

Neighborhood Charter Schools  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board Trustees**  
October 22, 2025

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of Neighborhood Charter Schools (the “Education Corporation” or “NCS”) was held on October 22, 2025, at 691 St. Nicholas Avenue, New York 10030, and via video. The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM.

**Trustees Present:**

Heidi Baker  
Wylie Fennell  
Stephanie Hubbell (via video)  
Morgan Jenkins (via video)  
Walter Rendon (via video)  
Cliff Schneider

**Trustees Absent:**

None

**Others in Attendance:**

Daniel McCormick  
Michelle Rumph  
Rachelly Crime  
Jermaine Ottey  
Alison Rosnick  
Jenn Lindsay  
Ari Kandel

Three (3) out of six (6) seated Trustees were in attendance in person and three (3) out of six (6) seated Trustees were in attendance via videoconference. Six (6) out of six (6) seated Trustees were present throughout the meeting, which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting.

**1. Welcome and Public Comment**

Mr. Schneider began the meeting and invited public comments. No comments were received.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Mr. Fennell and seconded by Ms. Baker to approve the minutes from the September 25, 2025 Board meeting and was unanimously approved.

**3. NCS Health Insurance Presentation**

Mr. McCormick introduced Mr. Kandel, Vice President of CBIZ Employee Benefits, to provide additional details and answer questions during the presentation regarding the proposal of a new health insurance plan for NCS employees. NCS has been using Blue Cross/Blue Shield Anthem for the past five years, with a 13% increase in cost for the last

renewal. The original quote for the upcoming renewal was 42% higher and is now 26% higher for fully insured coverage. Mr. Kandel has obtained quotes from other providers that are in a similar cost range. Because of the higher cost to renew or switch to a new provider, NCS is proposing a move to a self-funded model with NCS paying for what is actually used. Under this model, it is projected that NCS would not pay more than 19% higher per month than the cost of the current plan. Employees would have access to doctors partnered with Aetna and a benefit administrator would handle claims and bill them on a weekly basis. There would also be stop gap insurance to cover instances when the policy limits are reached, capping the amount of liability on an individual basis. This proposal would shift NCS to Aetna providers in January 2026. The disruption rate in coverage will be less than 0.7% and it was noted that very few doctors that are used now will not take Aetna. The change will also impact Finance in that there will be weekly payments on what NCS spends on premiums. Current plans will be duplicated as they are written and the contract will be renewed every year in October. A shift to a self-funded model will give NCS the ability to modify coverage as needed based on usage trends in the future. Vision and dental coverage are separate and not a part of this proposal.

After the proposal was presented, a discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Mr. Fennell to approve the transition by NCS to a self-insured health plan as of January 1, 2026 and was unanimously approved.

#### **4. Fundraising and Development Presentation**

Mr. McCormick asked Ms. Rosnick to discuss the upcoming Giving Tuesday fundraising challenge that will take place on and around December 2, 2025. Ms. Rosnick stated that the goal for this year is to increase the number of donors to NCS instead of focusing on the amount raised from the challenge. Each Trustee is requested to make a personal donation before December 2<sup>nd</sup> and to get six donors to give to NCS. The suggested breakdown for the new donors is two family members, two friends and two professional contacts. A toolkit and Giving Day hub with sample emails, social media posts and text messages will be provided as part of the challenge as well as a link to a webpage that will track donation totals and create a leaderboard. The webpage will be pushed more broadly to teachers and staff so that they are aware of it and can promote it. There will be a donor total goal.

#### **5. High School Planning**

Mr. McCormick asked Ms. Lindsay to provide an update on the work that is taking place for the High School expansion. Ms. Lindsay stated that a presentation for the Board occurred on October 9<sup>th</sup>, during which the progress on the design of the high school was discussed and feedback was obtained. The recording of the Zoom meeting and the slide presentation were shared with all Board members ahead of tonight's meeting. She noted that the design journey consists of phases, and that Phase One involves determining Hallmark Experiences, Academic Strategy and Culture Values in terms of challenges young people face on their road to adulthood. The current focus has been to define the academic programming that will be offered, discussions regarding Hallmark Experiences have already taken place and Cultural Values will be addressed next month. Implications to Operations in terms of staffing, space, budget and build/launch plan will be discussed in December. The work on the charter expansion applications is being completed by various leads to be submitted to NYSED by

December 1, 2025. It includes updating charter documents with a clear vision, putting together an enrollment plan for feasible growth that is aligned to the mission for a 9-12 program, planning staffing at network and high school levels, providing evidence of a credible plan for facilities, furnishing a budget with sustainable five year financial projections, and demonstrating authentic evidence of demand and community support for an NCS High School. It is expected that in its first year the High School will enroll 120 students for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade.

## **6. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. McCormick asked Ms. Crime to provide an update from Operations. Ms. Crime informed the Board that Civic Builders is volunteering to support the NCS High School expansion. They filmed a short video at the Bronx campus that will be showcased at their upcoming fundraising event. She also provided an update on enrollment for SY 25-26, which is currently 100% on budget and stated that applications opened on October 1, 2025 for SY 26-27.

Mr. McCormick stated that as part of his participation in the professional learning experience in Atlanta, GA last month, leaders from the LeverageED Foundation will visit the Harlem campus on November 10<sup>th</sup> to evaluate school health using their tool to scrutinize three categories, Academic, Culture and Systems/Structure. They will review artifacts submitted by Harlem leadership that touch on each of those categories before their visit. In anticipation of the evaluation, an Executive Leadership Summit was held on October 6, during which executive leaders in the NCS network participated in a day of professional learning centered around LeverageED's School Health Assessment rubric and reflected on the current health of the Harlem campus. A reflection on the health of the Bronx campus will take place in November.

In terms of the work to submit the charter expansion applications for the NCS High School, there will be meetings held at both campuses with parents of current 7<sup>th</sup> Grade students, who will be the founding families. High level information from the planning sessions will be provided as well as what can be expected during the transition from 8<sup>th</sup> Grade to 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, and they will be told that the High School is currently pending approval from NYSED. Excitement will be generated with the distribution of founding t-shirts to families and students and potentially another activity they can participate in. The meetings will be used in the section of the application to demonstrate feedback solicitation from the community. The charter expansion applications have already been started on the NYSED portal, with different team members having been assigned portions that are being monitored by Ms. Lindsay and Ms. Santos.

The second submission of the Annual Reports for both schools is due on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Work is being completed by Ms. Rumph on the financial portion and the Principals of each campus are responsible for the progress towards goals portion, with the intention to submit the materials to the portal by October 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the benchmark action plan document has been submitted to the NYSED liaison, Brandy Marshall, but so far NCS has not received any feedback on its contents.

Mr. McCormick advised that the annual holiday celebration is scheduled to take place on December 18 at Grand Slam Banquet Hall and invited all Board members to attend. Finally,

he highlighted the reports from the Program Manager of Community Engagement and Belonging with updates on initiatives for students, family and staff and engagement with local officials and from the Principals regarding campus specific activities and events.

## **7. Finance Update**

Ms. Rumph informed the Board that October is the month that has been spent closing out the annual audit for submission to NYSED. She reported that MMB+Co presented the draft of the audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 at the Finance Committee meeting. Overall, the financial audit report for SY24-25 was clean, with no issues or significant audit findings to report. The Auditors thanked the NCS Finance team for their hard work and the Finance Committee approved the final audited financial statements for submission to NYSED. The FONCS and the 401(k) audits will be presented next month. In terms of current finances, there is a lag between enrollment and per pupil billing. NCS is still on budget and will look to increase programming with any extra funds.

As to updates on facilities, now that the application for bond financing for the purchase of the 411 Wales Avenue building has been approved by Build NYC, NCS is waiting on the next steps in the process that may include an appraisal of the building.

## **7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Baker made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Fennell, to adjourn the meeting and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Heidi Baker

I, Heidi Baker, the duly qualified Secretary of Neighborhood Charter Schools, a New York education corporation, do hereby certify that I reviewed these Minutes, and that the above is a true and complete copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the said corporation held on October 22, 2025.

Dated: October 22, 2025