



The Rosalyn Yalow Charter School

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting & Finance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday July 15, 2025 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. Ross Lyon (remote), Dr. Sandra Hayes (remote), Krisztina Geosits (remote)

Trustees Absent

Gregoria Feliciano

Guests Present

Alec Diacou, Kim Smaw

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

G. Feliciano had an excused absence.

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 Jul 15, 2025 at 5:10 PM.

C. Approve agenda

Dr. Debra Dennard made a motion to approve the agenda.

Ben Yalow seconded the motion.

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

II. Chairman updates

A. Welcome Krisztina Geosits

Dr. Lyon thanked K. Geosits for accepting appointment to Yalow's Board.

B. Reminder to complete annual board survey and disclosure statements

Board members were reminded to complete and submit their annual Board member self-evaluation of Yalow's Board, as well as their annual financial disclosure statement to be submitted as part of the school's annual report to NYSED.

C. Election of Trustee

Dr. Lyon announced the names of two board members whose terms end August 31, 2025, Dr. Dennard, and G. Feliciano.

Dr. Sandra Hayes made a motion to elect Dr. Debra Dennard to the Board of Trustees.

Ben Yalow seconded the motion.

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

Dr. Sandra Hayes made a motion to elect Gregoria Feliciano to the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Debra Dennard seconded the motion.

The election is subject to acceptance by G. Feliciano, who has an excused absence from attendance.

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

III. Items for Board Approval

A. June 17, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Dr. Sandra Hayes made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Board Meeting & Finance Committee Meeting on 06-17-25.

Ben Yalow seconded the motion.

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

B. 2025–2026 health care plans

A. Diacou reported that Oxford Medical is Yalow's current health benefit provider.

Oxford's renewal rates average 5.24%, which rates were included in the 2025–2026 budget approved by the board in May.

The Board reviewed a chart comparing Oxford and Anthem rates for 2025–2026.

- Three plan options are being provided to employees: a limited doctor network, a broader network, and no restrictions network.
- Yalow will pay 92% of the premium for an individual employee (\$863). That same dollar amount of the health insurance premium paid by Yalow will be used to fix the dollar subsidy for spousal and family plans.

Dental and vision coverage is currently provide by Guardian. There are no price increases for 2025–2026.

Life insurance is provided by Mutual of Omaha equal to an employee's salary up to \$150,000. There are no price increases for 2025–2026.

Ben Yalow made a motion to approve three employee health plans, Oxford, Guardian, and Mutual of Omaha.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

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

IV. Finance report

A. Finance report

B. Yalow reported that the school holds cash plus liquid investment balances of \$5,172,032.

At the June board meeting, the board voted to add a second 6th-grade class, and a third 2nd-grade class. Subsequently, a number of teachers moved from Tier II to Tier I, which adds about \$30K each to salaries.

The current best estimate is a loss of a bit over \$600K if all parents who verbally accepted seats for the children complete their enrollment packet and become students, or a loss of \$900K if only the number of completed applications become students. These estimates don't take into account the typical student attrition occurring over the summer and during the year as families move.

Given current cash balances, Yalow can afford the loss. The loss of more than half of our 59 fifth graders will continue to negatively affect the school's financial projections for the

next three years. The Finance Advisory Committee monitors a working budget based on weekly enrollment forecasts and grade-by-grade impact on projected student enrollment on the required numbers of classrooms and teachers.

V. Principal report

A. STEP Literacy student growth student data (2024–2025)

K. Smaw reported on STEP Literacy assessment results for 2024–2025 and longitudinal growth.

- 65% of students meet or exceed grade-level benchmarks for Cycle 4 (44% of students have grown 4 Steps, which equates to 1 and $\frac{1}{3}$ year's growth, and 23% of students have made 5 Steps of growth, which is equivalent to 1 and $\frac{2}{3}$ year's growth).
- 35% of the students in the school are performing below grade level for Cycle 4.
- 293 out of the 398 students (74%) made 3 or more STEPs of growth this year.
- 75 students (19%) grew just 1 or 2 STEPs, which is equivalent to $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{2}{3}$ year's growth.

A few problem areas include:

- *Kindergarten* students who are below target are struggling with Letter Name ID, Letter Sound ID, Phonemic Awareness, Onset-Rime and Reading Accuracy. For Reading Accuracy, students omitted about 40% of the words they read, which means they need to be taught decoding strategies that they can try to use while reading.
- 1st-grade students struggle with Reading Accuracy and Reading Rate.
- 2nd-grade students performing below target level face challenges in Reading Rate and Comprehension. To improve their rate, students need ongoing fluency instruction and more regular re-reading of texts at and just below their instructional level. Additional instruction in decoding, improving word-solving strategies, and in fluency is needed.
- 3rd-grade students performing below target are struggling with Reading Rate, Silent Reading Comprehension and Written Comprehension.
- 4th–5th-grade performing below target need extra support to improve silent comprehension and written comprehension. They need practice with narrative texts that have multiple characters and subplots and opportunities to respond in writing with prompt feedback. Some students struggle to recognize text structures such as: compare and contrast, cause and effect, timeline and problem/solution, which makes it hard for them to find relevant text evidence for their comprehension answers.

Dr. Lyon noted that the 2024–2025 STEP Literacy results show the highest academic achievement levels ever reached at Yalow.

Chronically Absent Students

- Rosalyn Yalow had 140 chronically absent students in 2024-2025.
- Students in Kindergarten and 4th Grade with high absenteeism averaged about one third year's less growth than all other students.
- Students in First, Second, and Fifth with high absenteeism made slightly less growth than all other students in their grade.
- Students in Third grade with high absenteeism averaged slightly more growth than all other students in their grade. Refer to attached analysis for possible explanation of this unexpected anomaly.

B. Longitudinal growth 2019–2025

35 of Yalow's 59 5th grade graduates entered Yalow as kindergarteners in 2019–2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, and completed 5th grade in June 2025.

- average growth per year across 6 years (K-5): 2.7 Steps
- average growth in 5th grade (2024-25): 3.7 Steps
- average STEP level achieved by the end of 5th grade: 15.3

Our end target for fifth graders is STEP 16. **Conclusion:** We're close. Overall, it appears that a Yalow education succeeded in overcoming the ill effects of the pandemic.

The longer students are enrolled at Yalow the higher their level of achievement. Growth analysis of students enrolled at Rosalyn Yalow for 4-6 years of schooling averaged higher growth and achievement than students enrolled for 1-3 years.

VI. Executive Director Report

A. Dunnage & electric panel schedule updates

A. Diacou reported that ConEd notified Cardinal Hayes that the electrical transformer supplied by ConEd to feed power to Cardinal Hayes needs to be upgraded. Timing is unclear, but replacement needs to happen prior to increasing electric power to Cardinal Hayes. HVAC units will not be operable until the transformer is replaced.

- as of July 15, Alcom is expected to complete the electrical cabling into Yalow.
- stairs and railings for HVAC dunnage platforms have been installed.
- Domani Inspection Services Inc. and Kel-Mar will inspect and confirm completion of HVAC dunnage, Wednesday, July 16.
- HVAC connections to classrooms and offices will be completed within 10 days following completion of electric.

August estimate for completion and operation of all Yalow classroom HVAC units.

B. 2025–2026 enrollment forecast

As of Friday, July 11, 2025 Yalow has 94 completed new student registration packets, resulting in an enrollment forecast of 431 students. Based on 105 verbal acceptances, Yalow will have 442 students.

Originally, Yalow anticipated having three kindergarten classrooms. Based on 61 current kindergarten applicants choosing to attend Yalow, the third kindergarten classroom may be eliminated. Competition among all NYC schools for kindergarten students is particularly intense with the decline in the population of 5-year olds. Census data shows that families with younger children have been leaving NYC since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

C. Annual report due August 1

The non-financial portion of Yalow's annual report, including each Board member's Disclosure of Financial Interest statement, will be submitted.

D. CSP Expansion Grant due August 7

Yalow will be submitting a CSP Expansion Grant application for up to \$1.5 million, **commencing October 1, 2025. This 3-year grant is a competitive process, and only 5 charter schools will be awarded grants in 2025. Application questions are scored using a point system. Any expenses approved within the grant must first be expended by Yalow on projects approved in the grant application prior to submission to NYSED for reimbursement.**

VII. Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Co. case against Yalow

A. Deposition

As reported in the March 23, 2023 Board Minutes, Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Co., alleges they are entitled to reimbursement for their share of the settlement paid to Curtis Nash for the occurrence on May 18, 2017. Original case was settled in NYS court. This action is filed in federal court.

- Munich Reinsurance has hired Lewis Johs Avallone Aviles, LLP to represent Yalow.
- Plaintiff's counsel has served us with a deposition demand, in which they require we produce a witness (A. Diacou).
- scheduled for July 24, 2025.

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 6:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Sandra Hayes

IX. Finance Committee Meeting

A. Record Attendance

B. Yalow, Dr. Dennard, Dr. Hayes, K. Geosits, and Dr. Lyon.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Yalow called the finance committee meeting to order at 6:08 p.m., and announced that the agenda would consist of a recap of the finance report.

After redoing the budget again, with the extra classes, the teacher promotions, and a few minor tweaks, the school forecasts a loss of a bit over \$600K if all of the verbal acceptances become students in September 2025, and \$900K if only the currently completed student applications become students.

X. Closing items for Finance Committee meeting

A. Adjourn Finance Committee meeting

Dr. Ross Lyon made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 6:14 p.m.

Dr. Sandra Hayes seconded the motion.

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

Documents used during the meeting

- RYCS Renewal 6.26.25.pdf
- Rosalyn Yalow STEP Data Summary Report_Cycle 4.pdf
- STEP Average Growth_ Absentee vs. All Others 2025.pdf
- STEP Longitudinal Growth Analysis.pdf
- Chronic Absenteeism & Academic Growth- STEP Analysis Summary (SY24).pdf
- Potential Class_Grade Size 7-13-25.pdf