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Shannon Ortiz-Wong
**Principal
High School**
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AGENDA

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy II
Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, April 27, 2026
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 (*LaKiesha George*)
 - 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
Wednesday, February 25, 2026
245 West 129th Street**

Attendees: Geoffrey Canada, Kwame Owusu-Kesse, Mitch Kurz, Stan Druckenmiller, Willie Mae Lewis, Lisa McNear, Candice Ashby, Shannon Benson, LaRen Bierria, Saskia Brown, Ari Browne, Amy Deal, Veroniqua Delva, LaKiesha George, Jenn Klein, Jazmine Lewis, Stephanie Lilavois, John Macapagal, Katherine Martinez, Shannon Ortiz-Wong, Kelly Siddharta, Meredith Peckosh-Soffrin, Ralph Stefano, Sean Sullivan, Toya Stilley, and Tarik Ward.

Acceptance of Minutes (Geoffrey Canada)

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM. The board unanimously approved the meeting minutes from January 14, 2026.

Superintendent's Update (Dr. Saskia Brown)

Superintendent Dr. Saskia Brown reported that as of February 1, enrollment for HCZ Promise Academy I is 1,136, and 958 for HCZ Promise Academy II.

Dr. Brown invited Assistant Principal of Promise Academy I High School Dr. Natasha Gutierrez, Literacy Coach Katherine Aguero, and K-5 Math Coach Shernice Johnson to briefly greet the Board. Dr. Brown and the Board thanked them for stepping in as lead teachers while continuing their primary roles and responsibilities.

Dr. Brown thanked Director of Compliance Candice Ashby and Director of Business Administration Ari Browne for the completion and submission of the Annual Comprehensive Review, a New York City Department of Education reporting requirement that includes school data and self-evaluations for the 2024-2025 school year. She also thanked Chief Financial Officer Ralph Stefano and the Finance Team for their contributions.

Leadership teams participated in a Data to Action Lab on January 30, reviewed Quarter 2 academic data, and developed action plans for the remainder of the calendar year. Dr. Brown thanked Mr. Canada for attending.

Dr. Brown, Deputy Superintendent Shannon Benson, and the Teaching and Learning Team conducted instructional walkthroughs during the week of February 2 and observed strong scholar engagement and teacher preparedness.

The Elementary and Middle Schools are preparing scholars for upcoming computer-based testing with mock tests scheduled in February and March.

The Schools continue to expand and monitor the HeyTutor program to ensure scholars receive additional academic support when needed. Dr. Brown recognized the schools for increasing scholar participation in the program.

HCZ Promise Academy II Elementary School (LaKiesha George)

Principal LaKiesha George reported the Elementary School's attendance was 91% for January.

On Superintendent's Day, the Elementary School staff engaged in professional development opportunities.

Participation in the HeyTutor program increased from 62% to 74% over the past month.

The Elementary School welcomed an Integrated Co-Teaching Learning Specialist for first grade.

The Elementary School hosted family meetings to review upcoming assessments and provide information about testing expectations.

Morning circles continue to strengthen school culture and scholar engagement.

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

Principal Dr. Veroniqua Delva reported the Middle School's attendance was 93% for January.

The Middle School onboarded five new Lead Teachers to strengthen instructional capacity.

The Middle School held an open house, where prospective families met school leaders and the After School Team and toured the building. Dr. Delva thanked Director of Operations Toya Stilley and Operations Manager Kameyia Van Allen for their supporting family engagement.

Scholars completed quarterly assessments with 97% attendance on testing days.

School leadership held a scholar town hall to review academic data and strengthen scholar performance.

School leadership led a professional development half-day where teachers collaborated, explored the next unit of instruction, and aligned on instructional strategies.

The Middle School hosted a concert night to strengthen family engagement and clarify academic expectations.

The Math Team led a professional development session where the teachers shared best practices to strengthen instruction.

Participation in the HeyTutor program increased significantly from 46% to 72% over the past month. School leaders drove the increase through individual scholar meetings, increased oversight during tutoring sessions, and stronger coordination with HCZ Promise Academy After School.

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

Principal Shannon Ortiz-Wong reported the High School's attendance was 93% for January.

The High School administered quarterly assessments. Scholars made significant gains in academic testing and Regents preparation.

Scholars attended the Metropolitan Opera's *Madame Butterfly* and visited the sports media company Overtime to learn about careers in the field.

Three Promise Academy High School scholars were accepted to Harvard's Pre-College Program.

Scholars received college acceptances from Penn State University, Michigan State University, and Howard University. One scholar also received admission to Northeastern University with an \$80,000 annual scholarship.

Financial Update (Ralph Stefano)

Chief Financial Officer Ralph Stefano reported that HCZ Promise Academy II's December 31 enrollment is 966, which is six favorable versus the budget. The School's revenue through December is \$0.1M unfavorable at \$11.7M. Expenses are \$1.0M favorable, at \$11.1M. HCZ has not made a contribution through six months of FY26.

**Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy II Charter School
Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 18, 2026
245 West 129th Street**

Attendees: Geoffrey Canada, Mitch Kurz, Bodie Brizendine, Lisa McNear, Candice Ashby, Shannon Benson, LaRen Bierria, Saskia Brown, Ari Browne, Amy Deal, Veroniqua Delva, LaKiesha George, Jenn Klein, Jazmine Lewis, Stephanie Lilavois, John Macapagal, Katherine Martinez, Shannon Ortiz-Wong, Kelly Siddharta, Liam McCarthy, Meredith Peckosh-Soffrin, Ralph Stefano, Toya Stilley, and Tarik Ward.

Superintendent's Update (Dr. Saskia Brown)

Superintendent Dr. Saskia Brown reported that as of March 1, enrollment for HCZ Promise Academy I is 1,132, and 953 for HCZ Promise Academy II.

Dr. Brown reported that staff members are planning for the Extended School Year. The Teaching and Learning Team, school leadership, and the After School team, have developed a cohesive summer program focused on reducing summer learning loss.

The HCZ Promise Academy I and II Elementary and Middle Schools have administered mock exams in preparation for upcoming New York State tests. School leaders will analyze the results to inform instructional adjustments and targeted supports. ELA state testing is scheduled for April 21–22 for Elementary School scholars and April 23–24 for Middle School scholars.

The HeyTutor program participation data has only reflected two weeks of attendance due to a technical issue with the vendor's dashboard. This issue has primarily impacted Promise Academy II Middle School. The Promise Academy II team has been working with HeyTutor to resolve the issue, and principals will share complete data with the Board once it becomes available.

HCZ Promise Academy II Elementary School (LaKiesha George)

Principal LaKiesha George reported the Elementary School's attendance was 90% for February.

The Elementary School welcomed prospective families to its second Open House of the year. Ms. George thanked HCZ's President and Founder Geoffrey Canada and Dr. Brown for joining the session virtually. The school looks forward to the enrollment period, which begins on April 1.

Approximately 75% of scholars participated in the HeyTutor program. School leaders continue to implement incentives and conduct parent outreach to increase participation.

The Elementary School welcomed a new Parent Coordinator and a Teaching Assistant. Ms. George thanked the Human Resources Talent Acquisition Team for their support.

Staff participated in professional development sessions led by the Teaching and Learning Team, with a focus on New York State exam preparation, including proctoring expectations and instructional strategies to support scholar performance.

The Elementary School improved its technology scorecard rating from 69% to 87% over the past month, reflecting increased staff ownership and accountability in maintaining and securing technical equipment.

The Elementary School also hosted a Black History Month Spirit Week and held a Top Performers Dinner for scholars and families to celebrate academic achievement.

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

Principal Dr. Veroniqua Delva reported the Middle School's attendance was 91% for February.

The Middle School hired an alumni tutor who supports scholars in science classes with Regents and state exam preparation and math.

Education Director Dr. Shenequa Foulks led a computer-based testing workshop for families to strengthen understanding of assessment practices. Families learned how mock exam data informs instruction, what scholars can expect during testing, and strategies to support learning at home.

The Middle School administered its ELA mock exam and achieved 100% staff attendance and 97% scholar attendance, reflecting strong staff engagement and effective family outreach.

The Middle School hosted a Top Performers Dinner, organized by the Parent Coordinator Jordan Boshea, to celebrate honor roll scholars. Dr. Delva thanked the Food Services Team and Chef Sharon Lewis, who catered the event.

Gold honor roll scholars participated in a bowling field trip in recognition of their Marking Period 2 performance.

The Middle School also hosted a Valentine's Day dance for scholars who scored 80 or above on their Marking Period 2 assessments. Scholars who demonstrated academic growth were recognized through raffles and prizes.

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

Principal Shannon Ortiz-Wong reported the High School's attendance was 90% for February.

The High School strengthened collaboration with the After School Team by clarifying the role of advocates in supporting scholars. As a result, advocates have increased their presence in classrooms and are working more closely with counselors to provide targeted support.

High School leadership participated in Superintendent's Cabinet discussions focused on aligning adult practices and school culture with scholar achievement data.

The High School conducted a College Success Office case conference to ensure alignment on scholar needs and to support successful transitions to postsecondary education.

In recognition of National School Counseling Week, and with the support of the Student Government, the High School celebrated its Counseling Team and acknowledged their contributions to scholar success.

Student Government also hosted a senior movie night to promote community-building and reinforce expectations around scholar participation and accountability.

The High School reported continued progress in college admissions, with recent acceptances to SUNY Albany, University of Connecticut, Binghamton University, and Syracuse University, where one scholar received a scholarship for \$80,000 per year.

Financial Update (Ralph Stefano)

Chief Financial Officer Ralph Stefano reported that HCZ Promise Academy II's January 31 enrollment is 957, which is three unfavorable versus the budget. The school's revenue through January is on budget at \$13.7M. Expenses are \$0.9M favorable, at \$13.9M. HCZ has not made a contribution through seven months of FY26.

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy II
March 2026 Attendance Report

Date	HCZ PAII Elementary School			HCZ PAII Middle School			HCZ PAII High School		
	Number of Students		% of Students	Number of Students		% of Students	Number of Students		% of Students
	Absent	Enrollment	Present	Absent	Enrollment	Present	Absent	Enrollment	Present
3/2	46	498	91%	17	257	93%	18	198	91%
3/3	35	498	93%	22	257	91%	21	198	89%
3/4	43	498	91%	18	257	93%	14	198	93%
3/5	38	497	92%	17	257	93%	19	198	90%
3/6	39	497	92%	12	257	95%	15	198	92%
3/9	65	496	87%	22	257	91%	8	198	96%
3/10	47	496	91%	12	257	95%	14	198	93%
3/11	161	496	68%	46	257	82%	33	198	83%
3/12	27	496	95%	21	257	92%	19	198	90%
3/13	48	496	90%	14	257	95%	23	198	88%
3/16	64	495	87%	31	257	88%	18	198	91%
3/17	37	495	93%	14	257	95%	17	198	91%
3/18	45	494	91%	11	257	96%	18	198	91%
3/19	69	492	86%	31	257	88%	15	198	92%
3/23	49	492	90%	23	257	91%	20	198	90%
3/24	42	492	91%	16	257	94%	15	198	92%
3/25	41	492	92%	24	257	91%	15	198	92%
3/26	44	492	91%	14	257	95%	16	198	92%
3/27	68	492	86%	20	257	92%	20	198	90%
3/30	36	492	93%	14	257	95%	19	198	90%
3/31	41	492	92%	21	257	92%	13	198	93%
Average	52	495	90%	20	257	92%	18	198	91%

Promise Academy II
 FY 2026 February YTD Budget vs. Actual

		Revised Budget	Actual	Fav/(Unfav)	Revised Full Year Budget
YTD Average Enrollment	(a)	960	970	10	960
DOE and other gov't funding		\$ 15.7	\$ 15.7	\$ -	\$ 23.5
Expenses:					
Salaries		11.7	11.1	0.6	18.1
Benefits		2.8	2.7	0.1	4.2
OTPS		2.3	2.1	0.2	3.4
Total Expenses	(b)	16.8	15.9	0.9	25.7
Expenses in excess of public funding		1.1	0.2	0.9	2.2
Contribution Components:					
HCZ Contribution		-	-	-	2.2
per student (whole \$)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,324

(a) Enrollment as of Apr 1: 947

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