



Amber Charter Schools

Minutes

June Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday June 11, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Location

Inwood Elementary Campus: 532 W 215th St, New York, NY 10034

Trustees Present

Amador Centeno, John Gutierrez, Khiera Pena, Li'Esha Garcia, Lindsay Marino Long, Luina Munoz-BlueSpruce, Miguelina German, Robyn Epps, Timothy Day

Trustees Absent

Brad Olsen, Kim Ramos, Soledad Hiciano

Guests Present

Christine Ganey, Clarisse Alvarado, Emily Griffin, Francina Yaw-Costello, Gina Mellusi, Kirsys Gomez, Mei Ruiz, Mia Thomas, Noelani Gabriel Holt, Rose Castillo, Veronica Almedina

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

John Gutierrez called a meeting of the board of trustees of Amber Charter Schools to order on Wednesday Jun 11, 2025 at 6:16 PM.

C.

Check-In

- The board chair presented our new EH principal, Noelani Gabriel Holt.

II. Development Committee

A. Updates

- The committee chair showed the save-the-date for the event.
 - The honorees for the event were shared.
 - They will send the formal invite in Mid-July- August.
- Amber fund website has our 25th Anniversary added to it.
- We are creating a video featuring Amber students who have been at Amber for a long time, selecting 8th-grade students' stories and portfolios for the performing arts, and the performing arts teacher will select which ones to be interviewed.
- We are using a new donation platform called "Give Butter".
- The development committee reviewed and shared the board's commitment.
- The committee shared the tiers and tickets so the board can share them with friends, co-workers, etc.
- Exploring options for the night of the auction-Paddle Raise.
- Julien's Auction will go live in September and in person in California.

III. Education Committee

A. Spring i-Ready Diagnostic Results

- KBES principal shared the Network Results for Reading K-8.
 - 60 % up, 44% from winter.
 - 16% increase from on or above grade level.
 - A board member asked if kids in yellow will be asked to come to the summer program. Co-CEO stated they were already invited. The KBES principal explained that many of the students are already getting interventions.
 - A board member asked if the practice of leaving kids behind is still happening. Amber staff explained we use light retention scale, birthdate, physical size, parent involvement, attendance, social emotional, etc. This helps us to see if they need to be retained.
 - The education committee will review holdovers at their next meeting.
- EH Principal shared the medium typical growth as a Network.
 - 127% as a network.
 - IW: 127% with a 12% growth from last year.
 - KBES: 129% growth from last year.
 - Eh: 124%
 - KBMS: 133 %, 65% growth from last year

- A board member asked What strategies did you use? The KBMS principal explained the various interventions and strategies they used for this huge increase.
- The Board Chair asked, "Do we expect that we will have about 18% KBMS students who will always be below grade level?"
 - The KBMS principal replied that they are expecting the elementary students to grow before heading to KBMS with less of a gap. Scales that we use, data shows that retaining an older child is not beneficial.
 - A board member asked, "Did kids who come from another school count? KBMS principal replied, "Yes, but usually they come when they are struggling academically."
 - The Managing Director of Academics stated that we are looking at the long term as well.
 - Both elementary schools will feed our 5th grade, so there should be more Amber students next year.
- Managing Director of Academics- presented subgroups.
 - 24 fewer students in red (2 grade levels or more below).
 - 128 students moving out of red and into the green (on grade level).
- IW Principal presented the Network Math results.
 - 29 % in the winter from the green levels.
 - Yellow decreased by 16%.
 - Red- decreased by 5%
 - Last year, 44 students were on mid or above, 43% only one grade level.
 - Trend: similar, progressive right to the left one level into the other level, we want them to progress from red to green.
 - A board member shared their concern for why we are struggling in math year after year?
 - Amber staff explained that there are interventions that school leaders plan to address.
 - We are being more conscious of how we hire and train our staff in math.
 - Focus more on math, inquiry for next year in lessons.
 - A board member asked about what resources are there for the parents?
 - Math night at EH: the parents were doing the work with the students. Sending home resources as well, so they can get the practice. The board chair wants to know how many families are attending.
 - IW: Recording themselves and solving the problems, and then sharing via Parents Square to support our families and students.
 - Zoom with families to show how to solve problems.

- The KBMS principal shared the growth for Math.
 - Last year, 104 % and now 119%.
 - IW: 104% which is up 4.
 - KBES: up 6 % to now 116.
 - EH: 117 % up 10 %.
 - KBMS: 140 % 68% from last year.
- Managing Director of Academics- presented subgroup
 - IEP 218, change from fall to spring, 27% less in red
 - change 2% in yellow.
 - 27 more in the green.
 - ELL: 226 students
 - 35 fewer students in red.
 - More in yellow, they moved up from red.
 - 22 more students in green.
 - insert question from li-esha and answer from em from otter.
- iReady incentive this year.
 - Spring
 - 160 students in both ELA & Math reached their stretch goals (Individualized goals).
 - Math: 197
 - ELA: 246
 - Total Network for all three groups: 603
 - Co-CEO shared how we are celebrating our students and teachers.

IV. Finance Committee

A. Update on Budget FY26

- Co-CEO stated there was an error on the Spreadsheet. We have a surplus of \$249,116.

Li'Esha Garcia made a motion to amend and approve new budget.

Timothy Day seconded the motion.

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

V. Co-CEO Report

A. Monthly Update

- We are prepping for the interim audit in July. The team is already doing student testing.
- Co-CEO celebrated the admissions team for a successful year of hard work.

- 75% of our families have been verified to return next year. (Packets completed etc, customer service helping those numbers)
- Facilities Updates
 - We are almost done with the IW construction.
 - Co-CEO praised the Managing Director of Operations along with her team.
 - The Co-CEO has a meeting with school leadership tomorrow.
- Hispanic Federation
 - They showed a picture from the Event.
- The Co-CEOs formally thanked the EH principal and wished her luck on her new endeavors.

VI. Principals' Reports

A. KBES Principal

- Olympic day
 - Good family turnout
 - Spelling Bee
 - IReady celebration- 2 of the parties 3
 - Family Appreciation Day- towels for families to cheer on the children
 - Family raffle to get picnic towels

B. IW Principal

- 4th-grade seniors did the MS tour, and they loved it. The students were told about expectations, performing arts, STEM, and middle school gym exercise. They asked about prom.
- First spring celebration- families along students to do spring activities.
 - colages, stained glass, etc., engagement
- Olympic Day
 - The family turnout was great.

C. EH Principal

- The EH principal expressed her gratitude to the board and the Amber staff. She shared core memories of her time here at Amber.
- The Co-CEOs formally thanked the EH principal and wished her luck on her new endeavors.

D. KBMS Principal

- Fourth-grade visit went well.
- Shared pictures of the 8th-grade formal. The students loved the event, and the parents did as well.

- We had a science fair this week and displayed video of the event.

VII. Board Chair Report

A. Monthly Report

- There was a grievance filed against the school, board had to have an ad hoc committee. Luina, Miguelina, and John were members.
 - John thanked Miguelina and Luina for their work.
- The Board Retreat is on August 12th. Miguelina and Khiera will not be attending.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Approve Minutes

Amador Centeno made a motion to approve the minutes from May Board Meeting on 05-14-25.

Luina Munoz-BlueSpruce seconded the motion.

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

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Gutierrez