

Minutes
April 10, 2025, Regular Meeting
UChicago Charter School Board of Directors
Donoghue Campus 707 E. 37th Street at 5:00 pm
In-Person

Attendees

Board of Directors Members attending in person: D. Gorman-Smith, K. Kinzler, P. Zigler, C. Mitchell, K. Y. Lee

Also in attendance: J. Furman, G. Long, L. Hill, A. Hull, A. Sergeant, T. Island-Childress, C. Ragin

- I. **Welcome:** Board President D. Gorman-Smith welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.
- II. **Minutes:** D. Gorman-Smith called for a motion to approve the April 1, 2025, minutes of the UCCS Regular Board Meeting. C. Mitchell made a motion to approve, and P. Ziegler seconded. All approved.
- III. **Public Participation:** No public participation.
- IV. **UCCS Financial Report:** T. Island-Childress introduced Gia Long, Director of Recruitment and Admissions, who will provide a comprehensive enrollment report at the May board meeting.

A. Hull presented the FY26 draft budget. No significant changes are planned. UCCS anticipates a 3% increase in CPS funding, which will cover annual increases in expenses. A positive surplus is projected based on the 25-26 budget, some of which can be utilized to address achievement goals highlighted through the Benchmarking Analysis. UCCS will begin the staff renewal process for SY25-26.
- V. **Strategic Planning Subgroup Data Report Part 2:** T. Island-Childress presented the second set of findings from the benchmarking analysis. Highlighted in the report is the increase in chronic absenteeism during COVID that has remained high. The board discussed reasons for the absenteeism, including difficulties in parent engagement and the attendance formula for high school students. There is an opportunity to increase the capacity of attendance intervention systems, after-school programs, and other incentives based on attendance.

UCCS has a high principal turnover rate compared to the benchmark schools, specifically at the UCW campus. Overall teacher retention is strongest at NKO, with a 90% retention rate. UCW is slightly below the average retention rate of benchmark schools. The board discussed opportunities for increasing retention, including assessing UCCS cost efficiency, restructuring leadership, and investing in teacher coaching, specifically for novice teachers.

The discussion focused on developing strategies specifically to address chronic absenteeism and increase academic achievement across all grade levels. There was also a recommendation to

consider strategies to increase alumni engagement. Planned strategies will be discussed at the next board meeting.

VI. Adjourn: D. Gorman-Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:34 pm.