

The Renaissance

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

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monte Joffe, Ed.D.

Chairperson

Daniel Fanelli

Stacey Gauthier

Chester Hicks

Raymond Johnson

Dr. Rachel Mandel

Everett Boyd

Jose Mane

Rebekah Oakes

Secretary

DRAFT Minutes

May 20th, 2026

The Renaissance Charter School

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

HONORARY MEMBERS

Sandra Geyer, 1941-2019

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Francine Smith, 1949-2021

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Margaret Martinez-DeLuca

1. Chairperson's Message. Monte joined us later in the meeting, as he is celebrating a new grandchild with his daughter's family in Vienna. He mentioned that his older grandchildren there enjoy staying with the same early-childhood teacher for more than one year, but that there, as everywhere, there are educational issues of inequality and funding with no easy answers. He emphasized the importance of supporting the school management team in meeting charter goals and maintaining high standards.
2. Roll Call – Daniel Fanelli, Stacey Gauthier, Chester Hicks, Raymond Johnson, Everett Boyd, Jose Mane and Rebekah Oakes all present. Dr. Mandel was absent, and Monte Joffe joined the meeting at 9:22.
3. Last Month's Minutes were approved by acclamation.
4. School Management Team Report – Dan reported on recent events, including a successful Career Day and a school culture day with shout-outs to all the planners responsible. TRCS has been accepted into the Charter School Literacy Consortium grant, which will provide \$750,000 over the next few years. Dan introduced Nicole Jollon (a long-time HS English teacher at Renaissance) who is the new HS AP. Nicole emphasized her vision for increased parent involvement. Please see the full SMT report

"Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York"

attached below.

5. The school is preparing for the new portrait of a graduate initiative, which will shift focus from passing all students to ensuring competence. Major challenges include the lack of a pre-K contract and funding, and the HVAC system upgrade project being put on hold. The school is also exploring partnerships with Vaughan College and LaGuardia Community College to enhance student opportunities.
 - a. Financial Committee Meeting is scheduled to meet on May 26 to present the working budget, and the final budget will be presented to the board in June.
 - b. High School Graduation will be held on June 10; all board members welcome to attend.
6. Stacey's Report - Innovative Approaches to Literacy Grant has been re-issued, and the consortium is applying for it again. Stacey emphasized how the new SED standards for graduation must be a priority for HS planning and suggested that the Educational Support Team be familiar with the new portrait. Next year will be the first cohort for the new achievement measurements. There has been no movement on reinstating District 75 programming at Renaissance. The charter renewal process has been brutal for many charter schools now; financial management, enrollment, recruitment and retention, teacher certification and support of ELL students are crucial. We will probably be required to do quarterly interim reports. We have to make sure our schools are protected going into our next renewal by positioning ourselves ahead of those renewal issues important to the new city administration.
7. There was no Board Members' New Business.
8. There was no Public Speaking.
9. Adjournment of Public Meeting at 9:41.

May 2026 – Board of Trustees Update

High School Assistant Principal

I am pleased to officially introduce Nicole Jollon as our new High School Assistant Principal. Nicole has been a longstanding and highly respected member of the Renaissance community, joining Renaissance in 2014 as an ELA teacher and quickly taking on additional leadership responsibilities as High School Co-Coordinator.

Nicole brings a deep understanding of our instructional program, strong relationships with staff and students, and a proven track record of leadership within the high school. Her transition into this role represents both continuity and growth for our school.

Career Day: Alumni Engagement and College & Career Readiness

On May 15th, Renaissance hosted our annual Career Day, which included a number of our alumni returning to speak with current students. This event continues to be a powerful reflection of our long-term impact as a school community, as graduates shared their post-secondary experiences, career pathways, and lessons learned.

These conversations provided students with meaningful, real-world insights and helped to strengthen the connection between their current academic experiences and future opportunities.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to our College and Career Office for their thoughtful planning and execution of this event, and for continuing to build strong alumni connections that benefit our students.

School Culture Day: Student Leadership in Action

We recently held our School Culture Day, during which our High School Student Government and Middle School Student Council collaborated to lead discussions across grade levels focused on school culture.

Students facilitated conversations with their peers, reinforcing expectations, reflecting on community values, and modeling leadership. This experience is a strong example of our commitment to student voice and ownership within our school community.

Thank you to our School Culture Working Group, and to Dennis and Malini, for their leadership in supporting students through this important work.

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

Charter School Literacy Consortium Grant

We are excited to share that Renaissance has been awarded the Charter School Literacy Consortium Grant. This grant will provide approximately \$750,000 over three years to support a continued and deepened focus on literacy across both of our schools.

We are currently finalizing data use agreements and preparing for implementation. This work will further strengthen our alignment to evidence-based literacy practices and support targeted interventions for students, particularly those most in need.

We look forward to sharing more detailed plans and early outcomes with the Board in the coming months.

Little Sizzle: Early Introduction to Project-Based Learning

This week, our PreK–5 students are participating in Little Sizzle, an experience designed to introduce our youngest learners to the core elements of Rensizzle and project-based learning.

Students are engaging in hands-on, interdisciplinary studies on topics such as the ocean, animals, cooking, cultural experiences, and photography. This work builds early foundations for student inquiry, collaboration, and presentation skills.

Thank you to Daniela and Bridget for their leadership in bringing this experience to life for our elementary students.

Planning for 2026–2027: Teacher Preference Sheets

Teacher preference sheets were submitted on May 8th, providing us with important insight into staffing needs and teacher interests for the upcoming school year.

We are now analyzing this information to inform hiring, program planning, and scheduling decisions for 2026–2027. This process allows us to align staffing strategically to best support student learning and school-wide priorities.

Assessment Update: State Exams, APs, and Regents

Due to statewide issues with the NWEA testing platform, we adjusted our Grades 3–8 State Exam schedule. Over the past two weeks, students have successfully completed their ELA, Math, and Science exams.

I would like to thank Victor, Andrea, and Bridget for their leadership in preparing for and executing these assessments under changing conditions.

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

We are now in the midst of AP exam administration, and we will transition into Regents exams in June. Thank you again to Andrea and Victor for their continued coordination and support throughout this testing season.

Budget Update

We continue to develop the budget for the 2026–2027 school year based on current assumptions, as we are still awaiting final per-pupil funding figures.

The Finance Committee will meet next week to review and refine the most up-to-date working budget for next year. We plan to present a finalized version to the Board at the June meeting.

Community Highlights

I would like to share a few moments that reflect the strength of our community:

- Our Elementary Cluster celebrated Principal’s Day with student-created portraits and a musical performance by our 4th grade students. I am deeply appreciative of the thoughtfulness and effort that went into this recognition.
 - During Teacher Appreciation Week, I want to thank our Parent Association and Office Team for organizing a lunch for our staff. We are grateful for our teachers and the work they do each day to support our students. Renaissance would not be what it is without them.
-

Upcoming Event: High School Graduation

High School Graduation will take place on June 10th. I would like to extend an invitation to all Board members to join us in celebrating the accomplishments of our graduating seniors.

Staffing update

Cristine, John, Curtis, Renay, and Victor will be retiring at the end of this school year. We are grateful for their years of dedication and service to our community and look forward to celebrating their contributions together in June as we wish them well in their next steps.

As we plan for the upcoming school year, some of these roles will be filled, while others will be thoughtfully restructured to best meet the needs of our school.

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

Additionally, in order to strengthen our English Language Learner (ELL) program and ensure we are supporting students across all levels of language development, we are planning to expand our team to a total of four ELL teachers. This will allow us to better serve students at the Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, Expanding, and Commanding levels of English proficiency.

Now that teacher preference sheets have been submitted, we will begin the hiring process for this additional ELL position.