

# The Renaissance

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Charter School

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**APPROVED**

March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026

The Renaissance Charter School

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

## HONORARY MEMBERS

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1. Chairperson's Message – Monte reminds us that at this point in the school year, with only 4 months of teaching to go, we can still try to feel like it is a new year. We go beyond our pedagogical skills and go into our era of 'true grit!' Take a fresh step forward at this time, when some of our best and most creative work comes.
2. Roll Call – Monte Joffe, Daniel Fanelli, Stacey Gauthier, Chester Hicks, Raymond Johnson, Everett Boyd, Rebekah Oakes and Jose Mane all present; Dr. Rachel Mandel, absent. In addition, Bridget Curran, TRCS AP for K-8 and Anahi Raphael, the new Communications Director for both schools, joined the meeting.
3. The February 4, 2026 minutes were approved by acclamation.
4. School Management Team Report – Dan gave the board the highlights of the attached SMT report, appearing below.
  - a. Bridget's Report – Bridget has taken on the helm of Rensizzle because of her experience with Little Sizzle and her commitment to the Renaissance culture of experiential learning. The week starts the week of March 23. Bridget has also championed PS I Love You Day for the last few years, where we see students

*"Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York"*

- and teachers PK-12 wearing purple, writing hearts to each other, and supporting one another.
- b. Stacey's Report – The ELL group mentioned in Dan's report, includes Dan, Stacey and Liz Perez. At the next meeting we will include feedback from all teachers from both schools in a space to let teachers share best practices, see where there are gaps and what supports they need. We are taking the ELL program to the next level at both schools. This is a new year for ELLs in more ways than the above: there are also changes in the tests, and the focus of state Ed officials on this field.
- i. The Mental Health grants are finally back – Both suits that we joined were successful and we are hoping to be able to bring back another MH counselor for Ren. Stacey gave a big shout-out to Anahi and Sabrina who are working very hard on the consortium-wide Wellness Day coming up this Saturday. This day is supported by the Mental Health grants. Ren 2 opens its doors (and the street outside) to the whole community. There will be firetrucks, the Bio-Bus mobile science lab; a mobil library, the Ren 1 Jazz Band, Voice Charter School's chorus, puppet shows and much more. There will be resources touting Physical, Social-Emotional, and Mental Health wellness and awareness. Elected Officials have committed to attending. This will also be a time for recruitment for both schools, with student ambassadors to talk to prospective students and parents.
  - ii. Stacey sent out another shout-out to all the teachers participating in the committees and restorative circles, mentioned in Dan's report, that are so important in the after-math of the incident last month. We all know how these efforts must be approached as on-going, fully supported programs in order for them to achieve the school culture we all want and need.
- c. In a very unfortunate turn of events, District 75 is pulling their program from our building. Dan and Stacey have participated in multiple meetings to advocate for this program. Dan has made a point of maintaining contact with the

- principal of D75 to keep the doors open for a reversal of this decision. This program has been in our building for well over 30 years, fully inclusive and widely praised. Monte will start working on a letter from the board, Jose will get a letter from teachers, and Bridget confirmed there are still alums from the D75 program who maintain contact with their teachers. Some of the paras who have working with this program have been at Renaissance for over 15 years.
- d. The Finance and Audit committee meeting will be called in the next week or so. The Committee will then bring the budget recommendation to the board. Things have been in flux, which accounts for the delay: health costs are changing; the grants that have been pulled and then reinstated; PK contracts have still not been registered, and we are still owed approved conversion money from the prior year. We believe we are owed money for this year as well. The board wants to give a public shout-out to Henry Rubio, of CSA for his testimony at the budget hearings in Albany (remembering Ernie Logan, who began this practice years ago.) Elected officials have told us that Henry's statement was very important in bringing forward CSA's advocacy for appropriate funding for conversion charter schools.
5. Board Members' New Business –Jose brought forward a request to change the meeting time, so more teachers can attend. Monte urged him to continue a conversation with the teachers to see what times they would be able to attend.
6. Public Speaking –Maria, a parent of a child who started in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade spoke. She told us they were newly from the Philippines; she stressed the importance of education and expressed her gratification for being able to bring her child to such a supportive, welcoming school.
7. Public Meeting was adjourned at 9:48 AM.
8. Executive Session – 9:49 AM.

# The Renaissance Charter School

## Board of Trustees Report

March 2026

Principal: Daniel Fanelli

### 1. Academic Program & State Exam Preparation

As we enter the final stretch before State Exams, our instructional focus has intensified across grades 3–8.

In ELA, students in Independent Reading are actively utilizing **CommonLit.org** to strengthen their skills with informational texts. This work is being directly supported by our Independent Reading teachers and our ELA Coach, Ariel Sacks. The emphasis is on close reading, identifying central ideas, analyzing author’s craft, and constructing evidence-based written responses aligned to State exam expectations.

Additionally, we are preparing students to take the State ELA exam online. Teachers are intentionally supporting students in navigating digital passages, typing extended responses, and organizing their thinking before drafting. Students are being explicitly taught planning structures to ensure clarity, organization, and evidence-based argumentation.

In mathematics, we continue to work closely with our EM2 coach. Planning sessions have focused on conceptual understanding, student discourse, and rigorous grade-level alignment. The coach is modeling lessons, co-planning units, and providing actionable feedback to teachers.

Similarly, our partnership with the Lavinia coach remains embedded in classrooms through lesson modeling, curriculum planning, and structured feedback cycles.

Importantly, our work with both our EM2 and Lavinia coaches remains tightly aligned to our school-wide goals — particularly our 60:40 student-to-teacher voice ratio, our 20% student growth target, and our 85% proficiency benchmark — while simultaneously supporting the specific exam preparation work outlined above.

### 2. Literacy Systems Review & Assessment Exploration

We have continued reviewing our K–8 literacy framework internally.

This month we:

- Conducted a deeper analysis of our Targeted Reading Intervention Program (TRIP)
- Reviewed intervention scheduling, staffing structures, and progress monitoring systems
- Began exploring the ROAR assessment as a potential early literacy screener

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We are proactively strengthening our literacy infrastructure to ensure earlier identification of student needs and tighter intervention alignment.

### **3. Winter Tutoring Cycle (Grades 3–8)**

The Winter tutoring cycle is fully underway, targeting Math and ELA students in grades 3–8. Instruction is aligned to the Lavinia scope and sequence to ensure coherence with core classroom instruction.

I would like to take a moment to thank Naquan, Leah, Helen, Malini, and Ram for their continued dedication to this work. Their commitment to our students during extended hours makes a measurable difference.

Based on Round 1 data, we saw significant student growth — 83% of participating students demonstrated measurable gains. In several cases, students grew two levels and are now projected to score a Level 3 on the State assessment.

While this growth is encouraging, more work remains. We are excited to continue refining and expanding these groups to maximize impact before State Exams. Tutoring remains one of our strongest acceleration levers.

### **4. ELL Program Development**

We held a strong and productive meeting with our ELL Working Group this month. As our ELL population continues to grow, we are working to clearly define the structures of a highly successful English Language Learner program.

Our goal is to meet students where they are while intentionally pushing for growth in English language acquisition.

We are currently discussing a model that incorporates both:

- Pull-out direct instruction for targeted language development
- Push-in instructional support within core classrooms

This dual structure will allow us to support language development while preserving access to grade-level content. As we refine this model, we anticipate that it may lead to staffing adjustments in order to address identified gaps and ensure stronger support for our students.

### **5. School Culture & Student Voice**

The School Culture Working Group held its first meeting this month with representation across grade bands. The focus remains on strengthening advisory, rebuilding student affinity groups, and increasing student voice.

In addition, we conducted restorative cycles across the entire school. All students participated in structured restorative circles focused on reflection, empathy, and shared responsibility.

As part of this initiative, students collaborated on a shared art project. Groups created individual puzzle pieces that are now being assembled into a collective display that will be showcased throughout the school. The symbolism of the project reinforces that each student is an essential part of our community.

We continue to invest intentionally in strengthening school culture and are exploring additional initiatives to deepen belonging and shared identity.

We are also excited to share that José will be working with our High School Assistant Principal and coordinators to bring back our very special Social Justice Day. This event has historically been an important part of our culture, and we look forward to its return.

## **6. Summer Programming**

I submitted the Summer Boost application and we are currently awaiting a decision.

In the meantime, we have begun recruiting teachers for a full K–12 summer program to ensure readiness regardless of funding decisions. Planning includes K–8 academic acceleration and Regents preparation courses.

## **7. Rensizzle & Programming**

Bridget Curran, K-8 Assistant Principal, to present on Rensizzle and P.S. I love you day.

### **Scheduling:**

We have also begun the preliminary scheduling process for next year to ensure alignment across programming, staffing, and instructional priorities.

## **8. District 75 Program Update**

It is with disappointment that I share that District 75 has informed us they are pulling their program from our building.

I have had multiple meetings with the District 75 principal advocating for continuation of the program and reminding her of how successful the partnership has been. Unfortunately, there appears to be nothing further we can do at this point.

We are upset and disappointed by this news. The program has been meaningful for students and has represented a positive collaboration. We have had students go into their program and be successful and they have had students leave their program and enter ours and were also high successful.

## **9. Faculty Recognition & Professional Leadership**

We continue to celebrate the professional accomplishments of our faculty:

- Dennis presenting at NECTFL
- Cristine Martino Slingerland presenting at the NYSAIS Global Languages and Culture Conference (the only charter school presenting)
- Ariel Sacks advancing to the Top 20 finalists for the Julian Robertson Award for Excellence in Teaching

These recognitions reflect the strength of our instructional leadership and faculty professionalism.