



Amber Charter Schools

Minutes

September Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday September 17, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Location

Amber Charter School East Harlem - 220 E 106th St, New York, NY 10029

Trustees Present

Amador Centeno, John Gutierrez, Lindsay Marino Long, Luina Munoz-BlueSpruce, Miguelina German, Soledad Hiciano, Timothy Day

Trustees Absent

Brad Olsen, Khiera Pena, Kim Ramos, Li'Esha Garcia, Robyn Epps

Guests Present

Christine Ganey, Emily Griffin, Joey Gustafson, Kirsys Gomez, Rose Castillo, Sashemani Elliott, 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 Sep 17, 2025 at 6:07 PM.

C.

Check-In

II. Education Committee

A. State Scores

The Co-CEO shared ELA and Math proficiency results with the board:

Math: Proficiency reached 54%, up from 42% last year, meeting the goal to return to pre-COVID levels.

ELA: Proficiency was 52%, a 7% decrease, though the network exceeded its set goals.

Principals will provide a more in-depth analysis of the results, including next steps and root causes, at the next board meeting.

III. Development Committee

A. Update 25th Anniversary Gala

The Development Committee Chair reported that approximately 150 guests are expected to attend next week's gala—an excellent turnout that will ensure a full room and strong engagement for the paddle auction and call for pledges.

Approximately \$200,000 in pledges are anticipated going into the event. The Chair clarified that this figure represents gross pledges, not accounting for event costs. The Board Chair noted that these results exceed expectations and are very encouraging.

The Development Committee Chair emphasized the importance of full board attendance and active participation during the event, particularly during the paddle raise, to help inspire giving in the moment.

A founding class alumna will speak during the program, celebrating Amber's legacy and community impact.

IV. Enrollment

A. Update

The Chief Communications Officer provided an enrollment update by school:

East Harlem (EH): 328 students enrolled, goal of 335 (98% of target; 7 students short).

Kingsbridge Elementary (KBES): Met target with 435 students (100%).

Kingsbridge Middle (KBMS): 289 students enrolled, goal of 315 (92% of target; 26 students short).

Inwood (IW): 178 students enrolled, exceeding the goal of 165 (104% of the target).

Network Total: 1,230 students enrolled out of a goal of 1,250 (98% of target; 20 students short).

The Chief Communications Officer noted that last year, the network was 40 students behind target at this point. The team is actively calling families on the waitlist, with 12 new students expected to start next week. Some discharges are also being processed so that final numbers may shift slightly.

V. Co-CEO Report

A. Monthly Update

The Co-CEO reported that the Summer Boost program had 146 participants, an increase of 33 students from last year. A pilot was conducted at the middle school with full-day academics in the morning and enrichment in the afternoon, led by a teacher-coach. The team is evaluating the pilot to determine potential expansion to other campuses next year.

The Chief People Officer shared about the Leadership and Operations Institute & Summer Training. Focused on the trait of honesty, emphasizing both personal integrity and self-awareness.

The Co-CEO attended the Kingsbridge Library ribbon-cutting to celebrate the library's new 7-day schedule, alongside Councilman Eric Dinowitz and Vanessa Gibson, Bronx Borough President. The event highlighted the importance of partnerships that support families and provide increased access to community resources.

The Co-CEO announced that KBMS will participate in the March for Excellence alongside 200 charter schools and 100,000 students, advocating for the needs of charter schools.

The Co-CEO shared that our Inwood Principal is being honored as the marshal for the African American Parade.

The Co-CEO shared that the audit is in its final stages, and our audit exit call is scheduled for Friday, October 10th, with the finance committee. The draft financial statements will be presented to the board at the October board meeting for approval.

The Co-CEO shared with the board that our SUNY pre-visit documents are due on October 16th, and our call is scheduled for October 24th, during which we will gain greater clarity on the next steps for the renewal visit. The board interview in-person meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19th, at 5:30 PM; the school location is pending.

The Co-CEO shared that we have submitted an application to Build NYC to obtain a tax-exempt bond in order to refinance our Inwood renovation loan. EFF is scheduled for a school visit at Inwood on Wednesday, October 1st.

The Managing Director of Operations shared that the East Harlem campus currently has scaffolding in place following last year's inspection, which revealed significant areas requiring attention. Both outdoor and indoor damage have been identified, with photos and slides shared in the presentation.

The Facilities Committee recommends moving forward with a bidding process to address the issue promptly and prevent further deterioration.

VI. Board Chair Report

A. Monthly Report

The board chair announced Amador Centeno's resignation and honored him for his years of service to the Amber Board.

The board chair nominated Miguelina German as secretary of the board and part of the executive committee.

The board chair nominated Soledad Hiciano as vice chair of the board.

VII. Closing Items

A. Approve June Board Minutes

John Gutierrez made a motion to approve the minutes from June Board Meeting on 06-11-25.

Amador Centeno seconded the motion.

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

B. Approve August Board Minutes

John Gutierrez made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Retreat & August Board Meeting on 08-12-25.

Amador Centeno seconded the motion.

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

C. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Gutierrez