



MINUTES

For

Board Meeting

October 30, 2024

Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School
Perth Amboy, NJ

Dr. Paul Oliveira
Lead Administrator

Norma Diaz
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Norma Diaz
High School Principal

Tobi Knehr
Middle School Administrator

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 PM by Vice President Michelle Roman

In accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*, notice of this meeting has been publicized by having the date, time, and location of the meeting posted at the school, on the school website and advertised in the Home News Tribune which has been designated as the Board's official newspaper within the legal time required. Time will be allotted for public comment at this meeting.

II. FLAG SALUTE:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.

III. MISSION STATEMENT:

To employ an educational design and experience that merges the highest standards of academic excellence while fostering convictions and commitment to social and economic justice. The school acknowledges that both family and community involvement are integral to the student's academic achievement level, and will focus on fostering strong relationships between the school, family, and community. Through these partnerships, the school will strive to create a nurturing environment by providing each student with the five resources deemed necessary for healthy child development by the President's Summit for America's Future. These include: a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start, a marketable skill through effective education, and a chance to give back to peers and the community.

In order to provide a quality education, the curriculum offered will involve rigorous academics with a holistic approach to education. Special emphasis will be placed on service learning and espousing the importance of civic and social responsibility. The development of character, leadership skills, conflict resolution abilities, and community responsibility will be stressed to provide the students with the necessary tools to become contributing members of a democratic society.

IV. ROLL CALL:

Board Members		Additional Attendees	
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President	Absent	Dr. Paul Oliveira, Chief Lead Administrator	Present
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President	Present	Ms. Norma Diaz, High School Principal	Present
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary	Absent	Mrs. Tobi Knehr, Middle School Administrator	Present
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member	Present	Ms. Patricia Bombelyn, Board Attorney	Present
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member	Present		
Ms. Yadira Puntiel, Board Member	Present		

Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member	Present		
Ms. Norma Diaz, SBA/Board Secretary	Present		

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the public and closed Session Minutes of the Board Meeting held on: (Copies in the hands of Board Members).

i. June 26, 2024 - Organizational Meeting - Tabled

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President					
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary					
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member					
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member					
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member					
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member					

ii. August 19, 2024 - Board Retreat - Tabled

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President					
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary					
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member					
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member					
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member					
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member					

iii. August 28, 2024 - Board Meeting - Tabled

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
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Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President					
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary					
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member					
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member					
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member					
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member					

iv. September 11, 2024 - Emergency Board Meeting -Tabled

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President					
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary					
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member					
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member					
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member					
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member					

v. September 25, 2024 - Board Meeting -Tabled

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President					
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary					
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member					
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member					
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member					
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member					

VI. CORRESPONDENCE:

IRIS Environmental Laboratories Inspection Report for the Barclay building presented by Dr. Oliveira

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS (agenda items only):

The Board President invites members of the public to present any comments to the Board (limited to three minutes). Please begin your comments by stating your name and address. Individuals are invited to speak on one topic at a time, and no individual will speak more than once until all individuals so desiring have spoken once. The public is reminded to ensure the efficient and orderly operations of the meeting; members will be limited to speaking on agenda items for three minutes.

Mia Solano, a student, asked the board to consider making the senior trip an overnight trip. She feels that seniors are responsible and have earned that type of experience. She also urged the board to add more after-school sports like volleyball and basketball. She also asked the board to keep the attendance officer who she feels knows and supports students.

Tobi Knehr, middle school administrator read a letter as a community member to express her concern with the school's leadership and point out the several issues she has observed. She mentioned the lack of transparency, poor communication, the student handbook not yet translated, increased student misbehavior, low staff morale, low resources, and shared sentiment of a hostile work environment. She asked the board to conduct a thorough review of the leadership performance.

Jack Perna, former lead, expressed concern with funding from the 21st Century grant being drawn yet, and the grant cumulative report summary was completed, and there was a balance of \$102,000 and \$6,000 in the IDEA account. He said that those funds could be utilized to preserve Ms. Sena's position as an attendance officer who represents the school in court for truancy matters.

John Knehr, husband of Ms. Tobi Knehr, spoke regarding a Rice Notice to his wife and expressed his frustration with the salaries of the lead and the principal. He also believes that his wife has been the victim of retaliation from the leadership. He also mentioned that several teachers and students have left the school as of July 1, 2024. He accused the lead of extortion, and he does not understand how that principal will be able to perform the duties of the BA and principal.

Ariana Sena, former substitute teacher and AULCS alumni class of 2018, expressed the emotional toll the changes at AULCS have caused her and her family. She was notified that her substitute position was eliminated on September 3, 2024. She expressed that school is different with so many teachers gone, and several people are depressed with all the random terminations and how the school operates without a truancy officer. The past two years at AULCS have been messy with all the inconsistencies.

VIII. PRESENTATIONS:

- 1. NJSLA Annual Data presented by Dr. Oliveira**
- 2. Citizenship Award presented by Ms. Diaz**
 - a. Baleryn Acevedo Hernandez
 - b. Osmarlin Henriquez

IX. STAKEHOLDERS REPORTS: None

X. CHIEF LEAD ADMINISTRATORS REPORT: October 2024

Presented by Ms. Diaz and Ms. Knehr.

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Academic Excellence
2. Human Resources and Recognition
3. Finance and Facilities
4. Executive/Governance

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The Academic Excellence Committee, upon recommendation of the Lead Administrator, presents the following motions to the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School Board of Trustees for approval:

1. Approve Savvas Learning Company to conduct SIOP Virtual training for AULCS staff members for the SY 24-25. Total cost not to exceed \$5,000.00, Acct. # 20-270-200-300-000-096.
2. Grant permission for the following *Use of Facilities and School Activities* on the dates/times listed:

Grade	Requested by/ Coordinator	Date	Time/Locati on	Event	Expenses
11-12	Ms. Diaz/ Mr. Dehnz	12/7/24 3/8/25 6/7/25	7:30 AM - 2:30 pm 2nd Floor Classrooms	SAT Testing	1-Security Guard (\$30/hr) for a maximum of 7 hours \$630.00 1- Custodian (\$30/hr) for a maximum of 7 hours \$630.00 Acct. #11-000-266-100-001-0 66
7-12	Ms. Diaz	10/31/24	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Dress Down Costume Day Senior class account fundraiser	No cost
9-12	Ms.Diaz	10/31/24 - 11/29/24	3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Snack Sale Senior class	No cost

				account fundraiser	
9-12	Ms. Diaz	10/31/24	3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Mini candy bags sale Senior class account fundraiser	No cost
9-12	Ms. Diaz	11/11/24 - 11/15/24	3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Krispy Kreme Senior class account fundraiser	No cost
9-12	Ms. Diaz	11/15/24	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Dress Down Day Senior class account fundraiser	No cost
9-12	Ms. Diaz	11/26/24	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Dress Down Day Junior class account fundraiser	No cost
9-12	Ms. Diaz	12/19/24	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Movie Night Senior class account fundraiser	1-Security Guard (\$30/hr) for a maximum of 3 hours \$90.00 Acct. #11-000-266-100-001-066
9-12	Ms. Diaz	12/20/24	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Dress Down Day Senior class account fundraiser	No cost
9-12	Ms. Diaz	1/24/25	6:30 PM - 9:00 PM	Winter Dance	1-Security Guard (\$30/hr) for a maximum of 3 hours: \$90.00 Acct. #11-000-266-100-001-066
9-12	Ms. Diaz/ Ms. DePeri	11/16/24	8:00 AM - 12:30 PM	College and Careers Fair.	1-Security Guard (\$30/hr) for a maximum of 5 hours: \$150.00 1- Custodian (\$30/hr) for

					a maximum of 5 hours: \$150.00
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3. Approve AULCS Field Trips. Copy in the hands of the board of trustees. Acct. #11-000-270-500-000-072.

HUMAN RESOURCE AND RECOGNITION

The Human Resource and Recognition Committee, upon recommendation of the Lead Administrator, presents the following motions to the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School Board of Trustees for approval. All appointments and reappointments are contingent upon and may be modified based on student participation and the district's receipt of sufficient State School Aid and other revenue funding.

1. Approve the job description for School Business/Board Secretary/Principal. Removed from consent agenda.

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ms. Elosia Hernandez, President						
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x			
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary						
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	2		x			
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member	1		x			
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x			
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member			x			

2. Under the recommendation of the Lead Administrator, approve a medical leave of absence from 09/25/2024 to 11/25/2024 as requested by Employee #15145.

3. Accept the resignations of the following staff:

#	Employee	Position Title	Effective Date
1.	Rosa Alvarez	Teacher of English as a Second Language	11/01/2024
2.	Nabaneeta Mukherjee	Teacher of Science (Biology)	12/01/2024

4. Appoint the following staff as listed (Certified): Removed from the Consent Agenda

#	Candidates Name	Effective Date	Degree	Credited Exp./ Step	Assigned Subj. Area	Location	Total Annual Salary Rate
1.	Doneta Christian	11/01/2024	MBA	0	ESL	High School	\$62,500.00

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ms. Elosia Hernandez, President						
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x			
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary						
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	2		x			
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member	1		x			
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x			
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member			x			

5. Appoint the following staff as listed for 2024-2025 Stipend Positions:

#	Employee Name	Stipend Position	Stipend Amount
1.	Cara Kirner-DePeri	Class Advisor Grade 11	\$500.00
2.	Cara Kirner-DePeri	Class Advisor Grade 12 (Senior Trip, Graduation, Fundraising & Prom)	\$2,500.00
3.	Dr. Luis Diaz	Chess Club Advisor	\$500.00
4.	Dr. Luis Diaz	Video Gaming Club Advisor	\$500.00
5.	Dr. Luis Diaz	Student Government Advisor High School	\$750.00
6.	Bradford Pazant	Student Government Advisor, Middle School	\$750.00
7.	Meltem Pak	Dance Club Advisor	\$500.00
8.	Emma Stark	National Honor Society High School	\$750.00

FINANCE AND FACILITIES

The Finance and Facilities Committee, upon recommendation of the Lead Administrator and the School Business Administrator, presents the following motions to the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School Board of Trustees for approval.

1. Approve the Bills List for the period of 9/26/2024 to 10/30/2024.
2. Approve the Board Secretary Report and Treasurer Report for September 2024.
3. Authorize the submission of a proposal to “Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grant” for the project “Eco-Learning Oasis” in the amount of \$10,000 awarded on behalf of the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School.
4. Approve the hiring of LDM Professional Services LLC to conduct an evaluation of compliance findings in special education to ensure state findings are implemented for school year 24-25 not to exceed \$8,000.00 funded by IDEA Grant Acct. 20-200-300-000-097.
5. Approve the workforce reduction to address the shortfall from the revised August budget by eliminating the following staff members/positions:

Tobi Knehr	Administrator
Luis Vargas	Admin Assistant
Peter Bosques	Security
Fermin Ramirez Rojas	Custodian
Santiago Florez	Custodian
Ada Pineiro	Nurse Sub
Maria Sena	Attendance Officer

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ms. Elosia Hernandez, President						
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President				x		
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary						
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	1			x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member				x		
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member	2			x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member				x		

Consent Agenda Items

Removed items 1 and 4 from Human Resources and item 5 from Finance and Facilities

Board Members	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Ms. Elosia Hernandez, President						
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President				x		
Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary						
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member			x			
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member	1		x			
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x			
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member	2		x			

EXECUTIVE/GOVERNANCE

The Executive/Governance Committee, upon recommendation of the Chief Lead Administrator, presents the following motions to the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School Board of Trustees for approval:

*First reading of the following policies:

1. Policy # 1550 Equal Employment/Anti-Discrimination Practices (M) (Revised)
2. Policy # 2260 Equity in School and Classroom Practices (M) (Revised)
3. Policy # 2411 Guidance Counseling (M) (Revised)
4. Policy # 3211 Code of Ethics (Revised)
5. Policy #5570 Sportsmanship (Revised)
6. Policy #5750 Equitable Educational Opportunity (M) (Revised)
7. Policy #5755 Equity in Educational Programs and Services (M) (Abolished)
8. Policy #5841 Secret Societies (Revised)
9. Policy #5842 Equal Access of Student Organizations (Revised)
10. Policy #7610 Vandalism (Revised)
11. Policy #9323 Notification of Juvenile Offender Case Disposition (Revised)
12. Policy #2423 Bilingual Education (M) (Revised)
13. Policy #2431.4 Prevention & Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions & Head Injuries (M) (R)

*First reading of the following Regulations:

1. Regulation #2200 Curriculum Content (M) (Revised)

2. Regulation #2260 Equity School and Classroom Practices Complaint Procedure (M) (Revised)
3. Regulation #5440 Honoring Student Achievement (Revised)
4. Regulation #7610 Vandalism (Revised)
5. Regulation #2423 Bilingual Education (M) (Revised)
6. Regulation #2431.4 Prevention & Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions & Head Injuries (M) (R)

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x		
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	2		x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member	1		x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member			x		

XIII. OTHER MOTIONS

1. Accept the resignation of Mr. Saad Syed, Corporate Secretary, as of October 21, 2024.

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x		
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member			x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member	1		x		
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member	2		x		

Motion to change the sequence of the consent agenda to begin with the public session and then move to the executive session.

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
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Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x		
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	2		x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member	1		x		
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member			x		

Motion to approve sending the complaint received on October 9, 2024, by counsel to Howard Nirenber for investigation at an amount not to exceed \$4,500.00.

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x		
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	2		x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member	1		x		

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Public bodies may meet in closed session when the matters under discussion are:

- (1) Matters made confidential by state, federal law, or rule by court.
- (2) Disclosure would result in an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy unless the person affected consents in writing.
- (3) Disclosure would impair the body's right to receive federal or state funds.
- (4) Collective bargaining.
- (5) Lease or acquisition of property, setting of banking rates, investment of public funds if disclosure would harm the public interest.
- (6) Investigations into violations of law.
- (7) Strategies to protect public security. Pending, ongoing, or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation, including attorney-client privilege. The threat of litigation must be more than theoretical for this exemption to apply.
- (8) Personnel matters affecting employees of the public bodies, unless all parties request or consent to a public hearing. Prior to the discussion of personnel, affected employees must be given notice, known as a Rice notice, which gives the employee the right to request a public hearing.
- (9) Proceedings that could result in a suspension, civil penalty, or loss of a license or permit.

Discussion Items:

1. Discussion of lease provisions as to St. Michael's
2. Personnel matter: review and discussion of the outside investigation report of H. Nirenberg, Esq.
regarding a personnel matter.
3. Attorney client discussions regarding: a.) Kelly v. AUL
4. Personnel: potential new hire
5. Attorney-Client Privilege

Motion to move into Executive Session:

Time Entering 7:24 PM

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x		
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member	2		x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member					x
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member	1		x		

Time Returning 8:16 PM

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Members of the public desiring to make a public comment may come forward at this time. Please begin your comments by stating your name and address. Individuals are invited to speak on one topic at a time, and no individual will speak more than once until all individuals so desiring have spoken once.

The public is reminded that to ensure the efficient and orderly operations of the meeting, members of the public will be limited to speaking on items for three minutes.

Ariana Sena, former substitute teacher and AULCS alumni, expressed her concern with the work environment at AULCS and how the administration is contributing to low morale.

NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

XIV. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn

End Time 11:25 PM

Board Member	Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstention
Ms. Eloisa Hernandez, President					
Ms. Michelle Roman, Vice President			x		
Ms. Yadira, Puntiel, Board Member			x		
Mr. Ambiorix Ramirez, Board Member			x		
Ms. Lyner Perez, Board Member	1		x		
Ms. Mayra Mercado, Board Member	2		x		