

# JUMOKE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

**Mission:** To prepare children to successfully compete in the global marketplace despite the social and economic challenges they may presently face. The academy is dedicated to rigorous academic and social standards achieved by holding high expectations for all students during challenging instruction.

**“Loving Scholars, Nurturing Minds, and Empowering Futures”**

**Regular Board Meeting - Minutes**

**Tuesday, May 13, 2025**

**6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.**

The following board members, constituting a quorum, and Jumoke Academy Staff were in attendance:

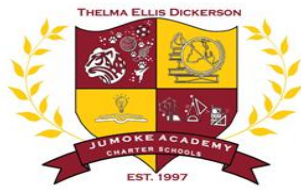
**Board members:**

Sam Gray, Board Chair  
Myron Stewart, Treasurer/Community Representative  
Leticia Acosta, Teacher Representative  
George Sutherland, Community Representative  
Vera Smith-Winfree, Community Representative, Fundraising  
Dr. Kerwin Low, Community Representative  
Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, Community Representative  
Soncera Cicero, Community Representative  
Janelle Lester (Zoom), Community Representative/Finance Sub-Committee

**Staff:**

Dr. Troy A. Monroe  
Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall  
Sheryl Deloso  
Sharron Solomon-McCarthy  
Lawrence Jeune  
Ana Marcil  
Robert Howard  
Nakitha Crossley  
Dr. Tera Harris  
Pamela Barry  
Latoya Johnson  
Summer Myles  
Anthony Digennaro  
Alejandro Alfonso  
Radikha Morris  
Natalie Best

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## **OPENING**

- Welcome/Public Comments  
Meeting called to order by Board Chair Gray at 5:59 P.M., he introduced himself and welcomed all parents, guardians, scholars and professional school staff. Board Chair Gray acknowledged those on the Zoom call, including Board Member Janelle Lester.

Open the floor for public comments, no questions were posed.

## **BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Sam Gray, Board Chair

- Opening Remarks.
- CEO/Superintendent Evaluation: Board Chair Gray said a group of board members will lead a detailed discussion, which will later involve the full board, to gather feedback. He also acknowledged the ribbon-cutting ceremony at 325 Blue Hills Ave and the Teacher of the Year luncheon.

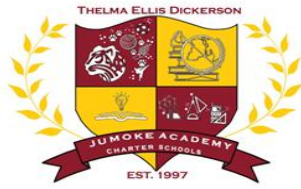
## **CEO/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Troy A. Monroe, CEO/Superintendent

### **PART A**

- April Scholar of the month Recognition
  - **Cairo Spence – TED**  
Principal Johnson addresses Cairo and his family. It is a privilege to recognize Cairo Spence, he has been with us since Pre-K and has been the epitome of a Jumoke scholar. His teachers describe him as respectful, responsible and ready to learn, top academically performing third grader as well as behaviorally. Principal Johnson was also proud to recognize his great parental support.
  - **Jadon Johnson - JAH-SMaRT**  
Dean Pamela Barry introduces the promoting eighth grader Jadon Johnson. He is someone who exemplifies what it means to be a Jumoke Scholar. He is consistently a role model in his class, with peers, with his communication in the classroom and with his classwork, advocating for himself and his peers around the school.
  - **Luna Vandegriff - JAH-HC**  
Dr. Tera Harris is honored to introduce us to Luna Vandegriff. Luna came to Jumoke Academy as an artist in the 24-25 school year. Not only is she an artist but also a scholar, she promoted herself for rigor into a seventh-grade curriculum as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. She also has social leadership and has been a true blessing to our school community. One of the biggest things as a student artist, Luna just won first place at a Mark Twain House sponsored event and that came with a cash prize, she beat many scholars in this competition. Luna is the package of both a true scholar and artist and she makes the Hartford Conservatory very proud. Her father, Mr. Vandegriff, has also been an ally and advocate, thank you for your partnership.

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CEO/Superintendent Monroe presented the scholars of the month certificate and gift bags and encouraged them to continue their pursuit of excellence in all things.

This concludes Part A of our acknowledgements. Board Chair Gray announces that the guests are welcome to stay for the remainder of the meeting but are not required. Light refreshments are provided at the back of the conference room for the families.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:09 P.M. by Board Member Leticia Acosta and seconded by Board Member Debeatham-Brown. This allows scholars and parents to transition from the room.

The meeting was reconvened at 6:13 P.M.

## **PART B**

- District Updates
  - **School Based Leadership Changes:**

Superintendent Monroe announced that Principal Johnson of TED Elementary will take on a new role as Educational Specialist at Jumoke Academy starting July 1st. In this position, she will:

- Lead the accreditation process for the Pre-K program through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- Support district principals as assigned.
- Coordinate district-wide enrichment programs and student enrollment recruitment.
- Oversee the teacher certification pathway program.
- Manage the district's summer programs and planning.
- Provide professional development for academic assistants.
- Serve as the district-wide arts program coordinator.
- Lead district teams involved in staff certification and accreditation.
- Help coordinate community partnerships and educational programs.
- Take on other duties as assigned by the Superintendent's office.

Although she is stepping down as principal, she will continue to play a key leadership role in the district. Principal Johnson has been with the district for 10 years, six as principal and four as a dean and teacher.

### ■ **Principal Appointment – TED Elementary School**

- Danielle Harrison-Ramiz

Superintendent Monroe introduced Mrs. Danielle Harrison-Ramiz to the board. She is originally from Middletown, CT, and has over 8 years of experience in education across Mississippi, Tennessee, and Connecticut. Her background includes:

- Teaching Middle School Math and History

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- Working in both elementary and high schools
- Serving as a DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) coach
- Acting as a lesson plan specialist, school manager, and director of culture and instruction for Teach for America
- Experience in charter schools, currently working at Achievement First

Mrs. Harrison-Ramiz holds Connecticut teaching certification, a degree in educational leadership and supervision, a master's in special education, and a bachelor's in English. She is a wife, mother, and a passionate educator committed to equity, accountability, and building strong relationships. She thanked Superintendent Monroe and expressed excitement about joining the Jumoke Academy family.

Superintendent Monroe also shared that transition activities have begun, including an informal walkthrough of the school with Principal Johnson and other leaders. Plans are in place for both leaders to meet with the full staff for a formal introduction soon.

Superintendent Monroe asks if there are any questions or comments, no questions were posed.

◦ **Recognition Teacher of the Year:** Mr. Alejandro Alfonso

Superintendent Monroe shared that the Teacher of the Year Program was recently brought back after a pause.

Because of a small applicant pool, this event is held every two years. It was organized by Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Gordon-Hall, and took place a few weeks ago at the newly renovated JAH-SMaRT Annex. The event featured a high-quality luncheon, a beautifully prepared space, and several outstanding teachers were recognized.

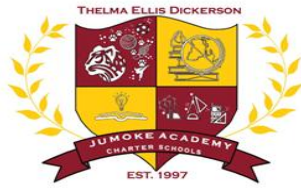
The 2025-2027 Teacher of the Year is Mr. Alejandro Alfonso, a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies teacher at JAH-SMaRT. He is known for his positive attitude, strong connection with students, and dedication to going above and beyond. Mr. Alfonso has been with Jumoke Academy for four years and is affectionately called "the father of the building" by students.

◦ **325 Blue Hills Ave - Ribbon Cutting Update**

Superintendent Monroe shared that the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the renovated property at 325 Blue Hills Avenue took place on May 2, 2025. He thanked Board Member Smith-Winfree for helping with preparations and Board Chair Gray for representing the board at the event. Faculty, staff, and students attended, including one scholar who helped to cut the ribbon. It was a meaningful event for everyone.

The door to the JAH-SMaRT Annex has been painted Jumoke Burgundy, thanks to the development company. The space will be used for events, meetings, future board sessions, and by the Jumoke Academy Parent Association. Special thanks were given to Mr. Robert Howard and Mr. Lawrence Jeune for their efforts in preparing the space.

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One of the conference rooms was named in honor of the late Mr. Frank Williams, a dedicated staff member and former Chief Financial Officer he was known for his commitment to the students. Board Chair Gray praised everyone involved and thanked Superintendent Monroe for his leadership. He also suggested using the blank walls in the new facility to showcase Jumoke Academy's history, including past teachers of the year, administrators, and alumni. He emphasized the opportunity to build and display a legacy.

- New Enrollment Update

Superintendent Monroe shared that there are 342 open spots for new students across the district. So far, 153 offers have been made, and 116 have been accepted. He recently met with the Board Marketing Sub-Committee to discuss ways to better promote the schools and increase engagement.

Principal Johnson will help with marketing efforts once she starts her new role. The committee plans to host at least three summer events at 325 Blue Hills Ave to welcome prospective families. These events will include testimonials from current families, teacher leaders, and board members.

Jumoke Academy signs have been placed around the city – thanks to Mr. Howard for handling the deliveries. Superintendent Monroe also asked all schools and principals to come up with creative enrollment strategies. They have three weeks to work with their teams to brainstorm ideas, with the goal of increasing enrollment by 10%.

- Budget Update

At the last board meeting, three budget scenarios were presented. The board requested a fourth option, which will be shared tonight by the Director of Finance, Mrs. Sheryl Deloso. The goal is to have the board vote on it for approval.

- Corrective Action Plan Update

Superintendent Monroe shared that last week, the team met with the State Department of Education to prepare for an upcoming accountability meeting about the Corrective Action Plan. Attendees included Mrs. Marcil (Human Resources Manager), Mrs. Solomon-McCarthy (Director of Student Support Services), Mrs. Deloso (Director of Finance), and Dr. Gordon-Hall (Chief Academic Officer).

The focus was on improving attendance, teacher certification rates, and academic performance. The official meeting with the State will take place this Thursday in a public forum, where the team will present progress and answer questions. The team is fully prepared.

## **PART C**

- Curriculum & Instruction Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall, Chief Academic Officer

### **Theme: Leveling the Playing Field for Scholars' Success**

- Spring Testing Update

Chief Academic Officer Gordon-Hall reports that we are in the middle of spring testing, we are almost done with state testing and we're moving right into our benchmark testing which is NWEA and AMIRA.

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- Summer Programming Update
  - Jumoke Program at TED for scholars in rising Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It will be from July 7-25<sup>th</sup>, Mon-Thurs
  - STEM Program at Goodwin University, four weeks in total from July 7<sup>th</sup> – Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, rising 5<sup>th</sup> grade to 8<sup>th</sup>. The application fee is \$50, and all scholars will walk away with a drone.
- Grade Level Promotion Exercises
  - With 20 academic days left, we have our promotion exercises at the end of the school year. PreK on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> grade on June 9<sup>th</sup> and our 8<sup>th</sup> graders on June 11<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony for 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be held at the University of Hartford from 2:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Board Chair Gray requests a motion for the consent agenda items which include the April Regular Board Meeting Minutes as well as the March 2025 Financial Statement. Board Member Smith Winfree moves that we approve the consent agenda for the April Regular Board Meeting minutes and March 2025 Financial Statements. Board Member DeBeatham-Brown seconds the motion. Board Chair Gray reports that the consent agenda items have been properly seconded and inquires if there are any objections currently. All are in favor and the motion is carried.

- April Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- March 2025 Financial Statements

## **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT**

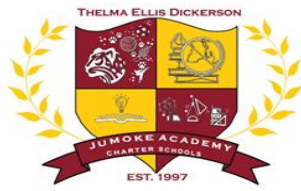
Sheryl Deloso, Director of Finance

Per the Director of Finance, the finance subcommittee meeting was held on May 7<sup>th</sup>, present at the meeting were members of the board, Mr. Stewart, Ms. Lester and staff members, Mr. Jeune and Ms. Rosemond.

- 2024-2025 Financial Update
  - Total expenditures and revenues as of March were shared with the board. No change in revenue from the previous month, thus it resulted in a deficit of 7% of our budget. We still maintain an expenditure of 8% per month with our biggest expenditure being education instructional expense. Expenses should be below 72% for us to be able to maintain the surplus. The Director of Finance provided a slide with a comparison of actual expenditures from 2024-2025.

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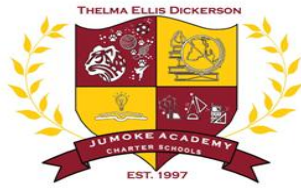
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- 2025-2026 Budget
  - A budget scenario recap slide is presented with three scenarios; this information was presented to the Board last month.
    - 1) conservative: very large deficit, no increase in enrollment, approved donor grant, salary freeze, a delay in capital expenditures and delay in technology projects.
    - 2) moderate: large deficit, increase enrollment by 10%, same approved donor grant, salary increase of 1% for staff and salary step increase for our teachers, and all other takeaway is the same as the first scenario.
    - 3) aggressive: no deficit, will increase enrollment by 20%, a larger private donor grant approved, we will increase salary by 2% and salary step increase for teachers, no delay in capital expenditures and no delay in technology projects.
  - Responding to the feedback from the last board meeting, discussion with the leadership team, Superintendent Monroe and the Chief Academic Officer Gordon-Hall we have created a 4<sup>th</sup> scenario which we refer to as moderately aggressive.
    - 4) Moderately Aggressive: No deficit, increase enrollment by 10% which would be 605 total enrollments, approved private grant, we would delay capital projects, renegotiate vendor contracts, this would make a significant adjustment on our budget with a minimal impact on our operation.

The impact of this scenario would be with a salary increase; this will increase our staff morale and retention. We do have a possibility of hiring challenges and with larger class sizes due to the sudden increases in enrollment. We currently have small classrooms we are still within the standard classroom sizes. Delayed capital projects will be an effect on disruptive learning for our scholars if repairs are needed in the classroom and there will also be an increase in cost if the temporary repairs will not work. By renegotiating vendors' contracts, we are maximizing our own resources and improving the efficiency of our operations, any savings will be added to our personal budget.

Board Member DeBeatham-Brown made a motion to accept the budget, Board Member Sutherland seconds. No objections, all in favor, unanimous, the budget has been passed.

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Some comments were made from board members stating that we need to get enrollment up by 2% and that raises were very important. Another comment was posed regarding recouping funds we didn't receive for our scholars, the director of finance stated that she pursuing obtaining the funds left.

Board Member DeBeatham-Brown announced that Superintendent Monroe received the Education Award at the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual WISCOH Gala from the West Indian Social Club on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was a great event, some of the staff were present and she felt like a proud board member. We must use this as our pathway, carry this momentum and build relationships within the West Indian community. Board Chair Gray thanks Board Member Debeatham-Brown for bringing up this tremendous opportunity and congratulating Superintendent Monroe on his accomplishment. When discussing recruitment and the opportunities that present themselves the award and accomplishments are a great pipeline to building greater relationships and feels we should capitalize on Superintendent Monroes current success to bring more student scholars to Jumoke Academy.

Lastly a board member referred to the poetry/rap competition and advised that this is our marketing campaign.

Board Chair Gray announces that there is no building sub-committee report to be had. No executive session other than pointing out that at the next meeting we will have a commentary regarding Superintendent Monroe's evaluation as we must check this off by the end of June.

Board Member Smith-Winfree motions to adjourn the meeting, board member Acosta seconds the motion. All are in favor and the meeting is adjourned at 7:00 P.M.

## **BUILDING SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT**

- None

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- None

## **ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

- None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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