

Minutes
University of Chicago Charter School Corporation Board of Directors
Thursday, September 25, 2025 from 5:00 - 6:30pm
In Person
Woodlawn Campus, 6300 S University Ave., Room 303

Attendees

In Person Board Members: D. Gorman-Smith, K. Kinzler, K. Lee, N. Grover

Also in attendance: A. Sergeant, J. Furman, G. Long, A. Hull, T. Pajakowski, C. Ragin, J. Mahdi, T. Tucker, D. Peters

School Directors: D. Gordon, E. Hughes, S. Woods

- I. **Welcome:** D. Gorman-Smith welcomed everyone and reviewed the CPS Board Member visits to NKO and Donoghue campuses.
- II. **Minutes:** D. Gorman-Smith called for a motion to approve the August 21, 2025 minutes of the UCCS Regular Board Meeting. K. Yee Lee moved, seconded by K. Kinzler, and all approved.
- III. **Public Participation:** Two NKO parents (Tisha Johnson and Carlia Young) attended the board meeting as observers.
- IV. **Ratify the CEO and MS Director Positions:** D. Gorman-Smith discussed the need to ratify the appointment of Aneesa Sergeant as Interim CEO and De'Shemika Benton as the Middle School Director. This follows the Board meeting held in executive session on July 17th to discuss and approve the appointments. D. Gorman-Smith called for a motion to ratify the appointment of Aneesa Sergeant as Interim CEO, K. Yee Lee moved, K. Kinzler seconded, and all approved with no opposition. D. Gorman-Smith called for a motion to ratify the appointment of De'Shemika Benton as the Middle School Director, K. Yee Lee moved, K. Kinzler seconded, and all approved with no opposition.
- V. **UCCS Updated Policies Vote:** The board reviewed several policies for inclusion in the UCCS's Student Family Handbook. In all cases, these represented existing policies to be reaffirmed or further clarified. N. Grover asked how the Restraint and Seclusion policy is enforced and documented. A. Sergeant discussed UCCS's annual personnel training, policy usage, and documentation for restraint and seclusion. Hearing no further questions or issues for discussion, D. Gorman-Smith called for a motion to approve all policies, including: PTRO, Student Records, Suspension, and Bullying. K. Yee Lee moved, K. Kinzler seconded, all approved.
- VI. **Board Elections:** D. Gorman-Smith deferred board elections until further conversation with the university.
- VII. **CEO Report - Early School Year Metrics:** A. Sergeant presented early metrics for the current academic year, including findings from Listening Tours she conducted

with parents and staff across campuses at the beginning of the year. The board and UCCS leadership have identified chronic absenteeism as a critical area to address. T. Pajakowski presented historical chronic absentee data from SY23-24 and SY24-25. L. Hill presented both current attendance data and interventions that have been put in place across campuses to address. Early metrics are positive, with all UCCS schools reporting over 90% daily attendance. The board discussed rising chronic absenteeism across the city and country and possible causes and opportunities for intervention across campuses.

D. Gordon shared UCW's focus on quality Tier 1 instruction and school incentives to help maintain student attendance rates. E. Hughes and S. Woods discussed the current trends in attendance for NKO and Donoghue, along with the incentives and new attendance initiatives to maintain attendance.

A. Sergeant reported on current vacancies that are staffed by long-term subs staffing and student 20th day enrollment, which is above enrollment targets.

VIII. Charter Renewal: D. Gorman-Smith thanked everyone involved in the charter renewal process, noting the condensed timeline and scale of work required to complete, particularly coinciding with the beginning of the school year. The board discussed Domain 5 of the charter renewal application and alignment to SY26 Network Goals. N. Grover asked how parents are involved in the decision-making process. The board discussed the CEO Listening Tours, survey feedback, FTCO meetings, and parent leader meetings with directors.

C. Ragin presented the updated charter renewal timeline and next steps. The board discussed the agenda for the upcoming State of Schools Presentation.

IX. Finance Report: A. Hull presented UCCS' current finances. UCCS is currently on track in revenue and expenses. CPS funding is on track despite its budgetary issues. Enrollment is above the budget target. The annual audit is ongoing and will be finalized end of October and submitted to CPS on November 1.

IX. Adjourn: D. Gorman-Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:13.