containing that adjustment.
 - **Action:** At 5:43PM, Ms. Santiago made a motion to adopt updated by-laws reflecting the change in meeting schedule to seven meetings per year. Ms.

Sandler seconded the motion, and the board voted, unanimously approving the motion.

▪ **Proposed Board Expectations and Accountability**

- At 5:44PM, Ms. Fisher presented a plan for tracking Trustee engagement that would allow for annual discussions between each Trustee and the ED or Board President to review engagement across the year and set goals for the future. There was extensive discussion around pros and cons. Ms. Fisher will make some adjustments based on feedback and will present revisions for further discussion at the August Board retreat.

▪ **August Board Retreat**

- At 6:15PM, Ms. Fisher reminded Trustees about the upcoming Board retreat scheduled for August 6th at 12:30PM.

6. Additional School Updates

▪ **Organizational Chart and Title Changes**

- At 6:15PM, Ms. Fisher proposed the following title and position changes to the org chart: 1) Adjusting the titles generated as part of the Impact Catalyst consulting work from Clinical Leads and Operations Lead to Clinical Directors and Director of Operations; 2) Capturing the work being done in the consultation and staff training arena under the new title of Director of Staff Training and Consultation; and 3) Better capture the work being done by the HR and Operations Manager (which will now include work connecting families with resources, building additional relationships with potential community partners, and re-starting the organization's peer mentor program) by adjusting her title to HR and Community Engagement Manager.
- **Action:** At 6:26PM, Ms. Lainer made a motion to approve the org chart changes outlined by Ms. Fisher (listed above). Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion, and the board voted, unanimously approving the motion.

▪ **Upcoming Projects on the Horizon**

- At 6:26PM, Ms. Fisher briefly discussed upcoming changes and areas that will require attention in the near future, including shifting from Zoom to Teams for virtual meetings, upgrading our Life Skills Center and Instructional Bathroom, and updating the organization's website.

7. Closing Items

- **Action:** At 6:29PM, Ms. Sandler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.