



# Promise Academy Charter School

---

A partner of



**Harlem Children's  
ZONE**

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kenneth G. Langone  
**Chairman Emeritus**

Geoffrey Canada  
**Chairman**

Anne Williams-Isom  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Mitch Kurz  
**Treasurer**

Stanley Druckenmiller  
Denise Fuller  
Arlene Gibson  
Willie Mae Lewis  
Aisha Tomlinson  
Alfonso Wyatt

Achil Petit  
**Superintendent**

Tonya L. White  
**Principal  
Lower Elementary School**  
245 West 129<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027  
Tel 646.556.6290

Joseph Cordero  
**Principal  
Upper Elementary School**  
245 West 129<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027  
Tel 646.556.6271

Kashif Hameed  
**Principal  
Middle School**  
245 West 129<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027  
Tel 646.556.6273

Marquitta T. Speller  
**Principal  
High School**  
245 West 129<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027  
Tel 646.556.6275

## AGENDA

Promise Academy I Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

at

The Harlem Children's Zone  
245 West 129th Street  
New York, NY 10027

- I. Acceptance of the Minutes for February 26, 2015 and March 30, 2015
- II. Overall Updates
  - i. CEO Report (*Anne Williams-Isom*)
  - ii. Superintendent's Updates (*Achil Petit*)
  - iii. Curriculum Office (*Achil Petit/Tonya White/Kevin Dougherty*)
- III. Promise Academy I Updates
  - i. Lower Elementary School (*Tonya White*)
  - ii. Upper Elementary School (*Joseph Cordero*)
  - iii. Middle School (*Kashif Hameed*)
  - iv. High School (*Jawana Johnson*)
- IV. Financial Report (*Jim Hutter*)

**The Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy I Charter School**

**Board Meeting**

**Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**245 West 129th Street**

*Attendees: Geoffrey Canada, Mitch Kurz, Anne Williams-Isom, Stan Druckenmiller, Arlene Gibson, Willie Mae Lewis, Aisha Tomlinson, Candice Ashby, Alpha Conteh, Joseph Cordero, Tracey Costello, Megan Crawford, Marlene Fox, Michelle Germaine, Kashif Hameed, Jim Hutter, Raychael Jensen, Shondell James, Marilyn Joseph, George Khaldun, Jazmine Lewis, Justin Maker, Mindy Miller, Latasha Morgan, Sharleen Morris, Kwame Owusu-Kesse, Asif Padela, Judy Palacios, Achil Petit, Conrad Pinnock, Susan Rydz, Lauren Scopaz, Marquitta Speller, Sarah Waltcher, Tonya White, Bessie Wilkerson, and Adam Zalisk*

**Acceptance of Minutes (Stan Druckenmiller)**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 am and a motion was called to approve the meeting minutes from December 17, 2014. The motion was unanimously approved.

**CEO's Updates (Anne Williams-Isom)**

Anne Williams-Isom said that Promise Academy II Middle School Principal Kevin Dougherty is at a leadership conference this week and that Assistant Principal Judy Palacios will present today in his place.

Ms. Williams-Isom also reported that Sheryl Ragland, the Principal for Promise Academy II Upper Elementary is still recovering from illness. The Superintendent, Achil Petit, will be presenting today in Ms. Ragland's place.

Debra Sostre, who was the Principal for Promise Academy II Upper Elementary, has left the organization. Shondell James is filling in as Acting Principal until someone is hired for the role.

Trustee Arlene Gibson observed the Promise schools on December 17<sup>th</sup>. She gave staff members many good suggestions including conducting a school-wide book read. The book "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio was chosen, which explores perseverance and kindness in the face of adversity. Promise students and staff members are currently reading the book.

Ms. Gibson also connected the Promise leadership with Kay Merseth, who is leading the new Teacher Fellows Program at Harvard College. The schools are excited to establish a partnership with this program in order to bring talented Harvard College graduates into Promise Academy I and II. The new program will launch its first cohort in the 2016-2017 school year. Harvard Fellows would serve as a Teaching Fellows the first year with Promise Academy, and then lead teacher the second year. Fellows receive training and coaching from Harvard throughout both years.

Board of Regents member Lester Young walked through Promise schools to give feedback to the high schools.

Two weeks ago, Ms. Williams-Isom gave a presentation at the White House for President Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative. The panel was called "Lifting up what works."

### **Superintendent's Updates (Achil Petit)**

We are six weeks away from the NYS exams. Staff members are working hard to prepare students.

Enrollment numbers remain consistent with what was budgeted. Promise Academy I is about four students over budget, and Promise Academy II is exactly on budget.

All schools met together to standardize the curriculum, so that each Promise Academy school is aligned with its sister school.

### **PAII Charter Renewal (Sharleen Morris)**

Sharleen Morris reported that HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School's application for renewal was approved by the Board of Regents on February 5, 2015. The renewal term is 4.5 years, resulting in both PAI and PAII going through concurrent charter renewals. The charter term for Promise Academy II ends on June 30, 2019.

In regard to its visit to Promise Academy II, the DOE reported that they saw improvement in the quality of instruction and the alignment across schools. The DOE also reported positive feedback from student and teacher interviews.

Sharleen Morris also reported the next steps for Promise Academy II, which include submitting revisions for adding expanding grades. There will also be an update to the Promise Academy I and II bylaws to reflect the requirement of 12 board meetings per year.

### **Teacher Recruitment (Achil Petit, Conrad Pinnock)**

Achil Petit discussed the next steps toward improving ELA scores by hiring more high-quality teachers. He discussed strategies for identifying candidates and the action plan for recruiting them. Mr. Petit discussed the most important factors for identifying quality teachers.

Conrad Pinnock also discussed internal and external factors of teacher recruitment and the challenges that schools face in finding specialized teachers. Mr. Pinnock spoke of a six point action plan, inclusive of an embedded recruiter in the Promise Academy Central Office, who focuses purely on identifying candidates and obtaining talented teachers. The recruitment person will work closely with the leadership team for curriculum and instruction and will report dually to Human Resources and the Superintendent.

Finally, Mr. Pinnock discussed recruiting teachers earlier as a strategy which gives the schools a better opportunity to identify and hire quality teachers who are often more readily available earlier in the recruiting season.

### **HCZ Promise Academy I Lower Elementary School PAILE (Tonya White)**

Attendance was at 94% for the months of December and January due to inclement weather. Staff members are increasing efforts to improve attendance.

The school is currently making efforts to renew and rejuvenate the staff by putting a new instruction initiative in place based on student needs. Efforts include more academic work groups in the afternoon and improving the delivery of instruction. The school has also met with the Upper Elementary Principal, Joseph Cordero, to continue vertical planning.

Lower elementary has created a school calendar displaying photographs of students and school events.

Parent/Teacher conferences occurred in February one afternoon and evening with 84% of parents attending. The school is making efforts to meet with the remaining parents.

The school held an awards assembly to recognize 60 of its students.

Spirit week occurred where students celebrated a different theme each day of the week.

The school held its 100<sup>th</sup> day celebration and students played educational games.

Lower elementary is taking advantage of the collaboration with other Promise schools to incorporate practices such as math competitions. The school is giving a "Math Wars" competition this week and parents have been invited to attend.

The school is celebrating Black History Month and there will be an African American Inventor classroom-door contest occurring on Monday, March 2, 2015.

The school is starting a partnership with The Spence School: ten Promise second graders and two teachers will partner with ten second graders and two teachers from The Spence School. For the months of April and May, the students will meet two Saturdays each month at Promise and the other two Saturdays at The Spence School.

### **HCZ Promise Academy I Upper Elementary School PAIUE (Joseph Cordero)**

Attendance was at 97% for the month of December and 95% for the month of January.

The school is focusing efforts closely on students who are struggling by helping to increase their levels to prepare them for the state tests.

In December, the school held a winter art showcase with 207 parents attending. The students performed dances (ballet, modern dance, hip-hop) and created art (sculptures, mixed media, graphics, and murals). The chorus performed seasonal songs and spirituals.

Upper, middle, and high schools held an honor roll luncheon for students from grades 3-12 who have grades of 90 and above. The luncheon included a discussion on what it means to maintain high grades.

The school took 90 of its students to Columbia University for the African Folktales Festival.

Upper elementary partnered with PAPA and the other schools for an anti-bullying workshop, with sixty parents attended.

In January, the school held its top performer dinner for students who have an 80 average or more for the first half of the school year. There were 101 students honored with 142 parents attending.

The school has created a Black History Month calendar. Students spent the first five minutes of the day talking about a different contributor to American history and viewing a video snippet about the person.

Upper elementary held two Common Core workshops so that parents are kept abreast of their children's academic progress.

The school held a game night where parents compete against students in education games. This has proven to be a successful event.

### **HCZ Promise Academy I Middle School PAIMS (Kashif Hameed)**

Attendance for the month of December was 93% and 94% for the month of January. The school struggled to get students in due to inclement weather. The middle school continues efforts to improve attendance.

The school is preparing for March Madness, with classrooms named after colleges and school leadership teaching in ELA classes. Test preparation is the main focus, as data is analyzed and struggling students are supported to raise their levels.

During test preparation, the school is also focusing on keeping student's stress levels down by engaging in fun activities including a basketball game against PAII's middle school. Students were also taken to see "Selma," a film about an event in the Civil Rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King.

Staff members were also taken out for lunch by school leadership to boost team spirit during intensive test preparations.

### **HCZ Promise Academy I High School PAIHS (Marquitta Speller)**

Attendance was at 95% for the month of December and January.

High school students took January exams and 90% of the school's juniors are on track to graduate. Students also passed the ELA exam and more than 50% of them are college-ready. The school is making a strong push to take exams as early as possible because to be able to take college placement exams. Every student has passed all mandatory exams.

The school has 40 students who are in the process of applying for pre-college summer programs. Students are hoping to gain admittance to Cornell, the Blue Stamp Engineering Program, and other programs where Promise students have had success in the past.

The high school has 18 students who are also college students in the Bard Early College program, taking college courses as well as high school courses.

The high school is pleased to announce an early college acceptance of one of the junior-level students, who was accepted into Bard College with a full scholarship and will leave to start college in August.

Two weeks ago, Promise Academy I and II High School attended a retreat. Staff members from both schools worked together to look and how we they could leverage the resources at both school. Lead teachers from both high schools are working with students to help them pass their Regents exam.

### **Financial Report (Jim Hutter)**

Promise Academy I is four students above the enrollment budget. From a revenue standpoint, PAI is about \$200,000 favorable through seven months which reflects both higher general education and special education revenue. Total expenses are approximately \$100,000 unfavorable, which represents about 1% of the total YTD budget of \$10.2 million. Overall, PAI is \$100,000 favorable.

A draft of the PAI 990 Form, which is used by non-profits to provide mandatory information to the Internal Revenue Service, was presented to the Board for their review. The form is being processed by Grant Thornton and is due for final submission by May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**The Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy I Charter School**

**Board Meeting**

**Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**35 East 125<sup>th</sup> Street**

*Attendees: Geoffrey Canada, Anne Williams-Isom, Ken Langone, Stan Druckenmiller, Denise Fuller, Arlene Gibson, Alfonso Wyatt, Candice Ashby, Joseph Cordero, Kashif Hameed, Jim Hutter, Shondell James, Jawana Johnson, Kevin Dougherty, Sharleen Morris, Asif Padela, Achil Petit, Sheryl Ragland, Marquitta Speller, Tonya White, and Bessie Wilkerson*

**CEO's Updates (Anne Williams-Isom)**

Anne Williams-Isom spoke about recent visits to Promise Academy I schools from National Security Agency director Michael S. Rogers and director Spike Lee among others, who presented to students.

On March 18<sup>th</sup>, Geoff Canada and Ms. Williams-Isom attended a teacher-recruitment event where they talked about Promise Academy.

Schools are seven days away from State exams and test preparation continues with parent teacher conferences scheduled to make sure that parents are onboard with supporting students at this time.

Promise welcomes back PAII Lower Elementary Principal Sheryl Ragland, who was away for six weeks due to illness.

PAII Lower Elementary had a Promise 50 Selma tribute. Grades K-2 created a walking museum to honor the event and each class presented on one of the Selma leaders. Three classes performed a play where they acted out kid-friendly clips from the film.

Interim Principal Shondell James and staff have been working with PAII Upper Elementary students in Saturday school to address reading challenges.

PAII Middle School students have been working on hydroponics this school year, and were guided by a science teacher in dissecting a tilapia fish from the lab.

The PAII High school has been preparing for Regents exams. The school has also started this month's character education with the theme "random acts of kindness."

**Facilities Appeal (Kate Shoemaker)**

Due to a change in state law last spring, new and expanding charter schools in New York City have an opportunity to obtain either public space or facilities funding at a rate of up to 20% of per pupil funding. In school year 2014-15, that rate is \$13,777, meaning that we could potentially receive up to \$2,755.40 per eligible child. Promise Academy II went through the process and recently won an appeal in New York State for facilities funding to accommodate expanding grades, 10, 11 and 12.

**Financial Report (Jim Hutter)**

The financial picture continues to be good. Promise Academy I is about \$200,000 favorable in revenue and on target for expenses through eight months. Therefore, the HCZ contribution is \$200,000 less than what was budgeted.

Since the last meeting, all filings have been made and there were no compliance issues raised by the auditors.



# HCZ Promise Academy I

## March 2015 Attendance Report

HCZ PAI Lower Elementary School				HCZ PAI Upper Elementary School			
Date	Number of Students Absent	Enrollment	% of Students Present	Number of Students Absent	Enrollment	% of Students Present	
3/2	22	294	93%	16	289	94%	
3/3	14	294	95%	8	289	97%	
3/4	16	294	95%	4	289	99%	
3/5	36	294	88%	20	289	93%	
3/6	30	294	90%	18	289	94%	
3/9	14	294	95%	12	289	96%	
3/10	14	294	95%	4	289	99%	
3/11	9	294	97%	4	289	99%	
3/12	4	294	99%	4	289	99%	
3/17	5	294	98%	9	289	97%	
3/18	8	294	97%	7	289	98%	
3/19	10	294	97%	4	289	99%	
3/20	15	294	95%	4	289	99%	
3/23	13	294	96%	6	289	98%	
3/24	4	294	99%	7	289	98%	
3/25	9	294	97%	4	289	99%	
3/26	12	294	96%	3	289	99%	
3/27	13	294	96%	7	289	98%	
3/30	17	294	94%	13	289	96%	
3/31	10	294	97%	14	289	95%	
<b>Average</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>97%</b>	

# HCZ Promise Academy I March 2015 Attendance Report

HCZ PAI Middle School		HCZ PAI High School				
Date	Number of Students Absent	Enrollment	% of Students Present	Number of Students Absent	Enrollment	% of Students Present
3/2	7	243	97%	11	210	95%
3/3	4	243	98%	7	210	97%
3/4	6	243	98%	11	210	95%
3/5	17	243	93%	20	210	90%
3/6	12	243	95%	3	210	99%
3/9	15	243	94%	9	210	96%
3/10	11	243	95%	9	210	96%
3/11	8	243	97%	5	210	98%
3/12	19	243	92%	5	210	98%
3/17	10	243	96%	7	210	97%
3/18	3	243	99%	11	210	95%
3/19	5	243	98%	10	210	95%
3/20	6	243	98%	9	210	96%
3/23	12	243	95%	9	210	96%
3/24	10	243	96%	7	210	97%
3/25	6	243	98%	5	210	98%
3/26	7	243	97%	4	210	98%
3/27	7	243	97%	5	210	98%
3/30	8	242	97%	8	210	96%
3/31	11	242	95%	11	210	95%
<b>Average</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>96%</b>



## Promise Academy I

### FY 2015 March YTD Budget vs. Actual

\$ millions

	Budget	Actual <sup>(1)</sup>	Fav/(Unfav)	Full Year Budget
<b>Enrollment</b>	1,034	1,033	(1)	1,034
<b>Grades</b>	K - 11	K - 11		K - 11
<b>DOE and other gov't funding</b>	\$ 12.4	\$ 12.7	\$ 0.3	\$ 16.5
<b>Expenses:</b>				
<b>Salaries</b>	8.0	8.0	-	10.9
<b>Benefits</b>	2.4	2.5	(0.1)	3.2
<b>OTPS</b>	2.4	2.4	-	3.1
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<u>12.8</u>	<u>12.9</u>	<u>(0.1)</u>	<u>17.2</u>
<b>HCZ Contribution</b>	\$ 0.4	\$ 0.2	\$ 0.2	\$ 0.7
<b>per student (whole \$)</b>	\$ 387	\$ 194	\$ 193	\$ 648

DOE reimbursement up to 1118 students.

(1) Excludes bonus, growth fund and "in-kind" contributions.