

Hatikvah International Academy Charter School

7 Lexington Avenue

East Brunswick, NJ

MEETING Minutes

September 25, 2025

7:00 P.M. Meeting

Meeting called to order by Daniel Gresack at 7:01 PM.

Sunshine Law Notice: The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the rights of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of the public bodies at which any business affecting their interest is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Hatikvah International Academy Charter School has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Asbury Park Press and the Courier-Post.

| Name | Title | Voting/Non -Voting | Present | Absent |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Mr. Daniel Gresack | President | Voting | X | |
| Mr. Harish Hathiramani | Vice President | Voting | X | |
| Mr. Marc Herman | Trustee | Voting | | X |
| Ms. Shawntell Manning | Trustee | Voting | X | |
| Mr. Arie Behar | Trustee | Voting | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | Voting | X | |
| Ms. Cristal Sharma | Trustee | Voting | X | |
| Ms. Amanda Rosenberg | Director; Ex Officio | Non-voting | X | |
| Dr. Marcia Grayson | SBA; Ex Officio | Non-voting | X | |
| Ms. Claudia Fiel | Teacher Representative; Recording Secretary | Non-voting | X | |
| Mr. Jeffrey Villanueva | Teacher Representative | Non-voting | X | |

Pledge of Allegiance: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United State of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HIB Investigations: None

Director's Report: The school year began on a strong, positive note with smooth operations, well-prepared facilities, and a warm, focused school climate. Instruction is already underway with high expectations and inclusive, engaging classrooms. The PTO played a key role in creating a joyful start through staff and family events. Back to School Night was a success, with upcoming opportunities for parent visitations. Enrollment updates will be shared.

SBA Report: Update on capital maintenance projects; audit; school's award status; and non-profit security grant submission.

Correspondence Received on 9/19/25:

Good afternoon,

As you may have heard, the United States Department of Education (USED) recently notified states that it had discontinued the National Blue Ribbon Schools program. The attached letter was shared with Chief State School Officers on August 29, 2025. Your school, **Hatikvah International Academy Charter School, was one of the nine public schools nominated and certified by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) as a 2025 nominee.** Due to the termination of the national program, your school will not be recognized by USED, and there will be no national ceremony this year. **To acknowledge the exemplary performance by your school that earned your nomination, the NJDOE would like to honor your school at a New Jersey State Board of Education meeting this fall.** We will be following up with the details and timing in the next week or two. At this time, we wanted to let you know that we are working on a way to honor your school's performance and the work that has been done over the last year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Thank you,
Jessica Merville

Jessica Merville
She/her/hers
Director, Office of Performance Management
New Jersey Department of Education
100 Riverview Plaza | Trenton, NJ 08625

Public Discussion: This portion of the meeting is open to members of the public for the purpose of addressing resolutions on this agenda or other matters. Members of the public who have requested to speak prior to the meeting will be recognized by the chair first. Each speaker will be given three (3) minutes, for a period of fifteen (15) minutes; and then time permitting, other public comment limited to three (3) minutes per speaker will be allowed, until the fifteen (15) minute period transpires. All speakers are asked to state their full name, spell their last name, group affiliation, if appropriate, and provide their address. **Issues raised by members of the public may or may not be responded to by the Board.** All comments will be considered, and a response will be forthcoming if and when appropriate. The Board asks that members of the public be courteous and respectful of the rights of other individuals when speaking. Specifically, comments regarding students and employees of the Board are discouraged, and the Board and the Administration will not respond to them. Students and employees have specific legal rights afforded to them by the laws of New Jersey. The Board is not responsible and is not liable for any comments made by members of the public. Members of the public should consider their comments in light of the legal rights of those affected or identified in their comments. Members of the public are reminded that they are legally responsible and liable for their comments.

No public present.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEES

Financial Committee:

Chairperson: Mr. Daniel Gresack and Mr. Marc Herman
Administrative Liaison: Dr. Marcia Grayson

Education Committee:

Chairperson: Dr. Dake Zhang
Administrative Liaison: Mrs. Amanda Rosenberg

Fundraising Committee:

Chairperson: Ms. Shawntell Manning
Administrative Liaison: Dr. Marcia Grayson

Nominating Committee:

Chairpersons: Ms. Shawntell Manning and Mr. Marc Herman

ITEM 1: Motion to approve the minutes from the August 21, 2025 meeting.

Motion: Harish Hathiramani

Second: Daniel Gresack

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.

ITEM 2: Motion to retroactively approve the budget transfers from 06/01/2025 through 06/30/2025 as presented.

Motion: Shawntell Manning

Second: Dr. Dake Zhang

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.

ITEM 3: Motion to approve the bills list dated from 07/26/2025 to 09/18/2025, with the exception of the payrolls and the TD Bank Charge backs, which are tabled to the October meeting, in the amount of \$759,756.50; to approve the Secretary's Reports dated 08/31/2025; and to approve the budget transfers from 07/01/2025 through 08/31/2025.

Motion: Shawntell Manning

Second: Harish Hathiramani

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---|--|--|--|
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.

ITEM 4: Motion to approve the following personnel items:

Certificated Personnel:

Melissa Giannios, part-time Speech and Language therapist, at an annual salary of \$20,000.00 adjusted for hours at a rate of \$82.50, effective as of 9/15/25.

Paternity Leave: Employee #82018184 (local ID) on or about November 27th with a return to work date of on or about February 19th.

Change in Status:

Nandini Prasad, part-time Physical Therapist, from independent contractor to Hatikvah employee at a rate of \$80.00 per hour, retroactively effective as of 09/02/2025.

Non-certificated Personnel:

Jennyfer Carreras, part-time School Nutrition Assistant, from 9/2/25 to 6/30/25 plus approximately 11 hours of paid training in August 2025 at a rate of \$15.50 per hour (estimated to be approximately \$12,000 annually adjusted by timesheets of actual hours worked); temporary long-term leave position as a substitute teacher assigner, at a rate of \$20.00 per hour, up to two hours a day, effective September 1, 2025 through December 2, 2025.

Contract renewals for 2025-2026:

Aanal Oza, Title I Paraprofessional, at an annual salary of \$4,766, retroactively effective as of September 2, 2025.

Aanal Oza, Paraprofessional, at an annual salary of \$23,260, retroactively effective as of September 2, 2025.

Substitutes:

Renu Dubey at a rate of \$125.00 per diem.

Phyllis Dalton, long-term paraprofessional from September 22, 2025 through on or about November 24, 2025, at a prorated salary of \$31,140.00.

Risa Hines, long-term replacement certificated teacher at an annual salary of \$64,148.00, prorated for effective dates of employment, on or about November 24, 2025 through on or about February 13, 2026.

Stipends for 6th grade camping trip:

Joyel Farges, \$750.00

Madeline Bellerio, \$750.00
Timothy Heckler, \$450.00
Melissa Plit, \$450.00
Hanit Mizrahi, \$450.00
Sarah Ciaccio, \$450.00
Jeffrey Villanueva, \$450.00
Stephanie Siegel, \$450.00

Signing Bonus: Award Amanda Rosenberg, Director, a signing bonus of \$2,000.00.

Motion: Cristal Sharma

Second: Dr. Dake Zhang

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.

ITEM 5: Motion to retroactively approve the submission of the 2026 NJ Nonprofit Security Grant for supplemental security personnel in the maximum amount of \$20,000.00 on September 8, 2025.

Motion: Daniel Gresack

Second: Cristal Sharma

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.

ITEM 6: Motion to approve the following school field trips:

| Grade | Field Trip Location | Date |
|-------|--|------------|
| 1st | Farm Tours. School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. | 10/22/2025 |
| 3rd | State Theatre New Jersey | 02/12/2026 |
| K | State Theatre New Jersey | 02/04/2026 |
| 5 | Count Basie Theatre | 01/28/2026 |

Motion: Harish Hathiramani

Second: Cristal Sharma

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.

ITEM 7: Motion to adjourn at 7:34 PM.

Motion: Daniel Gresack

Second: Dr. Dake Zhang

| Board Member | Voting | Yes | No | Abstain | Absent |
|--------------------|---------|-----|----|---------|--------|
| Daniel Gresack | Trustee | X | | | |
| Marc Herman | Trustee | | | | X |
| Harish Hathiramani | Trustee | X | | | |
| Shawntell Manning | Trustee | X | | | |
| Arie Behar | Trustee | | | | X |
| Dr. Dake Zhang | Trustee | X | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---|--|--|--|
| Cristal Sharma | Trustee | X | | | |
|----------------|---------|---|--|--|--|

Passed 5-0; 2 absent; no abstentions.