



The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting & Finance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday March 18, 2025 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. Ross Lyon (remote), Dr. Sandra Hayes (remote), Gregoria Feliciano (remote)

Trustees Absent

Dr. Justin McCrary

Guests Present

Alec Diacou, Kim Smaw

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

Dr. Lyon reported that Dr. McCrary was excused from the meeting.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Dr. Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

C. Approve agenda

Ben Yalow made a motion to to approve the agenda.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

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

II. Chairman updates

A. NYAC chess tournament

Dr. Lyon announced that Yalow's chess team will play members of the New York Athletic Club on Friday, April 26, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the NYAC.

B. NYSED site visit

NYSED's annual check-in site visit will take place Monday, April 28, in the afternoon. Dr. Lyon noted that the state has requested an action plan for the 2024-25 school year, which A. Diacou will be working on.

C. Spring board retreat

As part of the continuing education program for Board members, Dr. Lyon asked Board members if they can be available for the semi-annual Board retreat on Saturday, April 26, in advance of NYSED's site visit. B. Yalow mentioned he will be available by video conference.

III. Items for Board Approval

A. February 18, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Ben Yalow made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Board Meeting, Finance Committee Meeting, & Education Committee Meeting on 02-18-25.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

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

IV. Finance report

A. Finance summary

B. Yalow mentioned that the school has around \$5.5 million dollars invested in US T-Bills, but with interest rates decreasing interest income will decrease over time. Over the next few months, cash will be used to complete installation of the HVAC units, estimated at three quarters of a million dollars. The school has already paid for the switch component of the building's electrical upgrade. Installation of the new electrical switches and wiring from the basement to the roof is yet to be completed. The total cost of the electrical upgrade is estimated to be over a million dollars, with another three quarters of a million dollars left to be spent.

Assuming grade expansion to grade 6 in 2025–2026, we anticipate a small loss of approximately \$100,000; without grade expansion we expect a loss of \$1.5 million.

V. Principal report

A. Attendance August 29, 2024–February 14, 2025

K. Smaw reported student attendance and chronic absenteeism for 2024–2025 and presented comparative graphs for the 5-year period 2021–2025.

	2023–2024	2024–2025
Average attendance:	89.6%	90%
Chronic absentee rate:	41.6% (2/14/24)	37.9% (3/14/25)

School wide chronic absenteeism is down by 4% points compared with 2023–2024. 152 of 401 students are chronically absent, including 50% of 1st-grade students (34 students) and 45% of second-grade students (30 students); decreasing to 27% of 5th-grade students (16 students).

25 of 401 students have perfect attendance (6.2%).

B. Winter 2024 STEP Literacy student growth student data

UEI Cycle 2 test results, as of March 2, 2025:

- 55.6% of students are meeting or exceeding grade-level benchmarks—2 kindergarten classrooms; 3 1st grade classrooms; 3 2nd grade classrooms; 1 3rd-grade classroom; and 1 5th grade classroom.
- 44% of the students in the school are performing below grade level benchmarks—3 3rd grade classrooms; 3 4th grade classrooms; and 1 5th grade classroom.

33.4% of students (133 of 398) have grown two or more STEP levels, which equates to two-thirds of a year's growth, and are on track to make at least one year's growth by the end of June 2025.

VI. Executive Director Report

A. Installation of rooftop dunnage

A. Diacou reported that the installation of steel dunnage to support the 11 nHVAC compressors is scheduled to begin during spring break, with some work continuing while students are in school, which may cause some noise disruption to nearby classrooms. The Archdiocese asked Yalow to engage Superstructures Engineers + Architects, a specialist in exterior restoration projects, to conduct a peer review of GGA Studios' drawings, and report back to the Archdiocese. Superstructures confirmed that the dunnage and ladder design permits the installation of a new parapet roof subsequent to installation of the HVAC compressors.

B. Recap of CEC public hearing on Yalow's proposed charter revisions

A. Diacou reported on the public hearing with the Community Education Council on February 24th. Yalow's hearing went smoothly with passionate speeches from teachers and parents in support of Rosalyn Yalow's application. In contrast, a Brooklyn charter school had a contentious meeting with the Education Council chairman and a State Senator speaking negatively about charters. Dr. Lyon, Dr. Dennard, and Dr. Hayes discussed the challenges and successes of Yalow, particularly in comparison to public schools. They highlighted the school's commitment to providing equal opportunities for students regardless of their background, and its exceptional performance in educating disadvantaged students.

C. Hayes electric switch panel replacement project

The new electrical switch panels are on track for delivery before April 17th, with electricians planning to switch out the old panels during Cardinal Hayes' spring break.

D. Classroom ceiling leaks

Several classroom ceiling leaks that have been repaired, including issues in the Arts room, Penn State, and Brown University classrooms.

E. Testing of new Hayes fire alarm system

Final testing of the new fire alarm system at Cardinal Hayes took place on Saturday, March 15. Once inspection is approved by NYFD then we can apply for a permanent Certificate of Occupancy (CofO) for the 4th floor, rather than filing for quarterly renewals of the TCO.

Following approval, the old fire alarm pull stations will be eliminated throughout the Hayes building.

F. 2025–2026 lottery applications

2025 lottery applications are running ahead of applications one year ago, with slightly fewer kindergarten applications compared with 2024.

Parent tours are taking place two-to-three days a week, and recruitment efforts will continue through summer.

G. NYSED mid-year site visit

The school needs to submit two *"Action Plans"* to the State, addressing deficiencies pointed out in the 2024 charter renewal report, and Yalow's *"Action Plan"* for 6th grade expansion in 2025–2026.

H. NYS Chess Championships

Over the March 8–9 weekend, 27 of Yalow's kindergarten through 5th-grade students—7% of Yalow's entire school body—competed in the 57th Annual NYS Scholastic Chess Championships. Yalow took 1st place in two team divisions: under-1,000 rated section, and under-600 rated section.

A fourth grader, Samuel Lin, won 1st-place in the under-1,000 division.

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 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Sandra Hayes

VIII. Finance Committee Meeting

A. Record Attendance

B. Yalow, Dr. Dennard, Dr. Lyon, Dr. Hayes, and G. Feliciano attended.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Yalow called the Financial Committee Meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

The agenda consists of the financial update provided to the board, including the school's investment and expected cash outflows, and the installation of air conditioning units on the roof.

C. Adjourn Finance Committee meeting

Dr. Debra Dennard made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

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

Documents used during the meeting

- 2024-2025 Check-In Visit Confirmation Letter- Rosalyn Yalow.pdf
- Board Meeting Attendance Graphs March 2025.pdf
- Board Meeting Attendance Stats March 2025.pdf
- Rosalyn Yalow STEP Data Summary Report_Cycle 2.pdf
- Proposed Charter Revisions.pdf
- RE Checkin Visit.pdf
- 2025-2026 2019 PF REN School Action Plan Template.pdf
- FW Request for Evaluative Comments.pdf
- Final 2024-25 2019 PF REN School Action Plan Template.pdf