

APPROVED



The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School

Minutes

Rescheduled July Board Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday July 23, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Mission Statement

The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School will strive to 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

Ben Yalow (remote), Dr. Debra Dennard (remote), Dr. Justin McCrary (remote), Dr. Ross Lyon (remote), Dr. Sandra Hayes (remote)

Trustees Absent

Gregoria Feliciano

Guests Present

Alec Diacou, Kim Smaw (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Dr. Lyon called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

C. Approve agenda

Ben Yalow made a motion to approve the agenda as amended.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

Dr. Lyon requested an amendment to the agenda to vote for election of board members.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Items for Board Approval

A. Suspend August Board Meeting

Ben Yalow made a motion to suspend the August Board Meeting.

Dr. Debra Dennard seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. 2024–2025 Board Meeting Schedule

Ben Yalow made a motion to Approve the proposed 2024–2025 Board Meeting schedule, subject to cancellation of the August meeting.

Dr. Debra Dennard seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. June 18, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Ben Yalow made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Board Meeting on 06-18-24.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Election of 1 Trustee

Dr. Debra Dennard made a motion to elect Ben Yalow to the Board of Trustees (2024–2027).

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E.

Employee health benefit plans 2024–2025

A. Diacou presented plan summaries from four health care providers, Oxford (United Health Care), Aetna, and Anthem (formerly Blue Cross), along with Aetna using a medical benefits credit card option. Using the weighted average of 2023–2024 plans chosen by 46 employees, Oxford, Yalow's existing carrier, has the lowest average premium increase—5.2%—less than the 5.35% increase assumed in Yalow's 2024–2025 budget. The finance advisory committee recommends renewing the existing three employee options offered by Oxford.

There are no increases in dental or vision policy premiums offered by Guardian, Yalow's existing carrier.

Dr. Sandra Hayes made a motion to approve the Oxford and Guardian health and dental plan proposals.

Dr. Debra Dennard seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Finance report

A. Finance summary

B. Yalow stated that the electric switch replacement project at Cardinal Hayes High School (CHHS) that Yalow has requested to enable sufficient power to run the air conditioning compressors for Yalow's third and fourth floor classrooms, library, cafeteria, kitchen, and offices is moving forward, and Yalow has transferred \$1.1 million to CHHS as part of a loan agreement between Yalow and CHHS to fund this project.

July 16, 2024 cash balances are \$6,467, 322, sufficient to support the 2024–2025 budget. The budget includes sufficient monies to complete replacement of the electrical system.

IV. Principal report

A. 2024–2025 teacher hire update

K. Smaw reported the hiring of two new Tier I teachers and three Tier III teachers.

B. STEP Literacy student growth student data (2023–2024)

K. Smaw reported the following year-over-year literacy (2023–2024) growth highlights, as measured by the University of Chicago's STEP Literacy assessments.

- 61.5% of students meet or exceed grade-level benchmarks for Cycle 4.
- 38.6% of the students in the school are performing below grade level for Cycle 4.
- 189 out of the 430 students (44%) made 3 or more STEPs of growth this year.
- 106 students (25%) grew just 2 STEPs.
- 135 students (31%) grew 0 to 1 STEPs and

STEP Cycle 4 target expectations:

- Kindergarten: STEP 3
- First: STEP 6
- Second: STEP 9
- Third: STEP 12
- Fourth: STEP 14
- Fifth: STEP 16

Problem areas:

- *Kindergarten students* are struggling with letter name identification and need additional instruction and practice in decoding and encoding CVC (consonant, vowel and consonant sound).
- 1st-grade students struggle with accuracy, rate, and comprehension.
- 2nd-grade students struggle with accuracy rate, and comprehension need additional instruction in decoding, improving word-solving strategies, and fluency.
- 3rd-grade students struggle with their reading foundation skills (accuracy, rate, and developmental spelling).
- 4th-grade students need extra support in rate, decoding, and developmental spelling.
- 3rd–5th-grade students need extra support in comprehension (silent and written), inferring nonfiction texts, understanding the author’s craft, and improving their reading rate and their vocabulary strategies.

Chronically Absent Students

- Rosalyn Yalow's 176 chronically absent students achieved an average of 2.32 STEPs of growth.
- Chronic absenteeism negatively impacted more than half of the students in this subpopulation.

Dr. Lyon congratulated Principal Smaw on the progress the school is making with students, particularly our homeless populations.

V. Executive Director Report

A. Replacement of CHHS electrical switches

A. Diacou gave the following updates on the electric switch replacement project at CHHS:

- loan agreement between Yalow and Hayes was signed on June 27, 2024;
- initial installment of \$1,120,000 was advanced to Cardinal Hayes High School (CHHS).

- Allcom Electric and CHHS agreement to fabricate and install the new electrical switch panel is attached.
- CHHS is sending a \$300,000 check to Allcom July 23, 2023.
- Allcom will place switch order after depositing check.
- Allcom is "*hopeful*" switchboard will arrive from Siemens by Easter (April 20, 2025, 46 weeks).

B. Compliance updates

1. Yalow's (academic) Annual Report , due August 1, is underway.
2. MMB's 2023–2024 financial audit, due November 1, is underway.
3. Charter Revision request for NYSED approval of 2024 Employee Handbook submitted.
4. Two letters were sent to NYSED updating them on the Board's progress addressing issues in conjunction with the October 2021 Notice of Deficiency.

C. Preliminary planning: middle school expansion analysis

A. Diacou reported that the feasibility analysis of the Board's request to expand to grade six in 2025-2026, grade seven in 2026–2027, and grade eight in 2027–2028 is in progress. Because of Yalow's under-enrollment, the school has underutilized space at 650 Grand Concourse, which presents the school with multiple options for a middle school expansion.

The preliminary analysis uses June 28, 2024 enrollment of 432 K–5 students as a starting point for student growth over the 2024–2028 charter term. The school's existing physical footprint includes 19 furnished classrooms, 2 half-classrooms being used for ENL classes, an open space library, and an oversized cafeteria. Two of the 19 classrooms are currently unused due to under enrollment.

No additional construction will be needed for opening two grade 6 classrooms in 2025–2026 (64 students); construction will be needed to add two grade 7 classrooms in 2026–2027 and two grade 8 classrooms in 2027–2028. These additional classrooms can be constructed by building three new classrooms in the library and or cafeteria, and by combining the two ENL classrooms into a single classroom.

The charter revision request would specify one teacher for each middle school classroom. This will allow the school to fill new upper grade teaching positions in 2025-26 and 2026-27 by shifting teachers from the RTI team without hiring additional teachers.

Draft expansion plan, including financial implications, will be presented prior to next Board meeting.

Dr. Sandra Hayes made a motion to to adjourn the July Board Meeting.

Dr. Ross Lyon seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Sandra Hayes

VI. Finance Committee Meeting

A. Record Attendance

B. Yalow, Dr. Lyon, Dr. Dennard, Dr. Hayes, A. Diacou, K. Smaw.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Yalow called the Finance Meeting to order at 5:48. p.m.

As reported at the Board Meeting the school has circa \$6.4 million cash on hand after lending \$1.1 million to CHHS.

The school's portfolio of U.S. T-Bills is being managed to maximize interest earnings over the next nine months.

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Dr. Ross Lyon made a motion to to adjourn the Finance Meeting.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 5:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Sandra Hayes

Documents used during the meeting

- RYCS Irina Certificate 02 (PDF for Print).pdf
- RYCS Fencing Certificate (PDF for Print).pdf
- RYCS Chess Certificate (PDF for Print)-2.pdf
- Irina Award Prototype.pdf
- 2024–2025 Board Schedule.pdf
- RYCS Renewal 7.9.24.pdf
- Signed Allcom both parties 7.16.24.pdf
- CAP Letter to NYSED June 2024.pdf

- RYCS CAP Progress Notice 6-28.pdf
- CAP Progress Letter to NYSED July 12, 2024.pdf
- CAP Progress Letter to NYSED July 23, 2024.pdf
- Middle School Student Enrollment.pdf
- 2023-24 Rosalyn Yalow_Cycle 4 Data Summary Report.pdf