Public Meeting of the Board of Trustees
for
Universal Institute Charter School
Meeting held Virtually via Zoom
January 22, 2026, at 6:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
1. David Thompson, Board President
2. Michelle Martin, Board Secretary
3. Dr. Zenida Driver , Board Member

Attendees Present:
1. Wallace Dawan, Chief Financial Officer
2. Taleka Waters, Principal
3. Latoya Finney, Board of Directors Compliance Officer
4. Crystal Gary-Nelson, Chief Learning Officer
5. Kelli Woods, Director of Climate Culture and Safety
6. Lawrence Threadgill, Director of Facilities
7. Kevin Corcoran, Consultant, Vertex Education

Meeting called to Order at 6:06pm, a quorum was confirmed.

I. **Meeting Minutes**
   a. December 18, 2025 Public Meeting Minutes
      i. A motion was made to approve the December 18, 2025 Public Meeting minutes, with the understanding that any corrections would be submitted to the board president or board liaison.
      ii. By a unanimous vote the motion carried.
         - **Board Vote:**
            - **Yes: 3**
            - **No: 0**
            - **Abstain: 0**

II. **Unfinished Business**
   a. There was no unfinished business brought before the Board.

III. **Committee Reports**
   i. **Financial Report,** Presented by Kevin Corcoran, Vertex Education.

   Overview:
   Mr. Corcoran provided a detailed financial overview for UICS, reporting on actual financial performance from July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, with projections through June 30, 2026. UICS shows favorable district funding rates, enrollment trends, and disciplined expenditure management were highlighted.
   a. **Institute Charter School**
      1. **Profit/Loss and Budget Statement:** Vertex Education financial management consultant. Kevin Corcoran presented the finance report for Institute Charter School.
      2. Net income of approximately $529,000 at the midpoint of the fiscal year.

3. The school is projected to achieve approximately $1.19 million in net income by fiscal year end.
4. Although enrollment is 27 students below projection, increased charter funding rates from the School District of Philadelphia significantly offset the enrollment variance.
5. District funding increased approximately 17% for general education and 13% for special education, creating additional financial stability for the school.
6. School expenditures remain closely aligned with the approved budget, reflecting strong fiscal oversight and disciplined spending practices.
7. At the midpoint of the year, actual expenditures were nearly identical to budgeted spending, demonstrating accurate financial planning.
8. The school maintains over $8.5 million in cash reserves, representing more than seven months of operating expenses, which exceeds recommended financial stability thresholds.
9. All five financial metrics used by the Philadelphia Charter Schools Office remain in the "green" range, indicating strong financial health.
10. There was discussion amongst board members regarding the Institute financial report.
11. Mrs. Martin moved to accept the Institute financial report,
12. By a unanimous vote the Institute financial report was accepted and approved.
    - **Board Vote:**
        - **Yes: 3**
        - **No: 0**
        - **Abstain: 0**

ii. **Facilities Committee Reports**

a. Institute Charter School

i. Presented by Lawrence Threadgill – Director of Facilities

1. Mr. Threadgill provided an update regarding facilities operations and infrastructure improvements at Universal Institute Charter School. Highlights included the following:

   Elevator Repairs
    - The Annex 2 elevator has been repaired and restored to full operation after recent mechanical issues.
    - Facilities is coordinating with the elevator service provider to obtain a comprehensive inspection and repair history report for both Annex buildings.

   Scholar Restroom Repairs
    - Scholar bathrooms in Annex 1 have experienced recurring maintenance issues.
    - Maintenance staff have addressed several immediate repairs, and larger restroom upgrades are being planned for summer facilities work.

   Building Improvements
    - Facilities leadership is evaluating several building improvement projects including:
        - LED classroom lighting upgrades in Annex 1

- Structural repairs involving loose cement on a column in the main building
- General appearance upgrades and facility improvements throughout the Annex building.

Roofing Concerns

- The Annex 1 roof has developed several leaks across multiple areas of the building.
- Facilities will obtain three vendor quotes for roof repair or replacement to present to the Board at a future meeting.

2. Repair of a cracked sewer pipe in the first-floor adult restroom, restoring full functionality.
3. Identification of restroom repairs on the second and third floors of the annex, with cost estimates pending from Ace Vac Company.
4. Ongoing rooftop HVAC unit maintenance, including system resets as an interim measure.
5. Replacement of damaged sprinkler heads in the annex stairwell and additional inspections throughout both buildings due to aging infrastructure.
6. Development of a facilities improvement planning spreadsheet in collaboration with school leadership and central office
7. There was discussion amongst board members regarding the Institute facilities report.
8. Mrs. Martin moved to accept Institute facilities report.
9. By a unanimous vote the Institute facilities report was accepted.

➢ **Board Vote:**
- **Yes: 3**
- **No: 0**
- **Abstain: 0**

IV. Presentations

i. Universal Institute Charter School

i. Principal Waters presented a mid-year update on school performance, including academics, attendance, culture, and family engagement:

1. Enrollment and Attendance
   - School enrollment remains stable with balanced male and female student populations.
   - Average daily attendance currently stands at approximately 81%, with 73% of scholars attending at least 90% of school days.
   - Attendance challenges have been influenced by transportation delays and seasonal illness, particularly during the flu season.
2. Principal Waters highlighted an example of student support intervention, where a truancy meeting revealed a family experiencing housing displacement. School staff immediately connected the family with support services and resources.
3. Academic Performance
   - Instruction is currently driven by Firefly Benchmark 2 assessment data, focusing on:
     - Targeted small-group instruction in mathematics
     - Reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grade-level application
     - Ongoing progress monitoring to track student growth.
4. School Culture

- The implementation of restorative practices has resulted in a 42% reduction in Tier 2 disciplinary recentering incidents, demonstrating improvements in scholar behavior and accountability.

5. The Board engaged in discussion regarding principals' update.
6. Mrs. Martin moved to approve the principals' report.
7. By a unanimous vote the principals' report was approved.
   - **Board Vote:**
     - **Yes: 3**
     - **No: 0**
     - **Abstain: 0**

ii. **Central Office Report**

i. Crystal Gary-Nelson presented a brief Central Office update, which included planning for a Universal Charter Schools Board of Trustees retreat scheduled for Spring 2026.

1. The retreat will focus on:
   - Board governance best practices
   - Strategic alignment across Universal Charter Schools
   - Strengthening Board oversight and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The Board engaged in discussion regarding Superintendent's update.
3. Mrs. Martin moved to approve the Central Office Report.
4. By a unanimous vote the Central Office Report was approved.
   - **Board Vote:**
     - **Yes: 3**
     - **No: 0**
     - **Abstain: 0**

V. Public Comments

a. There were no public comments.

VI. Adjournment

a. Mrs. Martin moved to adjourn,
b. By unanimous vote the motion to adjourn passed.
c. The meeting concluded at 6:41 p.m.