



Youth Connection Charter School Board Meeting

3/27/2025

5:30 P.M.

VIRTUAL

TYPE OF MEETING	BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING CALLED BY	President Molina called the meeting to order at 5:31p.m.
OPENING REMARKS	Welcome
PUBLIC COMMENTS	None
ROLL CALL	<p>In attendance: Mr. Luis Alejandro Molina Alanis, President, Dr. Laura Ruth Johnson, Vice President, Mr. James Lyles, Treasurer, Angela Gibson, Secretary, Dr. Fabricio Balcazar, Senior Advisor, and Members, Dr. Richard Blackmon Jr., Mr. Arthur Ward, and Ms. Christine Bowden.</p> <p>Absent: Member, Dr. Jermaine Morales.</p> <p>A quorum was present.</p>
STAFF	<p>Sheila Venson, Executive Director, L. Vaughn, G. Carrera, A. Buabeng, T. Brown, K. Hopson, C. LaGroom, A. Ballard, G. Alejos, C. Rallins, Y. Thomas, J. Scott.</p> <p>Campuses/Others: N/A</p>
AGENDA	Opening Remarks, Public Comments, Roll Call, reading of 2.27.2025 Board Meeting Minutes, 3.27.2025 Executive/Finance Committee Report, Financial Reports Ending February 28, 2025, 3.27.2025 Directors Report, Board Actions/Resolutions and Adjournment.

Board Action

It was motioned to approve the 2.27.2025, Board Meeting Minutes:

Motioned by Member Lyles Seconded by Member Molina

There was or X was no discussion of the item.

Vote: In Favor 8 Opposed _____ Abstained _____

X Vote carried 8 Vote did not carry _____

Executive/Finance Committee Report

1. **CPS/Renewal Update** - The Executive & Finance Committee discussed the CPS Board renewal recommendations for Options Schools. YCCS was recommended for a 4-year contract renewal, the remaining charters will be renewed in April, 2025. YCCS' renewal contains conditions which were also discussed. YCCS met in the following categories: academics, financials, in the IPES category YCCS did not meet, in the category of organizational approaching standards. The renewal process included site visits. The conditions include those areas that YCCS did not meet. Executive Director Venson provided YCCS strategy to get a teacher at each campus certified in EL/Bilingual in partnership with Chicago SEED, however; Diverse Learner category is an area that we will not meet timeliness due to our student demographic. YCCS leadership will debrief with Options in April and more details will be provided to the Board of Directors next month. The full renewal report was provided to the full board, more details will be provided in the regular session. The YCCS leadership will continue to analyze prior to the Options meeting. Executive members were requested to review an analysis to obtain their feedback in preparation for the Options meeting. The governance section was discussed, and the two deficiencies were cited, however, we did obtain a meets rating. Additionally, the CPS board resolution for YCCS renewal was also discussed. The execution of the contract must be signed within 120 days, which then determines that YCCS accepts the agreement and the terms/conditions as presented by Options.
2. **Progressive Leadership Academy (PLA) Relocation** - The Executive Committee was provided updates on the PLA relocation by the Operations Director, Gersom Carrera- the relocation was approved by the CPS Board. However, there are some challenges presented today that may not make the relocation feasible. He will provide more information next month.
3. **Severance (Workforce Reduction) Proposal** - The Executive & Finance Committee discussed the proposal and narrative presented by Comptroller Buabeng & Director Venson. The largest variable in the budget projection is the enrollment and if this increases budget projections are subject to change. The various staff categories were discussed including YCCS admin and school level staff. The severance will be added to the budget as a place holder. YCCS leadership has created a strategy to increase enrollment, while advocating to amend the CPS Transfer Policy that create obstacles to YCCS sustainability. The additional strategy includes becoming a charter authorized by the Illinois State Board of Education. Executive Venson will provide a strategic plan for the Executive Board next month with the details of recruitment strategies. This remains unresolved as a barrier under CPS. The Finance Committee Chair, James Lyles, proposed a meeting for April to further discuss severance package options as presented and banking investment with Northern Trust.
4. **YCCS Board Response to CPS' 2.3.2025 Response (to 12.19.2024 Board Letter to CPS)** - Executive Director Venson provided rationale for delay in responding to the Executive Committee. Upon receiving the details from Options about the conditions.
5. **Personnel Update** - The Executive Committee agreed to discuss this matter during closed session.
6. **Board Elections Follow Up** - President Molina Alanis discussed the nomination/election process for the Executive Board. Elections will be held in April, 2025.
7. **Board Member Compliance Update**-The Executive Finance Committee Meeting agreed to hold off on this until the regular board meeting.

Board Action

It was motioned to approve the 3.27.25 Executive/Finance Committee Report:

Motioned by: Member **Gibson** Seconded by: Member **Lyles**

There **X** was or ___ was no discussion of the items.

Vote: In Favor **8** Opposed ___ Abstained ___

X Vote carried **8** Vote did not carry

Board Meeting

Several key areas were covered:

- **Renewal and Compliance**
- Received a four-year contract renewal with some conditions
- Identified minor compliance issues with board training and conflict of interest forms
- Discussed challenges in meeting special education and diverse learner standards
- **Financial Overview**
- Reported a deficit of \$521,000
- Reviewed school performance and financial ratios
- Discussed budget projections and enrollment challenges
- **Student Retention and Enrollment**
- Noted over 1,000 student dropouts
- Discussed strategies to improve student engagement
- Highlighted challenges with older student populations and CPS transfer policies
- Dr. Blackmon, Jr. and Mr. Arthur Ward were invited to join future brainstorming sessions with campus principals.
- **Personnel Matter (Closed Session)**
- **Leadership and Governance**
- Confirmed current board leadership slate for upcoming elections
- Emphasized the need for board members to be proactive and compliant
- Discussed ongoing challenges with Chicago Public Schools

The meeting reflected YCCS's commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in educational services.

Financial Report

Comptroller Buabeng presented Financial Reports Ending February 28, 2025, for review and discussion.

Board Action

It was motioned to approve the Financial Reports Ending February 28, 2025:

Motioned by: Member **Gibson** Seconded by: Member **Lyles**

There **X** was or ___ was no discussion of the items.

Vote: In Favor **8** Opposed ___ Abstained ___

X Vote carried **8** Vote did not carry

Director's Report

Membership Status Summary

As of March 21, 2025 (see attached Accountability Summaries for Enrollment):

- | | |
|----------------------|--------|
| • Attendance Average | 63.62% |
| • Enrollment | 2454 |
| • STLS | 535 |
| • Lunch Compliance | 92.72% |
| • Medical compliance | 82.08% |
| • YTD Drops | 1339 |

Administrative

- CPS has accepted the recommendation for a 4-year renewal term with stipulations/conditions.

School Improvement-

The SI Department is a collaborator for performance and school improvement planning for all 17 campuses.

1. AIR Assessments have been completed for this year's cohort except Aspira (April). Assessments include focus groups, classroom observations, 5 Essential survey data, campus surveys and school report card data from ISBE. The focus areas are Leadership & Vision, Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, Culture & Climate, Targeted Instruction and Support. The Assessment findings will be shared during a debrief with the leads. This is required because the ISBE School Report Card School Improvement Designation is either comprehensive or intensive. This designation is a three-year status. The campuses undergoing this process are considered in Year 1 of planning. The YCCS campuses are: MLLA, West Town Academy, YCCS West, Sullivan House, Association House, Community Youth Development, Olive Harvey Middle College, CCA, Innovations and Aspira.
2. The following YCCS campuses in Year 1 of implementation are: Latino Youth, Campos, ASA, YCLA, Chatham, Truman Middle College, and PLA.
3. As a result of the ISBE school report card data, all YCCS campuses are in school improvement status and have been assigned a School Improvement Specialist from the Regional Office of Education-West Cook to provide principal coaching, data collection & analysis, professional development, and any other school improvement support. YCCS' school improvement team collaborates on this process as well.
4. Providing ongoing tech support and progress monitoring assistance around the implementation of the YCCS-CIWP goals and initiatives. 3rd Quarter CIWP progress monitoring updates and SY26 planning will be completed by 4/17/25.
5. Collaborating with principals on the implementation of YCCS performance strategies, interventions and supports.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Violence

Since the previous directors' report There have not been any reported incidents of violence involving YCCS students.

Board Action

It was motioned to approve 3.27.2025 Directors Report:

Motioned by: Member **Gibson** Seconded by: Member **Ward**

There was or **X** was no discussion of the items.

Vote: In Favor **8** Opposed ____ Abstained ____

X Vote carried **8** Vote did not carry

Board Action

It was motioned to end the closed session (entered at 6:17 PM CST) and adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM CST:

Motioned by: Member **Blackmon, Jr.** Seconded by: Member **Ward**

There was or **X** was no discussion of the items.

Vote: In Favor **8** Opposed ____ Abstained ____

X Vote carried **8** Vote did not carry

Board Minutes Adopted: May 1, 2025

DocuSigned by:

Luis Alejandro Molina Alanis

Luis Alejandro Molina Alanis, President

Signed by:

Angela Gibson

Angela Gibson, Secretary