



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”

**Board Retreat/ Special Board Meeting
SMaRT Annex - 325 Blue Hills Ave, Hartford, CT
Saturday, September 13, 2025**

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Agenda

Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Board Members in attendance:

Sam Gray
Myron Steward
Latisha Acosta
George Sutherland
Vera Smith-Winfrey
Kerwin Low

Faculty and Staff:

Dr. Troy A. Monroe
Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall
Sheryl Deloso
Ana Marcil
Pamela Barry
Danielle Ramiz
Bobby Gibson, Jr.
Natalie Best

Special Guest:

Attorney Christine Chinni

Superintendent Monroe opens the meeting thanks the board, faculty/staff and special guests for attending. Meeting begins at 8:40 a.m.

OPENING

- Welcome & Opening Remarks

Mr. Sam Gray, Board Chair

9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.

Board Chair Gray goes straight into the executive session, explaining that they will be discussing Dr. Monroe's performance. 8:46 a.m.

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- Discussion and Possible Action on Superintendent/CEO Performance, Compensation, and Contract (Discussion Proposed for Executive Session)

Meeting resumes at 9:27 a.m. with remarks by Board Chair Gray.

- Board Member Governance

Board Chair Gray focused on strategic priorities for Jumoke Academy over the next two years, emphasizing student achievement, financial stability, and talent acquisition. Key initiatives include diversifying revenue, enhancing governance and compliance, and deepening community engagement. Board Chair Gray discussed the importance of board member roles, expectations, and succession planning, highlighting the need for professional expertise in areas like finance, fundraising, and community relations. Two potential new board members, Orlando Lawrence and Rodney Nedd were reviewed, with a focus on whether they're well suited and their potential contributions. This portion of the meeting concluded with a commitment to formalize committee roles and ensure board members meet their responsibilities.

Break and Transition

(four-minute break) 9:50 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

CEO/SUPERINTENDENT'S Updates

Dr. Troy A. Monroe, CEO/Superintendent

PART A

Dr. Monroe starts his portion at 10:07 a.m.

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Superintendent Monroe began his update by expressing gratitude to Board Chair Gray and the board for their commitment, and presented Certificates of Appreciation to Mr. Stewart, Mr. Sutherland, and Dr. Low for their distinct contributions to Jumoke Academy. A video titled "Year in Review and Look Ahead" showcased the academy's achievements and future goals, with Superintendent Monroe emphasizing love as a guiding principle, inspired by Dr. Derek Greenfield's message that "love is a verb." Board members reflected on how this value influences their work with scholars and the community. Major accomplishments included the successful 27th Annual Gala, scholar promotions, community engagement, marketing initiatives, grant awards, reduced absenteeism, improved staff certification, and board expansion. Programs such as the TED summer initiative and the Ethel Walker School partnership flourished, and staff retention remained strong at nearly 80%. Despite these gains, academic growth remains the central focus, aligned with the 5-Year District Improvement Plan, which targets academic excellence in math, literacy, and technology; character development and problem-solving; and career exposure through Next Frontier Industries. Superintendent Monroe also introduced a three-year strategic roadmap addressing curriculum, human resources, facilities, stakeholder engagement, and collaboration with the State Department of Education. Curriculum updates include a new literacy program, centralized resources, 8th grade Algebra, expanded Spanish instruction for grades 4–8, and revised science standards, though teacher shortages in math and science persist. In human resources, new hires include a grants and operations manager, finance director, instructional coaches, and a facilities supervisor. The Pathways to Certification program is progressing, with its

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first cohort graduating in December. Facilities upgrades have led to cost savings, and discussions are underway regarding middle school consolidation and the possibility of a high school. Stakeholder engagement remains active through partnerships, and Superintendent Monroe proposed forming a “super board” focused on finance. The academy is in its second year of the charter renewal cycle, with preparations ongoing. Future priorities include staff retention, enrollment growth, marketing, and program development. The academy will continue meeting the State Department’s Corrective Action Plan requirements, focusing on academic improvement, reducing chronic absenteeism, and enhancing staff certification. Support from an academic consulting group will aid elementary-level growth, alongside the development of STEM and ART programs and a new partnership with the University of Hartford. The 27th Heritage Gala was a highlight, featuring student performances including a drum line and a segment from *Hamilton*. Superintendent Monroe announced the theme for the upcoming 28th Gala: “Harlem Nights: A Dandy Affair,” with planning already underway.

Break and Transition

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

BUSINESS / FINANCE

Director of Finance

Mrs. Sheryl Deloso

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Mrs. Sheryl Deloso, Director of Finance, presented an overview of the organization’s funding sources, which include private contributions, SPED billing, federal funds, per pupil income, and miscellaneous fundraising. Scholar enrollment plays a critical role in determining funding levels, and while enrollment declined last year, it has already increased this year, suggesting a positive outlook for funding. This improvement is attributed to enhanced social media efforts and proactive engagement by Superintendent Monroe and the board with prospective families. Last year’s expenditures were primarily allocated to instructional services, followed by school-based administration, facilities/IT, instructional improvement, student support, and special education. Jumoke Academy Charter School received a clean audit and remains in good standing with EGMS and EFS, having effectively utilized a significant portion of its grants. Looking ahead, the Director of Finance anticipates further increases in enrollment and funding. The financial strategy includes using excess cash for low-risk investments such as reserve funds or short-term CDs and making moderate-effort instructional enhancements. Capital investments aimed at infrastructure improvements were discussed, noting their high upfront costs but visible impact. The strategy also considers long-term endowments, which carry low liquidity and require high effort. A financial dashboard was shared, detailing per-scholar education costs, revenue sources, major expenses, average monthly spending, and debt-to-equity trends, with a noted need for increased funding to improve the debt-to-equity ratio.

PART B

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall

Chief Academic Officer

11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Dr. Marie Gordon-Hall, Chief Academic Officer, began her presentation by introducing

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OpenSciEd, a new science resource from the State of Connecticut currently being implemented in middle schools. Due to its complexity, it is being used alongside previous materials to ensure teachers can effectively teach the standards which are expected to appear in assessments. Superintendent Monroe emphasized the strategic push for advanced math in middle school, with offerings now starting in 5th grade. Spanish instruction has also expanded to 4th grade, with the long-term goal of providing K–8 language education district-wide. Through the Corrective Action Plan (CAP), the district has refined its instructional framework around three pillars: explore, engage, and elevate. This framework has guided updates to meeting agendas, lesson plan templates, and systems for monitoring campus data and student growth. Regarding Smarter Balanced assessment data, Chief Academic Officer, Gordon-Hall reported that while scores in math and ELA remained steady from 2024–25, growth was limited. Third-grade teachers have laid a strong foundation, with fourth grade building on it, though dips begin in fifth grade. Science assessments are only administered in grades 5, 8, and 11, and underperformance by a small group of 11th graders from Achievement First skewed results. When excluding those students, Jumoke Academy scholars in grades 5 and 8 showed stronger performance at benchmark levels.

- Principal Presentations
 - School Goals & Alignment
 - TED – Principal Danielle Ramiz

Principal Danielle Ramiz of TED Elementary School began her presentation by introducing herself and outlining key focus areas for the year, including enrollment, staff retention, attendance, academic performance, and the school's strategic direction. She noted a steady increase in student enrollment since her arrival and reported strong staff retention, with only a few positions currently being filled. The school has consistently met its monthly attendance goal of 95%, thanks to team collaboration, classroom and grade-level incentives, and active family involvement. Academic performance showed encouraging progress, with state testing scores in Math and English Language Arts improving from level three to level four between 2024 and 2025. Although the school discontinued use of the Amira program, data from the 2024–2025 school year still reflected growth across kindergarten through fourth grade. Literacy growth outpaced proficiency, and mid-year NWEA assessments revealed significant gains, especially among students who previously scored in lower percentiles. Proficiency scores nearly doubled compared to the previous year. Looking ahead, Principal Ramiz shared ambitious academic goals for 2025, including increased proficiency in the Smarter Balanced Assessment and a 10% improvement on Interim Assessment Blocks. For NWEA, the school aims for 45% of students to reach the 61st percentile or higher, with an overall growth target of 70%. The school's theme for the year is "TED Proud," which stands for being Professional, Relational, Optimistic, Uplifting, and Data-driven.

- HC – Principal Bobby Gibson, Jr.

Principal Bobby Gibson, Jr. of the Hartford Conservatory began his presentation with enthusiasm for the new school year and reflected on his journey since joining the school in November of the previous year. He spoke about the positive cultural shift taking place, noting that students in grades six through eight now understand and embrace the school's expectations, while efforts continue to guide the newer fifth-grade students. He emphasized the importance of love and accountability in

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education, explaining that discipline should be rooted in care and attention. Principal Gibson highlighted several areas of progress, including a significant drop in chronic absenteeism from forty percent to fourteen percent, and an increase in students with perfect attendance to seventy-eight percent. He credited these improvements to strong family engagement and support systems. Enrollment has grown, with active enrollment currently at eighty-seven percent and expected to rise. Shifts in student demographics, particularly an increase in Hispanic students, have led to a focus on more inclusive instruction. Scholar and staff retention have also improved, with most students remaining within the Jumoke Academy family and nearly all certified staff returning. He concluded by stressing the importance of building relationships and creating a sense of belonging and continuity for both students and staff. Looking ahead, he expressed aspirations for continued growth, including the possibility of adding a high school track to retain students longer. The school has also seen a sharp decline in severe behavioral incidents requiring intervention, thanks to effective tools and strategies. With this progress, the school is now shifting its focus toward meeting students' academic needs and providing stronger learning support.

- SMaRT – Dean Pamela Barry, Interim Principal

Pamela Barry, the Dean at Jumoke Academy Honors Science, Math, and Research Technology, provided updates and shared goals for the school year while filling in for Principal Kashay Green. She celebrated strong attendance trends, including several days with one hundred percent scholar attendance, and emphasized ongoing efforts to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance. Engagement strategies such as dress-down days and pizza incentives are being used to encourage participation. Staffing began on a positive note this year, although the school has historically faced a twenty-eight percent turnover rate, mainly due to credentialing challenges and staff relocations. Despite the loss of some key team members, new hires are receiving support through mentorship and professional development. Enrollment remains steady, typically ranging between one hundred forty and one hundred fifty scholars, though there is a consistent drop-off after fifth grade due to high school pipeline opportunities. To retain students, the school is expanding advanced academic offerings such as Spanish and Algebra and integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics across all subjects. Academic growth, especially in reading, is a top priority. Instructional coaches are working closely with new staff to strengthen curriculum delivery. With full staffing, the school is implementing enrichment blocks and small group instruction to both challenge and support scholars. Efforts are also underway to motivate students for testing and increase hands-on, cross-curricular Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics activities. Weekly meetings with the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics coordinator and enhanced professional development are helping to boost staff and scholar engagement. Overall, Jumoke Academy Honors Science, Math, and Research Technology is focused on improving academics, behavior, and attendance, while rewarding growth and expanding enrichment and intervention programs.

Human Resources Manager

Mrs. Ana Marcil

- Demographics on Certified Staff

Ana Marcil, the Human Resources Manager, presented updates on certification, recruitment, and retention, emphasizing the district's goal of achieving one hundred

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percent compliance as outlined in the Corrective Action Plan. She stressed that certification is especially critical for teaching staff, who must meet educational qualifications and demonstrate instructional ability during the hiring process. Current staff demographics show that eighty-one percent are female, and nineteen percent are male, with ethnic representation including sixty percent African American, twenty-six percent Caucasian, ten percent Hispanic or Latino, and four percent Asian. In terms of education, forty-seven percent of staff hold either bachelor's or master's degrees, and six percent have doctorates. Certification types among staff vary nineteen percent are professionally certified, twenty-two percent hold initial certifications, seventeen percent have provisional certifications, six percent hold Charter School Educator Permits, two percent have Durational Shortage Area Permits, two percent have ninety-day authorizations, and thirty percent are long-term substitutes. Superintendent Monroe expressed concern about reaching full certification, but Ana Marcil clarified that while one hundred percent may not be feasible under state standards, alternative authorizations are recognized. However, substitutes must meet requirements within ninety days or be reassigned, and long-term substitutes are limited to sixty days of instruction. Regarding retention, seventy-five percent of certified staff have been with the organization for zero to three years, fifteen percent for four to seven years, eight percent for eight to eleven years, and three percent for twelve to fifteen years. The district ended the 2024–2025 school year with ninety-six percent certification compliance, and efforts are ongoing to ensure staff continue progressing toward full certification.

PART C

- Legal Counsel Review
Working Lunch / Legal Briefs

Attorney Christine Chinni
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Attorney Christine Chinni addressed the importance of maintaining transparency and integrity within Jumoke Academy, particularly considering its history. She emphasized that board members must avoid any conflicts of interest or nepotism and should not use their positions to benefit themselves or their families. She also explained the impact of the Freedom of Information Act, which now applies to the board and includes documents, meetings, and emails. This means that any written communication related to academy business could be publicly disclosed, making it essential to be cautious with written correspondence. To reduce risk, Attorney Christine Chinni recommended that board members use official Jumoke Academy email addresses exclusively for school-related matters. Board Chair Gray supported this recommendation and proposed immediate implementation, although Superintendent Monroe noted that while the emails had been set up previously, they had not been used. Attorney Christine Chinni stressed that separating personal and professional communications is important, especially if the board ever faces an investigation. She clarified that personal emails are not automatically protected just because they are private; protection only applies if the content is privileged. She also addressed misunderstandings about federal changes to Diversity, Equity, and

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Inclusion policies, affirming that Connecticut's anti-discrimination laws remain strong and unchanged. Additionally, she explained that while Jumoke Academy provides special education services, the sending districts are responsible for reimbursement. Attorney Christine Chinni concluded by acknowledging the broader challenges in Human Resources across education, particularly staff turnover and the specific rules that apply to certified personnel.

- Q & A

- Board Chair Closing Remarks
 - Closing comments made by S. Gray, thanking all who attended at 1:33 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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