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LaKiesha George
Principal
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Madelaine German-Schultz
Principal
Middle School
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New York, NY 10027
Tel 212.360.3233

Amy Deal
Principal
High School
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AGENDA

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy I
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 I Updates
 - i. Elementary School (*LaKiesha George*)
 - ii. Middle School (*Madelaine German-Schultz*)
 - iii. High School (*Amy Deal*)
- V. Financial Report (*Ralph Stefano*)

**Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy I 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 I Elementary School (LaKiesha George)

Principal LaKiesha George reported the Elementary School's attendance was 92% for November.

Last month, Education Directors and English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Coaches launched a tiered instruction method in response to assessment data. As a result, scholars improved in third- and fifth-grade math and fourth-grade ELA.

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

The Elementary School kicked off Thanksgiving by distributing turkeys to families.

HCZ Promise Academy I Middle School (Madelaine German-Schultz)

Principal Madelaine German-Schultz reported the Middle School's attendance was 94% for November.

The Middle School celebrated high attendance for Academic Hour, with 60 to 70 scholars attending daily. Additionally, nearly 50% of scholars are earning an average of 80% or higher in their main academic courses.

During Thanksgiving, scholars in the mentorship program volunteered at the 10th Annual St. Nicholas Thanksgiving Dinner. They distributed turkeys to HCZ Promise

Academy families and wrote notes of gratitude to the Facilities, Safety, and Food Service Teams.

HCZ Promise Academy I High School (Dr. Amy Deal)

Principal Dr. Amy Deal reported the High School's attendance was 92% for November. Attendance decreased due to incidents of cold and flu among scholars.

The High School celebrated graduating scholars by displaying senior portraits in the main lobby.

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

Scholars received college acceptance letters from Louisiana State University, Emory University, Rutgers University, Clark Atlanta University, Virginia State University, and other colleges and universities.

National Honor Society scholars participated in external community service opportunities. They also supported Elementary School scholars at their All-Star Banquet and read to kindergarten scholars.

The High School had “scholar/staff of the month” competitions and created a “warm and fuzzy” wall for staff and scholars to show appreciation.

Financial Update (Ralph Stefano)

CFO Ralph Stefano reported that HCZ Promise Academy I's December 1 enrollment is 1,164, which is three favorable versus the budget. The school's revenue is on budget at \$8.4M YTD. Expenses are \$0.2M unfavorable, at \$8.3M YTD. HCZ has not made a contribution through four months of FY25.

HCZ Promise Academy I December 2024 Attendance Report

Date	HCZ PAI Elementary School			HCZ PAI Middle School			HCZ PAI 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	46	638	93%	21	270	92%	21	254	92%
12/3	42	637	93%	11	270	96%	12	254	95%
12/4	42	637	93%	17	270	94%	12	254	95%
12/5	48	636	92%	11	270	96%	12	254	95%
12/6	42	636	93%	12	270	96%	16	254	94%
12/9	41	635	94%	19	270	93%	18	254	93%
12/10	154	635	76%	45	269	83%	40	254	84%
12/11	47	635	93%	21	269	92%	21	254	92%
12/12	28	635	96%	13	269	95%	10	254	96%
12/13	53	635	92%	20	269	93%	15	254	94%
12/16	38	635	94%	16	269	94%	13	254	95%
12/17	44	635	93%	16	269	94%	14	254	94%
12/18	42	635	93%	19	269	93%	17	254	93%
12/19	36	634	94%	24	269	91%	23	254	91%
12/20	87	634	86%	46	269	83%	49	254	81%
Average	53	635	92%	21	269	92%	20	254	92%



Promise Academy I

FY 2025 November YTD Budget vs. Actual

		Budget	Actual	Fav/(Unfav)	Full Year Budget
Enrollment @ Nov 30	(a)	1,161	1,162	1	1,161
DOE and other gov't funding		\$ 10.5	\$ 10.5	\$ (0.0)	\$ 25.3
Expenses:					
Salaries		6.0	6.3	(0.3)	15.7
Benefits		2.0	1.8	0.2	4.8
OTPS		1.7	1.7	-	4.1
Total Expenses	(b)	9.7	9.8	(0.1)	24.6
Expenses in excess of public funding		-	-	-	-
Contribution Components:					
HCZ Contribution		-	-	-	-
per student (whole \$)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

(a) Enrollment as of January 1: 1,157

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