

APPROVED



The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday February 21, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Location

4th floor cafeteria
Rosalyn Yalow Charter School
650 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10451

Mission Statement

The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School will eliminate the learning achievement gap for economically disadvantaged urban children—including special needs students and English language learners—by using engaging and demanding education; a team teaching model, linking an experienced teacher with a licensed social worker in grades K-2 and with a teaching fellow in later grades; rich extracurricular activities (fencing, arts, chess) to educate the whole child; and family support counseling—all in order to graduate our students at or above grade level in literacy and math.

Vision

Yalow's goal: Developing the whole child, encouraging each young student to excel.

Trustees Present

B. Yalow (remote), G. Feliciano (remote), I. Lee (remote), L. Howard (remote), M. Balbuena (remote), R. Lyon (remote), S. Hayes (remote)

Trustees Absent

None

Guests Present

A. Diacou, K. Smaw

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Balbuena called a meeting of the board of trustees of The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School to order on Tuesday Feb 21, 2023 at 6:36 PM.

II. Approve Board Minutes

A. October 25, 2022 Board Minutes

R. Lyon made a motion to postpone approving minutes until next Board Meeting.
S. Hayes seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. November 15, 2022 Board Minutes

R. Lyon made a motion to postpone approving minutes until next Board Meeting.
S. Hayes seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. December 20, 2022 Board Meeting

R. Lyon made a motion to postpone approving minutes until next Board Meeting.
S. Hayes seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Vote: teacher salary tiers for FY 2023–2024

B. Yalow made a motion to approve the teacher salary tiers for FY 2023–2024.
L. Howard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

III. Finance report

A. FY2022–2023 cash forecast

February 15, 2023 cash balances after adjustments: \$4,311,046
(e.g., title grants less estimated construction costs and monthly operating expenses)

Cash flow forecast includes hiring for currently unfilled positions and additional 2023-2024 positions. assumed to be filled February 1, 2023.

Given current enrollment of 444 students, it seems likely that the school will be financially secure through 2024–2025, and beyond.

B. Back-of-envelop FY2023–2024 budget scenarios (3)

Using 9% for an inflation estimate, back of the envelop year-end cash forecasts:

3 enrollment scenarios: 435, 450, & 490 students, using 9% inflation.

1. 435 students, 17 classrooms
 1. Revenue:\$11,

2. 6/30/2024 deficit: **(\$2,094,484)**
3. 6/30/2024 ending cash: **\$2,772,425 (after adding back depreciation)**
2. 450 students, 17 classrooms
 1. Revenue: \$12,634,831 (decrease of \$630,640)
 2. 6/30/2024 deficit: **(\$1,664,311)**
 3. 6/30/2024 ending cash: **\$3,027,774 (after adding back depreciation)**
3. 490 students, 17 classrooms
 1. Revenue: \$10,728,593
 2. 6/30/2023 deficit: **(\$869,641)**
 3. 6/30/2024 ending cash: **\$3,822,444 (after adding back depreciation)**

A detailed budget will be worked up in March once the board approves the 3-tiered salary structure for teachers.

IV. Executive Director Report

A. 2023 Charter Renewal Application

Yalow's Board needs to make a final decision on the 2023 Charter Renewal Application by February 2023.

- will Yalow's Board replace itself with another school board?
- does the Board intend to submit a Charter Renewal Application for the school in its current form?

On March 2, 2020, the NYS Board of Regents granted Rosalyn Yalow a 4-year charter renewal (attached) with the following commentary:

"Rosalyn Yalow Charter School (RYCS) is meeting six and exceeding one out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is approaching NYSED standards in the other three benchmarks."

The three benchmarks where the Rosalyn Yalow was not meeting the Performance Framework were:

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

Mid-term site visit reports from 2018, 2019, and 2020 are attached for the Board's review. NYSED has consistently cited Benchmarks 6, 7, and 10 as areas of concern. Mid-term site visit reports from 2021 and 2022 have not been provided to the school, as yet, which is disconcerting.

M. Balbuena invited Board members to express their views. Discussion ensued.

M. Balbuena asked that the Board make its decision whether or not to apply for charter renewal as our own entity at the March 21 Board meeting.

A. Diacou noted that the primary reason for the Board's consideration of merging with another charter school was not Yalow's financial situation, but the fact that the school continually losses whole families when 5th graders are about to graduate from Yalow, and parents transfer the 2nd-, 3rd, and 4th-grade siblings of those graduates to the new k-8 school where the 5th grader is matriculating into. The

primary reason for pursuing a merger was stopping the bleed of students leaving for K–8 schools. this is still a reason for pursuing a merger.

K. Smaw asked the Board to consult the principal when an employee writes scathing comments to the Board about the school prior to rushing to judgement. She requested that the Board ask the principal about an employee's performance and not assume that the employee was a stellar performer and or that the employee's words are paramount. She also noted that while several teachers have left Yalow over the years, 4 teachers returned this past year. Since she will not speak publicly about any employee's performance she further requested that the Board not continue to have public discussions of employee complaints.

B. NYSED Communication

- January 3, 2023 email from NYSED inquiring about the status of Yalow's stated plans to merge Yalow with another school (attached).
- January 12, 2023 response from Lisa Long to A. Diacou's request to obtain copies of the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 NYSED Mid-term Site Visit Reports.

C. Programmatic Expenditures Breakdown FY2019 v. FY2023

When the Yalow was reviewed for charter renewal in 2020, the attached snapshot of programmatic expenditures was included in our charter renewal application. The February 24, 2020 *Renewal Recommendations for Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents, p.6 attached*, states, as follows:

- ***"RYCS appears to be in very good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school's independently audited financial statements."***

Since FY 2019, Yalow has shifted more money toward teachers (**45.2% today v. 35.7%** in FY2019), and spends fewer dollars on administration (**14.2% today v. 18.9%** in FY2019):

	FY 2019		FY2023	
Revenue	\$9,593,203	100% !!	\$12,904,289	100%
Rent	1,942,000	20.2% !!	2,500,000	20.7%
Administration	1,812,501	18.9% !!	1,717,447	14.2%
General Ed teachers	2,871,207	29.9% !!	3,834,482	31.7%
Special Ed/ELL teachers	507,874	5.3% !!	1,055,513	8.7%
BAE teaching artists	104,731	0.5% !!	333,230	2.8%

D. Financial Transparency Report comparisons: 2019, 2020, 2021

Using public data prepared by NYSED for the 3 year period, 2019–2021, we are able to present per pupil expenditure comparisons and NYS student assessment outcomes for Yalow, NYS, and Yalow's two prospective merger partners, Global Community Charter School and South Bronx Charter School for International Cultures.

With 27.3% ELL students and 16.7% special ed students, Yalow expenditures per student and student outcomes compare very favorably to those for Global

Community, South Bronx International, and NYS schools as a whole. The same formula for student funding applies equally to all NYC charter schools. *NYSED Financial Report comparisons for 2022 have not yet been published.*

Key 2021 observations:

- Yalow expenses per student were \$16,484 compared with the NYS average of \$23,468.
- Yalow's 2022 ELA/Math scores compare favorably with those for Global Community and South Bronx International (refer to attached bar charts)
- Yalow outperformed CSD7, CSD9, and Bronx schools
- Yalow underperformed NYC in ELA and math
- Yalow outperformed Global Community and South Bronx International in math and almost tied the NYS weighted average for grades 3–5

The February 24, 2020 *Renewal Recommendations for Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents*, p.3, states: *"In general, proportionately more ELLs/MLLs reach English proficiency at RYCS in comparison to ELLs/MLLs attending NYC CSD 9 schools. In ELA, Yalow's ELL/MLL, SWD, and ED students tend to outperform students in schools with similar grade spans and demographics."*

In 2020, Education Commissioner Shannon Tahoe identified the Rosalyn Yalow Charter School as one of 582 high-achieving schools, writing: *"Recognition schools are those with high academic achievement and strong progress, that also **perform acceptably for all subgroups for which they are accountable...** Recognition schools like Rosalyn Yalow Charter School represent the very best in public education and are a testament to the hard work and dedication of your students, staff, and community."*

E. Replacement of CHHS electrical switches

No cost update. Completion date for replacement of Hayes electric switches not yet available.

No update from Archdiocese on approval for installation of rooftop dunnage to support 11 HVAC compressor units. Archdiocese is waiting for final plans for replacement of electrical switches, including funding plan.

On January 26, 2023 Archdioceses approved hiring Lecce Engineering to prepare a contractor bid specifications sheet delineating engineering design and construction administration services. The scope of work covers electrical switchboard replacement and upgrade to a new 480 Volt- 3 Phase 1600Amp, and new 2500Amp, Con-Ed electrical utility service.

- work scope completion schedule is 6 weeks
- **Yalow working cost estimate is \$1.5 million.**

F. Board contribution received

\$2,250 from Ross Lyon and Peggy Shaughnessy.

V. Update: American Recovery Act (ARP)

A.

Final allocation of American Recovery Plan (ARP) monies

Rosalyn Yalow was awarded a \$2,268,141 ARP grant.

\$1,573,292 remainder of American Recovery Plan grant was deposited in Yalow's bank account on February 2.

The ARP grant required that a minimum of 20% of Yalow's allocation of \$2,268,141 be used to address COVID-19 student learning losses.

- Yalow's approved 2022 ARP grant application dedicated \$300,000 to the completion of the HVAC system at Hayes.
- An FS10A revision request was submitted to NYSED on January 4, 2023 to revise the approved allocation of ARP grant funds by eliminating using ARP funds to complete the HVAC system.

Between August 2020 and July 2022 Yalow has spent \$2,268,141 (100%) of ARP proceeds to remediate student learning loss through the payment of Tier I & Tier II teacher salaries, along with reading interventionists, social workers, along with special education and ELL instructors.

Bottom line: ARP grant monies have allowed Yalow to over hire and reduce the student-teacher ratio from 11-to-1 to 8.7-to-1—an increase of 10.5 teachers.

The 8.7-1 student teacher ratio excludes the 5 teaching artists (violin, chorus, and visual art) contracted through Bronx Arts Ensemble at a cost of \$330,000.

VI. New Business

A. Discussion about the school leadership

In responding to the Board Chairman's request for comments about our charter renewal, B. Yalow stated that the school's strength has been school leadership. K. Smaw has taken incredibly effective steps improving academics in a post-pandemic era, and A. Diacou has kept things going.

It's important for the board to figure out what we can do to support the brilliant efforts by school leadership. P. Smaw is a superstar.

B. Discussion about the board leadership

Dr. R. Lyon made suggestions about altering the structure of the board's leadership to make the chairmanship a rotating position—it would give insight to each board member what the problems are that we deal with.

Dr. S. Hayes suggested holding a discussion in an executive session about the relationship between the board leadership and school leadership.

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
L. Howard

Documents used during the meeting

- NYTimes 2.17.23.pdf
- NYDaily News 2.20.23.pdf
- Opinion | Two-Thirds of Kids Struggle to Read, and We Know How to Fix It - The New York Times.pdf
- Yalow Pages from Regents Charter Renewal 3.2.20.pdf
- NYSED CSO Rosalyn Yalow Mid-Term Site Visit Report - final 08-01-2018.pdf
- Final RYCS Check-In SV Memo 08-01-19.pdf
- Final 2020 Renewal Site Visit Report 1.8.20.pdf
- NYSED 2022 charter renewal guide.pdf
- RYCS update re 20232024 SY.pdf
- Re RYCS update re 20232024 SY.pdf
- Lisa Long- Request 1.9.23.pdf
- Yalow Programmatic Expenditures Breakdown FY 2022 - 2023.pdf
- Yalow Programmatic Expenditures Breakdown FY 2021–2022.pdf
- Programmatic Costs 2018-2019.pdf
- Copy-Yalow Pages from Regents Charter Renewal 3.2.20.pdf
- Financial Transparency Reports.pdf
- RYCS NYS_ELA MATH_2022 with Comps JP.pdf
- Per Pupil Expenditure Comparison Analysis Summary 11.14.22.pdf
- 2021 | ROSALYN YALOW CHARTER SCHOOL - Financial Transparency Report | NYSED Data Site.pdf
- 2021 | SOUTH BRONX INTERNATIONAL MS - Report Card | NYSED Data Site.pdf
- 2021 | SOUTH BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL - Financial Transparency Report | NYSED Data Site.pdf