

MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 17, 2026

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Trustee
Sabrina Philson, Trustee
John Witherspoon, Trustee
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee
David Medina, Trustee

GUESTS

Valerie Jacobson, Head of School
Katie Manion, Interim Head of Operations
Ellen Eagen, School Counsel
Mary Kenny, Transcriber
Additional Staff (19)

1. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. Ms. Putz welcomed everyone.

2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES

- Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve the February 2026 Board Minutes pending counsel review. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. Ms. Philson abstained. All others were in favor.

3. ACADEMICS

Ms. Jacobson summarized important updates at the school:

- 2/24-2/27 STAR Testing in ELA/Math (during class); make-ups 3/2-3/6
- 2/27 Virtual PLC Meeting
- 2/27 Winter Concert (Cafeteria)
- 3/2 Credit Recovery Group 6 Begins
- 3/3 Faculty Yearbook Photos (during prep periods)
- 3/4 during Advisory - Students Completed NYC DOE Survey
- 3/6 at 10am Student Recruitment Open House
- 3/10 -3/12 Final Exams (during class)
- 3/13 - Final Exam Make-Ups; Credit Recovery Group 6 Ends; Last Day of Trimester 2
- 3/16 - Trimester 3 Begins; Trimester 2 Grades Due by 3pm; Grade Verification Issued
- 3/17 - Grade Verifications Due by 3pm; Wear Green & White School Spirit Day
- 3/18 - Trimester 2 Report Cards Generated; Shark Tank Assembly (during Advisory)
- 3/19 - Trimester 2 Report Cards Released to Students
- 3/20 - School Closed - Eid al-Fitr
- 3/23 - NYSED Monitoring Site Visit (in afternoon); Electives Course Selection Fair (during lunch periods)
- 3/24 - Soft LockDown Drill at 10am; 2026-27 Course Selection during Social Studies Class
- 3/25 - Annual March Against Gun Violence w/ NYAGV
- 4/1 - NYC DOE Teacher, Student, Parent Surveys Due
- 4/2-4/10 School Closed for Spring Break

Ms. Jacobson presented a proposed calendar for 2026-27, pending the DOE calendar dates. She did not request approval of the calendar at that time. School would be closed June 30-July 3, with the exception of Facilities. Non-Instructional staff would get six additional floating vacation days to be used by August 15, 2026. Instructional staff would get six vacation days on the following Fridays: July 10, July 17, July 24, July 31, August 7, and August 14. School would be closed on August 21. Summer school will run July 6-August 13 from 8am to 2:30pm Mondays-Thursdays. Teachers will return for Professional Development on Monday, August 17 through August 28. August Regents Exams will be on Tuesday, August 17 and Wednesday, August 18. Freshman Bridge Program dates will be announced. The first day of school will be Monday, August 31, 2026. The projected last day of school is Friday, June 25.

August professional development needs include Restorative Practices Advisory Circles, Danielson Rubric for Teachers, Advisory Program, CCR Program, Co-teaching, Curriculum and Lesson Planning, DASA, Mandated Reporter, PLCs and Data Dive, and SNAS and ELL Supports.

Ms. Jacobson presented information about the 2025-26 teacher evaluations process, including the timelines for formal and informal evaluations. Due to a need for help completing formal evaluations in the spring, Ms. Jacobson presented three proposals for third-party evaluators: School Works for \$53,600, the Danielson Group for \$36,000, and Typhani Harris, E.D. for \$30-35,000. Ms. Jacobson would like to move forward with the Danielson Group. Board discussion occurred. Ms. Eagen suggested that Ms. Jacobson should meet with the Board the following Monday to provide an analysis for why she is recommending the Danielson Group to the Board prior to them voting.

Ms. Jacobson congratulated the February Teacher, Staff, and Advisor of the Month: Reuben Dilworth, Rosa Yenque, and Tiffany Hampton. She also provided an overview of recent school highlights, including the Women's History Month College Panel, Women's History Month She-ro Pop-Up, and March Madness Advisory Competitions.

Ms. Martin provided a Senior progress update. 83/160 seniors are on track to graduate. 60 students have all Regents. There are 53 5th-year seniors in credit recovery. Eight students graduated in January, four from the Class of 2024 and four from the Class of 2025.

4. PARENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Ms. Pink announced that the PLC will be continuing to partner with Brooklyn Neighborhood Services this summer. The program will allow for 25 WCHS seniors to participate in a financial literacy workshop. The March PLC meeting will take place on Thursday, March 26. A guest from the Brooklyn Public Library will present.

5. OPERATIONS

Ms. Jacobson reported that she is preparing for NYSED Annual Visit with Department Leaders, Academy Leaders, Safety & Facilities and Accountability Manager; planning Spring Regents Tutoring and creating Proctoring Schedules, trainings, exam orders and supplies and scantrons and accommodation rooms and room assignments with Data, SNAS, and Counseling Department for PSAT, AP, NYSESLAT and June Regents Exams; issuing Trimester 3 schedules, Trimester 2 Grade Verifications and Report Cards; administering DOE Teacher, Student and Parent Surveys through April 1; leading Scheduling Team to prepare 26-27 Master Schedule and Student Course Selection screens, including student Course Selection Fair on March 23 and selections in Social Studies classes on March 24 followed by Counselor Follow-up during lunch periods on March 25; submitting Per Pupil Invoice #6 by March 24, and hosting an upcoming Soft Lock Down Drill next week for a total of 11 for 2025-26; 1 upcoming drill.

Ms. Jacobson presented information about E-Rate. E-rate is a federal program providing schools and libraries with 20-90% discounts on eligible service. Internet access, telecommunications services, and related equipment are eligible for discounts from approved vendors depending on the funding cycle. WCHS is in year 2 of the 3-year approved Category 1 internet contract for \$27,594 per year. FY2026 begins a new five-year cycle (2026-2030) for Category Two equipment, such as Wi-Fi access points and cabling. WCHS has been allocated an estimated Category 2 Budget of \$131,020.50 based on \$200/student x 650 students at an 85% discount (WCHS pays 15%).

Ms. Jacobson presented bids from GHA Technologies (selected), Global Computer Systems, and iWise Consulting for \$88,300, \$95,772, and \$104,647.70, respectively. Discussion occurred.

- Mr. Witherspoon motioned to approve the 2026-27 E-Rate bid from GHA Technologies. Mr. Medina seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Rivera requested that the Board fill the Head of Operations role, a role that has remained vacant in recent years and has been completed by the Head of School. Katie Manion would serve as Interim Head of Operations.

- Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve Katie Manion as Interim Head of Operations. Ms. Philson seconded. All were in favor.

6. FINANCE

Ms. Fernandez presented the financial statement as of January 31. The total collected revenue for the period is \$8,314,401. The total expenses for the period are \$9,178,309. The deficit for the period is \$863,908. The projected end of year deficit is \$890,621. She then reviewed assets versus liabilities in detail.

7. FACILITIES

Raymond James reported that there were no school visits or inspections for the month from the Fire Department, Board of Health, Environment Services, or the Department of Buildings. The school's air conditioners are being prepared for the upcoming summer by checking filters and motors. The school sustained no leaks during heavy rainfall. The cellar had no issues, this was due to the school replacing a defective water pump and Con Edison sealing their utility entry points. All hallways are being stripped and waxed and classrooms are being prepared for the State visit.

8. SAFETY

Mr. Guzman reported that the Dean's Office is actively developing and implementing interventions to support students in arriving on time, such as daily check-ins and calls to parents. The safety team continues to inform the Dean's office of students who are actively late to ensure communication to parents happens as soon as the student arrives at the school. On March 2, 9, and 16, WCHS attended the weekly meeting with the 90th Precinct and other local schools. During these meetings, Mr. Guzman informed them about the different activities scheduled for the remainder of the month. They agreed to provide support for the March Against Violence on March 25, 2026. Calls to parents for students who arrive late to school, late to class, or out of uniform continue to be made through the Dean's Office. During the month of March, there were two incidents that resulted in out-of-school suspensions. Hallway sweeps are continuing, and students found in the hallways after the late bell will automatically receive after-school ACT to deter lateness to class. Staff are continuing to encourage students to use their lockers to ensure they remain in uniform throughout the school day. The Dean's Office continues to confiscate non-uniform items from students who do not comply with the rules and returns the items to students at the end of the day.

9. RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

Ms. Gomez stated that enrollment is 595 in PowerSchool and ATS. The estimated FTE is 589.098. The lottery application deadline is April 1 and the lottery will be held on April 13. There are 219 total applications so far. 2026-27 grade-level seats have yet to be determined. 13 families attended the March 7 Open House. Canvassing took place at Bushwick Community Partnership Meeting, IS 291, and JHS 383. WCHS will have a presence at the March 18 RiseBoro Community Resource Fair. Williamsburg canvassing will take place later in the week at MS 577, JHS 126, IS 084, and MS 50. The Recruitment Department has applied for WCHS to be a SYEP worksite this summer. Ms. Gomez requested to host six 18+ youth to support recruitment, operations, and Summer Bridge. The lottery on April 13 will feature performances by the Advanced Choir. Detective Smith will be the independent observer. Ms. Pink will also gather community partners for the event.

Ms. Gomez reviewed the UnderDog Strategies recruitment proposal with the Board. The company would be hired to help the school hit enrollment targets for the upcoming school year. The enrollment audit showed

that word of mouth referrals continue to be the school's best recruitment strategy and that digital reach and social media campaigns could use additional help with conversion. UnderDog Strategies would help the school with active lead generation, high-touch outreach, and canvassing. UnderDog projects 194 leads and 32 new applications. The proposal would cost \$30,350. Extensive discussion occurred.

- Ms. Philson made a motion to approve the hiring of UnderDog Strategies for a concentrated campaign for a cost of \$30,350. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. All were in favor.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. Kloss reported that there was one instructional hire in February and one Operations re-hire. There were no February separations. Two employees are currently on leave. Mr. Kloss is recruiting for a math leave replacement and will be making a general posting for 2026-27. He is working with the Athletics Department on spring coaches and required certifications. Mr. Kloss sent a memo of responsibilities memo out to the Safety Officers and held the annual Ops/HR guidelines PD presentation. He will continue working with Leadership on student safety, attire, arrival and departures.

11. STAFF LIAISON TO THE BOARD

Mr. Kronenberg thanked Ms. Manion for creating and disseminating the Climate Survey. He added that March Madness has added excitement to the month. Students have been benefiting from the school's partnership with TDF and have attended shows including Lion King and backstage at Operation Mince meat.

12. ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Manion presented data from the staff-completed Mid-Year Climate Survey. The survey showed strong staff commitment and community, vibrant school culture and programming, staff engagement and solutions-oriented ideas around retention, and strong faith in the ELL and SPED programming at the school. Staff reported strong policy adherence with room for growth.

Ms. Manion also presented a summary of the recent enrollment audit. The audit showed that retention is improving. The net difference between students enrolled and students discharged has grown meaningfully each year, with 2025–26 showing the strongest performance in four years. It seems like current retention strategies are working. Enrollment trends reflect broader market conditions. The audit identified opportunities to strengthen internal systems, including student onboarding, family engagement, and discharge processes. The school is actively reviewing protocols and staff guidance in response. Recruitment efforts are multi-faceted and expanding, with word-of-mouth remaining the school's strongest channel and new strategies in development to convert digital interest into enrollment. The Board will continue to monitor progress on audit recommendations through regular reporting from school leadership.

Ms. Manion stated that the NYSED Check-In Visit is scheduled for the afternoon of Monday, March 23. Updates to the WCHS Action Plan are due March 20. Leadership will hold a prep meeting on March 19. The next board meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 21. A student film from February 28 raised \$420. There are a number of pending film shoots in the works. Total funds raised from filming include \$11,593. She is seeking additional grants and funding. Ms. Manion will work with Ms. Gomez and Ms. Johnson to highlight Friday lunch Bingo and Karaoke and will promote the NYAGV rally scheduled for March 25.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Philson seconded. All were in favor.