

The Renaissance

35-59 81st Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

www.renaissancecharter.org • 0060-803-718 • 718-803-3785 (fax)

Charter School

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Approved Minutes

April 15th, 2026

The Renaissance Charter School

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

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1. Chairperson's Message – Monte let us know that he heard from Danielle Baro, one of our long-time alums, who has been a principal of a charter school and filmmaker, and now has published a book of poetry which is being celebrated in Brooklyn this weekend. As we approach the last few weeks of school we can still declare a “new school year” as started to bring fresh and exciting insights to our teaching and learning.
2. Roll Call – Monte Joffe, Daniel Fanelli, Stacey Gauthier, Chester Hicks, Raymond Johnson, Everett Boyd, Jose Mane and Rebekah Oakes all present. Dr. Rachel Mandel absent. Anahi Rafael also attended the meeting.
3. Last month's minutes were approved by acclimation.
4. School Management Team Report – Dan highlighted Rensizzle Week with many shout-outs to Bridget and the T&L co-coordinators who brought such excellence to this year's line-up and student-driven presentations. Stacey mentioned that next year we aspire to have Ren 1 and 2 do Rensizzle together, which will be logistically challenging, but could bring many new rewards.
 - a. Dan also shouted-out our College and Career Office for the honors,

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- scholarships and programs our seniors have been accepted to. And the high-impact pre-college programs our 9-11th classes are experiencing. Please see the detailed report attached below.
- b. Stacey's report - The Community Wellness Day held at Ren 2 was a huge success. There were trucks lined up outside the school from Grow NYC, the Bio-Bus, a Mobile Library, and a neighborhood fire truck. Representatives from the Community Board, and even CSE came. Parents and children participated in multiple safety presentations, danced to a Drumming Circle and the school choirs and jazz band. Many thanks to the staffs of both schools, and most especially Jessica, Omar, Anahi and alum Sabrina Gauthier.
 - i. The federal mental health grant has been reinstated and it looks like there will be funding for another counselor for Ren 1 again.
 - ii. District 75 update: advocating for keeping the program, and it is being talked about at the DOE. First time in 20 years, a bump in SPED funding, from the foundation aid change. It will start growing along with the per-pupil funding. Changes to Tier 6 pension will be a big hit for Ren 1, but this will help a bit. Thanks to Dan and Liz and the ELL committee for both schools, next year we will have 13 ELL/Foreign Language teachers at Ren 2 and 4 at Ren 1.
 5. Financial Committee Update - Dan and Stacey reported on the review of the working budget. Renaissance stable financial position. The financial outlook includes multiple scenarios for staffing changes and potential retirements. External factors continue to impact our financial status: changes to benefits structure which are now provided by the school, and the Pre-K and Conversion money have still not been received. Motion to approve the working budget was made, seconded and passed. A full report of the committee is included in the School Management Report attached below.
 6. There was no Board Members' New Business and no Public Speaking.
 7. Adjournment of Public Meeting – 9:43 AM.

April 15, 2026 – Board of Trustees Principal Update

Rensizzle: Mission-Aligned, Student-Centered Learning in Action

In the week prior to Spring Break, our school community engaged in our annual Rensizzle program—an experience that continues to reflect the core of our mission and instructional vision. Rensizzle represents project-based learning at its finest, using New York City as a living classroom and providing students with meaningful, real-world learning opportunities. Throughout the week, students took ownership of their learning, stepped into leadership roles, and engaged their peers through creative, interactive presentations. Across grades 6–12, we saw students facilitating discussions, presenting original work, and demonstrating confidence and growth, all of which strongly align to our school-wide focus on increasing student voice and fostering rigorous student discourse.

This work would not have been possible without the thoughtful planning and dedication of our teachers, whose commitment to creating engaging and authentic learning experiences made the week a success. I also want to extend my gratitude to our Elementary, Middle, and High School Co-Coordinators, along with Cristine, for their leadership and support. A special thank you to Bridget for stepping in immediately upon her return and taking on the leadership of Rensizzle, her ability to prioritize this work and guide the process ensured a seamless and impactful experience for our entire school community.

College and Career Office: Strong Outcomes and Expanding Opportunities

Our College and Career Office continue to deliver strong outcomes for students across all grade levels. I would like to thank Gavy, Gaby, and Fahad for their leadership and dedication in guiding students and families through this process.

This year, our seniors have achieved impressive college outcomes, including:

- A student was accepted to Macaulay Honors College at John Jay College
- A student committed to Smith College as a recipient of the Posse Foundation Scholarship
- A student was accepted and committed to Farmingdale State College, where they will pursue Aeronautical Science in a Professional Pilot program

In addition, our students have earned acceptances to a wide range of highly competitive institutions, including:

- NYU
- Pennsylvania State University
- Binghamton University
- Syracuse University
- Stony Brook University
- Eckerd College
- Louisiana State University
- University of Colorado Boulder
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

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Across grades 9 – 11, students are engaging in high-impact enrichment and college readiness experiences, including:

- College Now coursework through Queens College
- Selective programs such as SEO Scholars Program and Kent x Squared
- Pre-college opportunities at institutions such as Brown University
- International and national leadership opportunities, including participation in World Federation of United Nations Associations Model United Nations conferences

These experiences reflect a strong and growing college-going culture across our high school.

Enrollment Update

I am pleased to report that Renaissance is at 98% enrollment and will continue the work of backfilling open seats. This reflects the continued strength of our program and demand within our community.

Summer Program: Planning and Enrollment Progress

We are currently in full preparation for our Summer Program, which will serve students across both schools (K–12) and will be housed at Renaissance 2.

- We have filled approximately **92% of available seats** through targeted outreach for our K-8 program
- HS students are required to attend in order to stay on track for graduation.
- We anticipate serving **650–700 students** across grades K–12
- Both schools have conducted multiple rounds of outreach to families; I would like to thank our office teams for their significant efforts in this work

Program Overview:

- **K–8 Program:** July 7 – August 7 (5 days/week with afterschool option)
- **High School Program:** July 7 – August 13 (Monday–Thursday; Regents the week of August 17)

The program will include:

- Academic instruction using Lavinia’s Red Thread and Math Story Problems K-8
- HS students will take Classes and Prep for Regents using targeted High Priority Standards for all core classes
- Enrichment programming and extended-day opportunities
- Meals for students participating in the full day program
- This program is free of charge to our families.

Students in K-8 will complete pre- and post-assessments, allowing us to measure growth and report outcomes to the board in September.

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Assessment Season

We are now entering the full testing season, including:

- NYS State Exams
- AP Exams in May
- Regents Exams beginning in June

Our instructional teams are focused on ensuring students are well-prepared, with an emphasis on progress monitoring and targeted instructional support.

School Culture and Student Leadership

We continue to strengthen school culture through intentional structures and student leadership opportunities.

- In March, Vinny led a family meeting to support Grade 6 student behavior
- Our School Culture Working Group has been meeting since February to plan additional initiatives
- We recently convened cluster co-coordinators and student leaders from Student Government, National Honor Society, and Spanish Honor Society

We are planning a **student-led, cross-grade experience** that will:

- Leverage our PK–12 model
- Provide leadership opportunities for student organizations and athletic team captains
- Foster community building and student ownership across the school

Community Service Days are upcoming for our students in advisories grades 7 to 11.

Data Systems and Instructional Focus

I would like to recognize Dawn and Karla for their work in developing a comprehensive data tracking system for our instructional leadership team.

This tool allows us to:

- Track student performance across all assessments in one centralized location
- Monitor growth over time
- Identify trends at the student, classroom, and subgroup levels

Importantly, this strengthens our ability to focus on and support our ELL and IEP student populations, ensuring targeted, data-driven instruction.

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Staffing Updates

As we look ahead to the next school year, we are beginning to plan for several anticipated staffing transitions. We are hearing that a few of our long-standing teachers may be considering retirement at the end of this school year. While we have not yet received official paperwork, we are proactively preparing to ensure continuity and strong instructional programming moving forward. Additionally due to staffing changes in our kitchen, we are looking for a New Chef Manager.

We are excited to share that Fahad Rumi has accepted the position of Assistant Director of the College and Career Office. In this role, he will work closely with Gavy and Victor, particularly as Victor transitions toward retirement, to continue strengthening the academic programming of our high school and supporting the ongoing success of our College and Career Office. We will begin the process of identifying a strong candidate to fill Fahad's current role.

We are also pleased to welcome Juan as our new Office Manager. I would like to thank Omar for his diligent work in leading this search and ensuring we secured a strong addition to our team. We are excited to have Juan on board and confident in the impact he will have on our operations.

Finally, over the next week and a half, myself and members of the SMT will be interviewing candidates for the High School Assistant Principal position. We will provide the Board with an update at our next meeting.

Lastly, I am excited to share the news with the board that I will be welcoming a baby girl to my family on May 6th. My wife and I are overjoyed. Because of the due date I will miss our May Board meeting, but I will have other members of the management team present.

Closing

Overall, this period reflects strong alignment across our academic programs, student experiences, and operational systems. From Rensizzle to college access, from summer programming to data systems, we continue to build a cohesive model centered on student voice, rigorous learning, and continuous improvement

Financial Overview

The Finance Committee conducted a review of Renaissance's budget performance to date, comparing projected figures against actual expenditures. Overall, Renaissance remains in a stable financial position, with expected variances across budget categories. Some areas are trending above projections while others remain below, largely due to timing factors, staffing structures, and the cyclical nature of school-based expenses. These variances provide flexibility, allowing Renaissance to thoughtfully reallocate resources to best support organizational priorities as the year progresses.

Key Drivers & Considerations

Several internal and external factors continue to influence Renaissance's financial outlook. Changes to employee benefits and associated costs remain an area of focus, particularly as adjustments to healthcare plans

and related expenses evolve. Additionally, delays in expected funding streams—especially those tied to public funding—have required increased monitoring and proactive follow-up.

A key area of focus is Pre-K funding, where delays in contract registration and the release of funds have created uncertainty in revenue timing. These delays appear to be tied to broader state and city processes, and Renaissance continues to actively follow up to ensure clarity and access to these funds. While this does not change long-term expectations, it does impact short-term cash flow and requires ongoing attention and coordination.

Risks & Uncertainties

The committee discussed areas of uncertainty that may impact Renaissance’s financial outlook moving forward. These include evolving costs related to benefits and pensions, as well as the timing of outstanding funding. Additionally, anticipated staffing changes may introduce variability in expenditures depending on when costs are realized and how they are accounted for within the fiscal year. These factors underscore the importance of continued vigilance and adaptability in financial planning.

Planning & Next Steps

Looking ahead, Renaissance will continue to refine budget projections and engage in scenario planning to account for potential changes in revenue and expenditures. Efforts will remain focused on resolving outstanding funding issues, closely monitoring expense trends, and maintaining flexibility to adjust as needed.

In addition, Renaissance will begin developing the projected budget for the 2026–2027 school year, incorporating current trends, anticipated changes, and updated assumptions. A preliminary version of this projected budget will be presented to the Board in early June.

Committee Action

The Finance Committee reviewed and approved the working budget as presented.