

Board Minutes

The New Academy Charter School

Minutes of the general meeting of the Board of Directors of The New Academy Charter School held on March 12, 2026.

- I. The meeting was called to order by Mr. William Nunn. Representative Joe Preston, Mr. Ken Curcio, and Ms. Katie Micco were present. Mr. David Caliguiri and Ms. Susan Creighton were excused.
- II. In accordance with applicable law, Notice of Publication of the meeting was advertised in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on March 5, 2026 and the meeting was conducted at the 900 Agnew Road facility.
- III. Comments were requested from the public but there were none.
- IV. Minutes from the meeting of March 12, 2026 were reviewed and approved unanimously.
- V. Financial Report

The Financial Report was presented by Mr. Ken Curcio. Mr. Curcio indicated that while attendance was stable, it was much lower than budgeted which was leading to a substantial revenue shortfall. At that time, Mr. Curcio concluded his report.

VI. The Education Report

The Education Report was presented by Mr. Jay Moser. Mr. Moser reported that enrollment was currently at 84 (breakdown listed below)

8 th Grade	9
9 th Grade	21
10 th Grade	18
11 th Grade	16
12 th Grade	20

He further indicated that there are currently 42 students in the school with Programs for Exceptionalities, 35 of which are from Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Mr. Moser then reported the status of all New Academy Charter School pending and awarded grants as of March 6, 2026. See the following:

Funder	Name	Status	Amount Pending	Amount Awarded	Term Start Date	Term End Date
Dollar Bank Foundation	Driving Simulator	Application-Submitted	\$17,850.00	\$0.00		
Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and	'25-'26 School Safety and Mental Health	Application-Submitted	\$70,000.00			

Delinquency	Grant					
Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County	LSA-2024	Awarded		\$301,476.00	TBD	TBD
USDA	PA Harvest of the Month Art Contest	Awarded		\$1,500.00	6/15/25	6/15/26
Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency	'23-'24 School Mental Health Grant	Awarded		\$70,000.00	1/1/24	6/30/26
Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency	'24-'25 School Safety and Mental Health Grant	Awarded		\$70,000.00	7/1/24	6/30/26
Fruit Tree Planting Foundation	Orchard Grant-Charter	Awarded		\$300.00	2/27/25	
Pennsylvania Department of Education	School Improvement	Awarded		\$75,000.00	9/13/25	9/30/26
Pennsylvania Department of Education	Title I	Awarded		\$40,748	8/2/25	9/30/26
Pennsylvania Department of Education	Title II	Awarded		\$3,646	8/2/24	9/30/26
Pennsylvania Department of Education	Title IV	Awarded		\$10,000.00	8/2/24	9/30/26
Pennsylvania Department of Education	IDEA	Awarded		TBD	9/1/25	6/30/26
		Totals	\$87,850	\$572,670		

Mr. Moser relayed the following information which outlines The New Academy Charter School's ongoing strategic work to support student recruitment and retention for the 2025-2026 academic year. The school continues to prioritize expanding enrollment within the target student population while simultaneously enhancing student engagement and persistence.

Admissions Effort:

1. Community Outreach & Partnerships:

- Continuing collaboration with local organizations to build awareness of our academic offerings.
- Continue to use presentations and information sessions at various local community hubs throughout the 2025-2026 school year, including presentations with the Juvenile Public Defenders office, the Public Defenders' Office and the Parent Advocacy Association.

- Utilize partnerships with organizations serving vulnerable populations to identify prospective students who may benefit from our personalized, trauma-informed model.

2. Community Visibility:

- Update the school website with clearer enrollment information, success metrics, and testimonials from current students.
- Offer tours for interested students to experience a typical school day.

Retention Efforts:

1. Student Support & Engagement:

- Ongoing implementation of wraparound services, including mental health counseling, academic mentoring, and family outreach.
- Increase focus on student voice via surveys and student advisory groups, shaping changes to our culture and climate.

2. Attendance & Re-engagement Initiatives:

- Develop individualized attendance plans with at-risk students, supported by home visits and family conferences.

3. Family Connection:

- Strengthen two-way communication with families through regular phone calls, tours, and school events. We use Talking Points, an app that teachers use to send messages, assignments and class information to our families.

Next Steps:

- Coordinate with our families, our enrollment specialists and court liaisons to ensure that the good things that are happening every day in our school are reaching perspective students and their families.

Mr. Moser then reported on school safety and security. He explained that as part of the school's ongoing commitment to a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff, it will be strengthening both the preventive systems and the emergency response capacity. He further explained that school safety is not a static initiative but an ongoing process of review, refinement, and training to ensure alignment with current risks, state expectations, and best practices.

Mr. Moser then indicated that over the past several months, the school has continued to review and refine the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to ensure it reflects updated guidance and evolving safety concerns. Particular attention is being paid to integrating digital-age risks, mental health crisis response, and coordinated emergency preparedness. He further explained that the school is also maintaining communication with the Pennsylvania State Police regarding risk and vulnerability assessment practices and monitoring guidance and funding updates from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to ensure compliance and alignment with state standards.

He explained that a major component of ongoing improvement efforts includes professional development. Administration staff members will attend the 2026 PAIU School Safety & Security Conference on March 12–13. The conference agenda reflects a comprehensive and timely focus on the most pressing safety issues facing schools today.

Mr. Moser further reported that the Conference sessions emphasize several key themes that directly align with the school’s current priorities of a significant focus on technology and student safety in the digital and AI age, including the impact of social media on student mental health and emerging online risks. He further reported that sessions such as Working with Youth in the Digital and AI Age and Digital Danger Zones for Educators will provide guidance on identifying and responding to modern digital threats. Additionally, Beyond the Binder: Leveraging AI to Strengthen EOPs will offer practical strategies to modernize emergency planning and improve efficiency through responsible AI integration.

Mr. Moser then reported that emergency preparedness and active threat readiness are also central themes and that presentations from the Pennsylvania State Police on risk and vulnerability assessments, as well as sessions on applying structured rehearsal methodologies to active threat preparedness, will help strengthen tabletop exercises and overall response coordination. He indicated that the keynote address, Education in a Violent World, will provide a broader national perspective on evolving threats and systemic preparedness.

Mr. Moser then reported that mental health and behavioral crisis responses remain critical components of school safety and that sessions focused on suicide risk evaluation, therapeutic crisis prevention, trauma-informed practices, and the PREPaRE crisis framework will support efforts to enhance early identification, intervention, and post-crisis recovery processes. He indicated that these trainings reinforce the understanding that school safety extends beyond physical security and includes proactive behavioral and emotional supports.

He also indicated that the conference also includes sessions dedicated to improving the efficiency of school safety committees and providing state-level updates from PCCD, ensuring that governance structures and compliance practices remain strong.

He indicated that school safety remains a top priority for the administration and that through ongoing professional learning, interagency collaboration, and continuous plan refinement, the school will continue working to ensure that systems are not only compliant but also proactive, coordinated, and responsive to the needs of students and staff. He reported that a follow-up summary of key takeaways and recommended next steps will be provided after the conference.

Mr. Moser then went over the following IXL and School Improvement Goals:

IXL		
Goal	By June 2026, 35% of all students will show positive average monthly growth on Math IXL.	
Target 3	By March 30, 25% of all students will show positive average monthly growth on Math IXL.	
Target 4	By June 2026, 35% of all students will show positive average monthly growth on Math IXL.	

Goal	By June 2026, 35% of all students will show positive average monthly growth on ELA IXL.	
Target 3	By March 30, 25% of all students will show positive average monthly growth on ELA IXL.	
Target 4	By June 2026, 35% of all students will show positive average monthly growth on ELA IXL.	
Think Kids		
Goal	By June 2026, responders' total average on the PA School Climate Survey will be at least 2.7.	
Target 1	By Sept. 30, responders' (students) total average on the PA School Climate Survey will be at least 2.6. TARGET MET	
Target 2	By Dec. 30, responders' (staff) total average on the PA School Climate Survey will be at least 2.6. TARGET MET	
Target 3	By Mar. 30, responders' (students) total average on PA School Climate Survey will be at least 2.7.	
Target 4	By June 2026, responders' total average on the PA School Climate Survey will be at least 2.7.	
Attendance Goal		
	By June 30, at least 15% of students will have regular attendance (14 or fewer absences, attending 90% of the time).	
Target 1	By Sept. 30, at least 15% of students who have a history of chronic absence (attending less than 90% of the time) will have an attendance success plan. TARGET MET	
Target 2	By Dec. 30, our average daily attendance will be 70%. TARGET MET	
Target 3	By March 30. at least 20% of students will have regular attendance (attending 90% of the time).	
Target 4	By June 30, at least 15% of students will have regular attendance (14 or fewer absences, attending 90% of the time).	

Mr. Moser also indicated that on February 20th, School Improvement Coordinator Christina Feragotti met with ELA and math teachers to explain how to integrate IXL into their daily teaching and that our textbooks can now be linked to IXL allowing teachers to target specific skills in their lessons to student laptops.

Mr. Moser then went over some of the upcoming tours/events for the 2025-2026 School Year as follows:

- Tour and demonstration of JATC IBEW Local 5 on March 20, 2026 for interested seniors. IBEW Local 5 is a chapter of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers representing Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and the surrounding areas within their jurisdiction.
- Tour for interested seniors of Empire Beauty School on March 25, 2026.
- Tour of New Century Careers on March 27, 2026.
- Pittsburgh Promise's annual Senior Celebration Day on Tuesday, April 28, 2026 from 10:00-11:30 am at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall.

- Two students registered for March 14 SAT. One student currently registered for May 2 SAT tests.
- Graduation rates have increased from a 47% to a 73% 4-year cohort graduation rate from the 23-24 to the 24-25 school year.
- Rachel Heinz, a representative from the IBEW Local 5 (Electrical Union) came in on January 15th as part of our lecture series.
- Patrice Bailey, a representative from Empire Beauty Schools also came in and spoke to students as part of our lecture series.
- Pittsburgh Councilperson Bob Charland visited the school on February 20th.
- Pittsburgh Fire Chief Daryl Jones will be our next guest as part of our Speaker Series
- 2 students accepted at Robert Morris University, 1 student accepted at Seton Hill.
- School Prom is scheduled on May 17th at the Grand Wyndham Hotel, Downtown.
- Graduation is June 5th, 2026 – looking at Kelly Strayhorn Theater or the Harris Theater.

He indicated that this highlights our progress, but our work continues, together, the board, the staff and our families and students can achieve remarkable things together.

Mr. Moser then reported that on March 3, 2026, The New Academy Charter School hosted its annual oversight visit conducted by Lisa Augustin from Pittsburgh Public Schools. He indicated that the review evaluated documentation and practices from the 2024–2025 school year to ensure compliance with charter requirements, Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations, and district oversight expectations.

Mr. Moser then reported that the review team examined materials across the following domains:

- Curriculum & Instruction: Curriculum guides, pacing documents, assessments, student learning objectives, and evidence of data-driven instructional adjustments.
- Professional Development: PD calendar, agendas, Act 48 documentation, induction plan, and evidence of evidence-based instructional practices.
- Special Education: Evaluation procedures, IEP processes, disability data, modified curriculum/assessments, ESY data, and compliance documentation.
- Governance & Administration: Board documentation, principal evaluation, parent communication practices, school improvement planning, and Title I documentation.
- Finance: Budgets, audit reports, financial statements, fiscal solvency policies, and insurance documentation.
- School Safety & Compliance: Safe Schools reporting, crisis response training, drill documentation, trauma-informed training, and safety coordination.
- Health & Student Services: Mandated screenings, certified nurse documentation, SAP programming, and medical compliance records.

Mr. Moser then indicated that the district will issue a formal written report outlining commendations and/or recommendations. Upon receipt of this, the administration will:

- Review findings with leadership.

- Address any required corrective actions.
- Incorporate recommendations into continuous improvement planning for 2026–2027.

He concluded his report by indicating that, overall, the visit was collaborative and reflective of continued organizational growth and systems refinement.

At this time Mr. Moser then requested Board approval of a Flexible Learning Program and the program was then discussed. At this time, a motion to approve the program was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

A discussion was then held concerning the positive impact the New Academy Charter School was having on the community.

VII. Legal

Mr. Norris reported that there were no new claims. He then indicated that the Financial Interest Disclosure Forms would be mailed shortly and needed to be returned prior to May 1 in order that they may be filed with the State Ethics Commission. He stated that this is the first year that the filing to the State Ethics Commission was required due to a change in the Charter School Law.

At this time, a motion to add three new Board members was discussed. The prospective Board members were Ms. Valerie McCann Bucek, Ms. Kathryn Clark, and Ms. Tralese Thomas. It was noted that Ms. Thomas would be the parent representative on the Board. Mr. Norris then noted that new Board members would need to take an oath of office and receive the required charter school Board Training. At this time, Mr. Norris concluded his report.

VIII. New Business

The next scheduled meeting of the Board is set for Thursday, June 18, 2026.

VIV. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.