

Board of Trustees

Gabrielle Apollon (Vice President)
Lord Crawford
Ankur Dalal
Katie Embree
Maureen Higgins (President)
Mirlande Joachim
Kristopher John (Treasurer)
Salone Kapur
Lindsey Moschet (Secretary)
Jennifer Ng
Elizabeth Pernick



**St HOPE Leadership Academy Board of Trustees
Board Meeting**

MINUTES

February 26, 2026 from 6:30-8:00 pm
Meeting Conducted In-Person at 222 W. 134th Street

• Welcome

Call to Order

Gabrielle Apollon	Absent (Excused)
Lord Crawford	Present (Virtual – Address Provided)
Ankur Dalal	Absent (Excused)
Katie Embree	Present (Virtual – Address Provided)
Maureen Higgins	Present (Virtual – Address Provided)
Mirlande Joachim	Present (Virtual – Address Provided)
Kristopher John	Present
Salone Kapur	Absent (Excused)
Lindsey Moschet	Present (Virtual – Address Provided)
Jennifer Ng	Absent (Excused)
Elizabeth Pernick	Absent (Excused)

Also present at the meeting: Meghann Persenaire, Principal.

• Public Comment

No requests for public comment were received.

• Consent Agenda

Minutes from the January 29th Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

• Nominating Committee

- *Board Membership* – Ms. Persenaire confirmed that Ms. Kapur will step down from the Board as of June 30. The Board discussed that ten is the ideal total number of members so they will not fill Ms. Kapur’s seat when she steps down.
- *Community Partnership Subcommittee Update* – Dr. Embree reported that she is in the process of reviewing the retreat notes and will have an outline of next steps at the March Board meeting.

• Finance Committee

- *Scholarship Committee* – Ms. Persenaire reported that three HARLEM scholarship applications were received by the deadline with all qualifying as finalists. No Journey Scholarship applications were received. Dr. Bond will convene the Scholarship Selection Committee on Saturday, March 14th at 10 am and is looking for one additional Board member to join the committee. Ms. Joachim previously confirmed her participation so just one more is needed.

- *501(c)3 Follow-Up* - Ms. Persenaire reported on the discussion with Mr. Daniels from CSBM on the possibility of setting up a Friends Of nonprofit organization that would be connected to the school to house fundraising activities. It would require obtaining legal assistance to establish the 501(c)3, including completing and submitting the required paperwork, which would likely cost between \$5-10,000. Once the organization is established, an annual audit and tax return would be required if the organization raises in excess of \$50,000. CSBM would also need to set up Quickbooks which would have start-up costs and an annual cost of \$200. The Friends Of would require a separate Board comprised of at least three members (one of which can be from the current school Board) that meets twice per year. Most schools set up a Friends Of to handle the complexities of leasing facilities. The Friends Of actually holds and pays the lease and subleases to the school, often for less money. The school does not need a Friends Of to fundraise – as a nonprofit, the school can fundraise at any time. The only drawback is that any funds raised need to be spent in the same fiscal year or it triggers the same issues as using surplus funds. The Board discussed the pros and cons and asked Ms. Persenaire to conduct some additional research on potential costs of establishing a Friends Of organization, including the time school-based staff spend supporting the organization. They suggested speaking with a couple of schools that have a Friends Of organization to conduct this research.
- *CSBM Follow-Up* – Ms. Persenaire reported that the updated 990 which reflected the errors that had been corrected was successfully submitted. She thanked the Board for conducting the final review remotely and noted that she will be meeting with the President of CSBM to discuss the Board's and her concerns about the layers of issues and what quality control mechanisms will be established to prevent this from happening in the future.
- *January Finance Report* – Ms. Persenaire presented the January Finance Report for discussion, noting that the projected deficit remained steady. While there was an increase in the PFA line, there was also an increase in our SPED enrollment offsetting the health insurance spending increase.
- *Recruitment and Enrollment* – Ms. Persenaire reported that in February, 2025, we had 31 applications as of the day of the Board meeting - 21 from Schoolmint, 2 from Underdog, 8 in person. As of the date of this Board meeting, we have 49 applications - 14 from Schoolmint, 17 from the website, 16 from Underdog and 2 in person. Given that the Schoolmint applications have the lowest conversion to actual September enrollment, the Board was encouraged that there were 16 Underdog digital leads conversions compared to two at this time last year.

- **Accountability Committee**

- *January Dashboard* – Ms. Persenaire presented the January dashboard for discussion, noting that suspensions remained very low compared to recent years. The Board reviewed the number of student withdrawals to date with Ms. Persenaire noting that student retention has been particularly strong this year. Last year at this time there were 12 withdrawals, with just 4 to date this year.
- *Charter Renewal* – Ms. Persenaire reported that Regent Tanikawa's recent visit to the school was a tremendous success, with the Regent joined by Dr. Lisa Long, Executive Director of the NYSED Charter School Office. The visit included a student tour, a parent roundtable, a teacher roundtable, classroom visits and a meeting with Ms. Persenaire. Both Regent Tanikawa and Dr. Long were particularly impressed with the student-centered culture where every student felt seen and heard. Ms. Persenaire also noted that she had not received any update from the authorizer regarding their renewal report and recommendation.
- *MAP Midline Results* – Ms. Persenaire presented the MAP midline results for review and discussion. She reported that all grades increased their percent on grade level and their average RIT in both subjects. The math results were particularly strong with 6th grade math's percent on grade level growing from 9% to 39% and 8th grade math's average RIT surpassing the national average by one point. 8th graders performance was also very strong in ELA with percent on grade level growing from 40% to 52% and the average RIT meeting the national average. Special populations also experienced significant growth, particularly in 6th grade with SwIEP scholars' average RIT growing from 183 to 192 in ELA and from 186 to 206 in math. The same was true for 6th grade ELLs with the average RIT in ELA growing from 181 to 195 and in math from 187 to 207. The Board discussed the results in depth and commended the school on the tremendous

academic growth. Members asked Ms. Persenaire to present some additional data at the March meeting, including results for the general education population with SwIEPs removed.

- **Principal Update**

- Ms. Persenaire discussed that a videographer from Underdog recently came to the school to shoot footage for a new marketing piece and shared with Ms. Persenaire that every student he interviewed commented on how the school felt like family and what they loved most about St HOPE was the caring teachers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

I, Lindsey Moschet, do hereby certify that I am duly qualified acting Secretary of St HOPE Leadership Academy, a New York education corporation and that the above is a true and complete copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the said corporation held on February 26, 2026 at which quorum was present throughout. (February 27, 2026).