



The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting & Finance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday September 17, 2024 at 6:30 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, Gregoria Feliciano (remote)

Trustees Absent

None

Guests Present

Alec Diacou, Kim Smaw

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Dr. Ross Lyon called a meeting of the board of trustees of The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School to order on Tuesday Sep 17, 2024 at 6:34 PM.

C. Approve agenda

Ben Yalow made a motion to approve the agenda.

Dr. Justin McCrary seconded the motion.

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

II. Chairman updates

A. Corrective Action Plan (CAP) resolved

NYSED notified the school that the Board has satisfactorily addressed the Board Oversight and Governance concerns outlined in the initial request for a Corrective Action Plan dated October 12, 2021 and that the requirements of the CAP have been fully resolved.

B. Employee investigation concluded that there is no basis for investigation

III. Items for Board Approval

A. 2024–2025 Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and District-Wide Safety Plan

Ben Yalow made a motion to approve the updated 2024–2025 ERP and District-Wide Safety Plan, subject to typographical corrections.

Dr. Ross Lyon seconded the motion.

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

B. July 23, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Dr. Sandra Hayes made a motion to approve the minutes from Rescheduled July Board Meeting & Finance Committee Meeting on 07-23-24.

Dr. Ross Lyon seconded the motion.

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

C. Middle School Expansion Plan

A. Diacou presented the grade 6–8 expansion plan covering the four-year term of the school charter (2024–2028). Enrollment forecasts are based on September 12, 2024 enrollment of 396 students. Expansion will take place within our existing footprint at Cardinal Hayes High School, 650 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10451.

No major construction will be necessary: a) two 6th-grade classes will be added in 2025–2026, whereby Yalow retains 60+ students/year; b) two 7th-grade classes will be added in 2026–2027; and c) two 8th-grade classes will be added in 2027–2028. 2027–2028 enrollment is forecast to be 569 k-8 students.

As part of the 2024 charter revision request, the school seeks three additional charter revision modifications, plus change to school's organization chart:

1. Key Design Element, to eliminate the co-teaching model in grades 6, 7, and 8. Grades 6–8 will have only one teacher per classroom;
2. Enrollment Policy, to expand the lottery to include grades 3–8, but give Yalow the right to place accepted upper-grade students (grades 2–5) in a lower grade following a written proficiency test, similar to the policy used at several charter networks (see attached);
3. Enrollment Policy, to back-fill students in all grades to maintain aggregate enrollment; plus
4. Organization Chart, adding a guidance counselor in 2027–2028 to assist graduating eighth-grade students applying to high school.

A survey was sent to parents asking, *"Would your child stay enrolled at RYCS if we offer middle school grades (6-8)?"* As of September 12, 94 parents (98%) replied "yes."

The Finance Advisory Committee approves the grade 6–8 expansion plan.

B. Yalow stated that the expansion plan is necessary for the school to stop bleeding cash due to reduced student enrollment. Kindergarten-aged students are declining citywide, and kindergarten seats are becoming harder to fill due to competition from charters and traditional public schools.

Yalow can grow enrollment by allowing 5th graders to continue as 6th graders at Yalow, rather than sending them to other schools after they graduate from 5th grade.

Ben Yalow made a motion to adopt the proposed grade 6-8 expansion plan.

Dr. Justin McCrary seconded the motion.

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

D. Middle school financial forecast 2024–2028

B. Yalow presented the 4-year financial forecast to be submitted along with the proposed charter revision application, stating that the school is hemorrhaging cash because September enrollment is 80 students short of projected enrollment of 475 students. The 4-year forecast is based on current enrollment of 396 students, showing losses in the first

two years and surpluses thereafter as grade 6–8 student enrollment grows to 569 students in 2027–2028.

Despite the 2024–2025 loss we expect to end the year with approximately \$4,800,000 in cash plus investments (UST-Bills or CDs).

E. Resolution to authorize 2024 charter revision application

Ben Yalow made a motion to authorize submission of 2024 charter revision application for middle school expansion, as drafted.

Dr. Justin McCrary seconded the motion.

"Resolved that the Board has reviewed the proposed plan to add two classes of 6th grade in 2025–2026, two classes of 7th grade in 2026–2027, and two classes of 8th grade in 2027–2028, and hereby directs the Executive Director to submit a Charter Revision Application to the NYSED with such modifications as may be required. The Board Chariman shall submit a cover letter authorizing the same."

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

Roll Call

Dr. Debra Dennard	Aye
Dr. Ross Lyon	Aye
Ben Yalow	Aye
Dr. Justin McCrary	Aye
Gregoria Feliciano	Abstain
Dr. Sandra Hayes	Aye

IV. Finance report

A. Finance summary

B. Yalow stated that the school had cash plus investments totaling \$6.8 million on September 10, 2024. The school's financial advisor, JPMorgan is reinvesting the school's 2024 maturing UST-Bills in new T-Bills maturing in March, April, and May, 2025, while maintaining cash balances of approximately \$1.2 million. The objective is to maximize interest earnings while meeting the school's operating expenses.

V. Principal report

A. Preliminary 2023–2024 ELA/Math test score comparisons

K. Smaw reported that the school made considerable progress on NYS Math scores. Yalow's grade 3-5 results compare favorably with NYS, NYC, and CSD7/CSD9. ELA scores fell short of expectations.

K. Smaw noted that while Yalow's aggregate test results include those of the school's English Language Learners, comparison scores for NYS and NYC do not include test results for English Language Learners because 2024 results provided by the New York

State Education Department (NYSED) for English Language Learners are still being verified. Yalow has a much higher percentage of ELL and FELL students than do NYS, NYC, The Bronx, CSD7 and CSD, which may impact comparison scores when ELLs are excluded from NYC and NYS scores. Yalow's percentage is 38%.

Comparison results will change after ELL student results are included for NYC and NYS.

VI. Executive Director Report

A. Replacement of CHHS electrical switches

A. Diacou reported that Allcom Electric—contractor for the electric switch replacement project—expects switchboard will arrive from Siemens by spring break (April 20, 2025). In the meantime, Allcom will prep the Cardinal Hayes building prior to arrival of the new electric switches.

B. Compliance updates

1. MMB's 2023–2024 financial audit is being prepared for Board review at Yalow's October Board Meeting.
2. NYSED approved the school's 2024 Employee Handbook on September 5, 2024.
3. In regards to the October 12, 2021 Corrective Action Plan (CAP) imposed on the school, on August 21, 2024, NYSED notified the school that, *"The requirements of that Corrective Action Plan have been fully resolved."*

C. Missing student update

Tables and charts of 78 student withdrawals since July 2, 2024 include 13 students officially categorized as being *"homeless"* by NYC. The analysis addresses stated reasons why and which schools these 65 students transferred to. Reasons provided by parents for leaving Yalow: "relocation" (12 students, 18%), *"dissatisfaction"* (11, 17%), *a closer school* (10, 15%), *keeping siblings together* (8, 12%); IEP requirements (4, 6%); and "unknown" (17, 26%). School where parents transferred their children: charter (54%), DOE (41%), parochial (2%), outside NYC (3%).

On BEDS Day 2023, only 9.7% of Yalow students resided in CSD#7—43 of 445 students. The remaining students were residents of: CSD#9 (64%, 286 students), CSD#10 (11.7%, 52), CSD#12 (7.2%, 32), CSD#8 (4%, 18), CSD#11 (2.5%, 11), Queens (2 students), Manhattan (1 student).

Yalow began the 2023–2024 school year with 115 homeless students (21.5%). By June 30, 2024, 30 had transferred out of Yalow, primarily for housing opportunities, leaving 85 homeless students. Of these 85, 11 graduated from 5th grade, leaving 74 homeless students on July 2, 2024. Finally, 13 of these students transferred out of Yalow, leaving

61. Since July 2, 2024, 7 new homeless students enrolled in Yalow for a starting total of 68 homeless students—representing 17 % of the school's current student body of 396.

D. Request to increase number bus shelter ads

A. Diacou requested increasing the budget for bus stop enrollment ads and extending the existing bus stop advertising or 28 weeks—from December, 2024 through early June, 2025.

Ben Yalow made a motion to increase the 1014–2025 budget for bus stop ads by \$30,000.

Dr. Justin McCrary seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Dr. Debra Dennard Aye

Dr. Ross Lyon No

Dr. Justin McCrary Aye

Ben Yalow Aye

Gregoria Feliciano Aye

Dr. Sandra Hayes Aye

VII. New business

A. Reschedule October board meeting

Dr. Debra Dennard made a motion to reschedule the October Board Meeting from October 15, 2024 to October 8, 2024.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

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

B. Board retreat

Dr. Justin McCrary made a motion to schedule a Board retreat for November 16, 2024.

Dr. Debra Dennard seconded the motion.

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

C. Review of complaint procedures

Dr. Hayes requested a Board review of the school's complaint procedures.

Dr. Lyon suggested that this item be included in the Board's retreat agenda.

Dr. Lyon made a suggestion for the school to engage parents to refer Yalow to friends and family.

VIII. 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 7:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Sandra Hayes

IX. Finance Committee Meeting

A. Record attendance

B. Yalow, Dr. Dennard, G. Feliciano, Dr. Hayes, Dr. Lyon, Dr. McCrary. Guests: A. Diacou, K. Smaw.

B. Call the Finance Committee Meeting to Order

B. Yalow called the finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

B. Yalow reported that: 1)the finance report was included in the Board packet and presented to the full Board; and 2) as a result of the proposed grade expansion plan the school will turn cash positive in year 3 because the school will continue to educate 5th grade students at Yalow when they matriculate to 6th grade at Yalow.

X. Closing items for Finance Committee meeting

A. Adjourn Finance Committee meeting

Dr. Ross Lyon made a motion to to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 7:43 p.m.
Ben Yalow seconded the motion.

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

Documents used during the meeting

- Proposed Middle School Expansion 9.12.24.pdf
- Survey Results 9.16.24.pdf
- RYCS 202324 NYS Score Graphs - Prelim 8.27.24.pdf
- Revision Request ApprovalDenial Decision.pdf
- CAP Response from NYSED 8.21.24.pdf
- Discharges 7.2-9.12.24 Graphs.pdf
- Bus Shelter Ads-Charter Schools.pdf
- Yalow Bus Stop Ads.pdf