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Elementary School
70 East 112th Street
New York, NY 10029
Tel 212.360.3236

Veroniqua Delva
Principal
Middle School
35 East 125th Street
New York, NY 10035
Tel 212.360.3237

Shannon Ortiz-Wong
Principal
High School
35 East 125th Street
New York, NY 10035
Tel 212.360.3238

AGENDA

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy II
Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, January 30th, 2025
at
245 West 129th Street
New York, NY

- I. Acceptance of the Minutes
- II. CEO Report (*Kwame Owusu-Kesse*)
- III. Superintendent's Updates (*Saskia Brown*)
- IV. HCZ Promise Academy II Updates
 - i. Elementary School (*Kiana Morris*)
 - ii. Middle School (*Veroniqua Delva*)
 - iii. High School (*Shannon Ortiz-Wong*)
- V. Financial Report (*Ralph Stefano*)

**Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy II Charter School
Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 17, 2024
245 West 129th Street**

Attendees: Geoffrey Canada, Kwame Owusu-Kesse, Mitch Kurz, Fatime Cadoo, Willie Mae Lewis, Keith Meister, Candice Ashby, Saskia Brown, Ari Browne, Amy Shan, Amy Deal, Veroniqua Delva, Garraud Etienne, Michelle Field, LaKiesha George, Madelaine German-Schultz, Jenn Klein, Jazmine Lewis, Stephanie Lilavois, John Macapagal, Katherine Martinez, Liam McCarthy, Kiana Morris, Shannon Ortiz-Wong, Meredith Peckosh-Soffrin, Chris Rhodes, Ralph Stefano, and Toya Stilley.

Acceptance of Minutes (Geoffrey Canada)

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM, and a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 19 was unanimously approved.

CEO Report (Kwame Owusu-Kesse)

Chief Executive Officer Kwame Owusu-Kesse introduced three staff members:

Mr. John Macapagal, Controller, Finance, joined HCZ on November 4. He brings eight years of non-profit public accounting experience and has previously served as Controller at two New York City-based schools. Mr. Macapagal earned his Bachelor of Science in accounting from St. John's University and will lead HCZ's General Accounting and Accounts Payable Team.

Mr. Christian Rhodes, Deputy Executive Director, William Julius Wilson Institute (WJWI) at HCZ, has been with the organization since December 2022. Before accepting the position, Mr. Rhodes spent 15 years as a trusted advisor to education leaders nationwide. He served as a Senior Advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona, advising him on K-12 education, strategic partnerships, and special initiatives. Appointed by President Biden, Mr. Rhodes also served as the Chief of Staff for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, leading its efforts to increase access to summer learning and enrichment programs and establishing a practitioner-focused repository of district and state responses to safely reopen schools after the pandemic. Under his leadership, WJWI has worked with 47 communities across the country to scale HCZ's place-based, cradle-to-career model.

Mr. Shannon Benson was appointed Deputy Superintendent of HCZ Promise Academy Charter Schools in December 2024. Mr. Benson has over a decade of experience in education, including roles as Director of Student Support Services in Sparta Township Public Schools and Dean of Students at North Star Academy in New Jersey. He played a pivotal role in improving school culture across multiple campuses, achieving significant academic growth, and strengthening parent-school partnerships. Before transitioning into education, Mr. Benson served as a sergeant in

the United States Army. Mr. Benson holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education and a Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Kean University. Additionally, Mr. Benson anticipates completing his Doctorate Degree in Educational Administration at Centenary University.

Mr. Owusu-Kesse and other HCZ leaders visited four university campuses across the Northeast. Their stops included Columbia University and Columbia University Teacher's College, where they participated in conversations with students about the state of education and HCZ's work in Harlem and nationally. The team also visited Harvard Kennedy School, where they participated in the curriculum-based case study about HCZ. Lastly, Mr. Owusu-Kesse and the team attended New York University's MBA course, "Difficult Conversations," where Mr. Owusu-Kesse engaged in Q&A with students about the complexities of leadership, specifically around the tough conversations that leadership requires.

Superintendent's Update (Dr. Saskia Brown)

Superintendent Dr. Saskia Brown reported that enrollment is 1,164 for HCZ Promise Academy I and 1,038 for HCZ Promise Academy II.

Dr. Brown shared that the School developed an Emergency Evacuation and Reunification Plan. She thanked Director of Operations Toya Stilley for supporting the initiative with law enforcement, public schools, and other community organizations.

HCZ Promise Academy II Elementary School (Kiana Morris)

Principal Kiana Morris reported the Elementary School's attendance was 90% for November.

Third- through fifth-grade scholars participated in an honor roll event.

Families attended "Titan Talks," where parents asked questions about the Elementary School and its programs.

The Elementary School hosted various events during December. Over 300 scholars and their families attended a holiday crafting event, and over 400 scholars were awarded a sorbet for perfect attendance.

Second-grade scholars visited the George Bruce Library in Harlem.

HCZ Promise Academy II Middle School (Dr. Veroniqua Delva)

Principal Dr. Veroniqua Delva reported the Middle School's attendance was 92% for November. She thanked Director of Operations Toya Stilley for leading attendance meetings and implementing plans to help families improve attendance.

Parents and families attended an Honor Roll Brunch. Dr. Delva thanked Director of Food Services Charline Calixte and her team for providing food and beverage service.

Gold Honor Roll scholars went to Bowlero Times Square. Dr. Delva thanked Assessment and Data Manager Dr. Angie Eugenio and Positive Behaviors and Interventions Manager Jamal Johnson for supporting scholars on the trip.

Scholars attended a perfect attendance luncheon.

Dr. Delva hosted her first meeting with her Principal's Cabinet scholars.

Staff members participated in professional development focused on building a culture of excellence and learned more about performance management and accountability.

Dr. Delva thanked staff members for their support during her first 90 days as principal.

Dr. Delva thanked Director of Humanities Dr. Andrew Wintner and Director of STEM Kaitlynn Conwright for observing and coaching teachers; Mr. Johnson for overseeing operations; Dr. Eugenio and Managing Director of Teaching and Learning Katherine Martinez for strengthening the Leadership Team; International Institute for Restorative Practices Coach Bill Boyle and the Social Emotional Learning Team for their contributions; and Director of Business Administration Ari Browne for assisting with staffing.

HCZ Promise Academy II High School (Shannon Ortiz-Wong)

Principal Shannon Ortiz-Wong reported the High School's attendance was 91% for November. Attendance decreased due to increased incidents of cold and flu among scholars.

HCZ Wealth Builds hosted its High School Career Fair, where scholars worked on their resumes and job interview skills. Principal Ortiz-Wong thanked Managing Director of Wealth Builds Greg Forbes for partnering with the High School.

Scholars attended the first award ceremony of the school year. Over 90 scholars are on the honor roll. The High School hosted a National Honor Society induction ceremony for scholars and families.

A senior scholar was awarded the Questbridge scholarship and will receive full tuition at Boston University.

Financial Update (Ralph Stefano)

CFO Ralph Stefano reported that HCZ Promise Academy II's December 1 enrollment is 1,038, which is thirty-one favorable versus the budget. The school's revenue is 0.2M favorable, at \$7.8M YTD. Expenses are \$0.3M favorable, at \$7.1M YTD. HCZ has not made a contribution through four months of FY25.

HCZ Promise Academy II December 2024 Attendance Report

Date	HCZ PAII Elementary School			HCZ PAII Middle School			HCZ PAII High School		
	Number of Scholars Absent	Enrollment	% of Scholars Present	Number of Scholars Absent	Enrollment	% of Scholars Present	Number of Scholars Absent	Enrollment	% of Scholars Present
12/2	63	573	89%	18	257	93%	21	204	90%
12/3	44	573	92%	14	257	95%	13	204	94%
12/4	65	573	89%	17	257	93%	16	204	92%
12/5	63	572	89%	16	257	94%	21	204	90%
12/6	90	572	84%	19	257	93%	25	204	88%
12/9	79	572	86%	20	257	92%	19	204	91%
12/10	171	572	70%	60	257	77%	36	204	82%
12/11	88	572	85%	25	257	90%	20	204	90%
12/12	73	572	87%	27	257	89%	14	204	93%
12/13	96	571	83%	29	257	89%	15	204	93%
12/16	79	571	86%	20	257	92%	13	204	94%
12/17	58	571	90%	19	257	93%	14	204	93%
12/18	45	571	92%	22	257	91%	16	204	92%
12/19	53	571	91%	32	257	88%	19	204	91%
12/20	81	571	86%	34	257	87%	27	204	87%
Average	77	572	87%	25	257	90%	19	204	91%



Promise Academy II

FY 2025 November YTD Budget vs. Actual

		Budget	Actual	Fav/(Unfav)	Full Year Budget
Enrollment @ Nov 30	(a)	1,007	1,035	28	1,007
DOE and other gov't funding		\$ 9.5	\$ 9.8	\$ 0.3	\$ 22.7
Expenses:					
Salaries		5.6	6.0	(0.4)	14.5
Benefits		1.9	1.6	0.3	4.5
OTPS		1.5	1.5	0.0	3.6
Total Expenses	(b)	9.0	9.1	(0.1)	22.6
Expenses in excess of public funding		-	-	-	-
Contribution Components:					
HCZ Contribution		-	-	-	-
per student (whole \$)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

(a) Enrollment as of January 1: 1,033

(b) Excludes PA Initiatives, bonus, growth fund, & other HCZ allocations.