



# **BRIDGE PREPARATORY** **CHARTER SCHOOL**

Bridge Preparatory Charter School  
Application for Charter Renewal  
Submitted August 15, 2023

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**SECTION 1: ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

**Benchmark 1: Student Performance**

*Please provide a brief narrative to describe trends, strengths, weaknesses; a brief rationale for these data outcomes; and strategies the school is employing to improve outcomes for all applicable benchmark standards.*

*NOTE: Benchmark 1 will be completed and submitted by  
October 3, 2023*

*Note: The August 15 submission begins with Benchmark 2, below*

## **Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning**

### *Our Student Population*

The ability to read is not one that comes naturally to anyone, and many children and adults have had their lives altered by reading difficulties, which know no class, race or intelligence level. The schools that children attend make a difference in their reading and academic achievement. Research shows that without early intervention, the reading gap between struggling readers and their peers will continue to widen over time.

Estimates indicate that as many as 10 to 20 percent of New York City students have a language-based learning difference (LBLD), the largest of which is dyslexia. Bridge Preparatory Charter School (BPCS) is the first public school in the state, and one of several nationwide designed to serve and meet the needs of this group of students.<sup>1</sup> BPCS is a diverse community of learners that currently serves students from every zip code across Staten Island, as well as several from Brooklyn. A majority of BPCS students enter multiple grade levels below in reading, with many lacking basic foundational reading skills, and most of our students have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes one or multiple related services such as Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Counseling.

Our academic program and school design promotes literacy equity for all students with a specially designed, innovative learning environment. The research is clear that explicit and structured language instruction is valuable for all students, but is critical for students with language-based learning differences (such as dyslexia), those who struggle with literacy acquisition, and English language learners (ELLs).

Since opening, BPCS has been highlighted in many news articles and press events, as demonstrated by the following notable mentions:

- At the May 2023 meeting of the New York City Panel for Education Policy, NYC Schools Chancellor David Banks described his visit to BPCS, stating: “What I saw there was absolutely amazing - just an amazing body of work, and I’m thrilled to see how the school has continued to grow and is meeting the needs of...kids and...families. It’s an amazing place and if anyone has not had the chance to visit, I would encourage you to do so.”<sup>2</sup>
- New York State Education Commissioner Dr. Betty Rosa, who also visited BPCS with Regent Christine Cea, recognized BPCS on Dyslexia Awareness Day in 2023, highlighting the critical engagement being done around the foundations for literacy development that our school provides, the leadership from the ED, and the school’s willingness to engage with her and take her feedback around strategic growth in considering expansion to early childhood grades<sup>3</sup>.
- Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella highlighted BPCS in May 2022, stating “On Staten Island, we are proud to be the home of Bridge Preparatory Charter School, which is the first-of-its-kind public school in the state that is specifically designed to teach students with dyslexia.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/nyregion/dyslexia-programs-reading-schools.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://learndoe.org/pep/archive-pep-apr19-2023/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KPS\\_bwEADI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KPS_bwEADI)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/293-22/mayor-adams-chancellor-banks-comprehensive-approach-supporting-students-dyslexia#/0>

BPCS has also been highlighted and featured in many publications during our first charter term, including but not limited to: the *Staten Island Advance*<sup>5</sup>, the *New York Times*<sup>6</sup>, *Education Week*<sup>7</sup>, the *Wall Street Journal*<sup>8</sup>, *NY1*<sup>9</sup>, the *New York Post*<sup>10</sup>, and CBS News<sup>11</sup>.

To ensure that our program reaches our target population, we have a special lottery preference for differing learners, specifically students with IEPs that indicate dyslexia, an impairment in reading, or difficulty with/an impairment in phonological awareness and development. In 2022-23, 67% of our students were identified as students with disabilities (SWD), 40 percentage points higher than the enrollment of SWD in Community School District (CSD) 31, where BPCS is located. The majority of these SWD are classified with a speech or language impairment (SLI), learning disability (LD), or other health impairment (OHI); these classifications are associated with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities.

### *The Science of Reading and Structured Literacy*

A significant proportion of our students have language-based learning disabilities. To meet the needs of our population, our approach to teaching and learning is rooted in the Science of Reading (SOR). The SOR is an evidence-based and comprehensive understanding of how individuals acquire reading skills. It draws from extensive research in cognitive science, psychology, linguistics, and education to inform effective literacy instruction. The key components of the SOR encompass phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies. Research highlights that reading is not an innate skill but rather a learned process that requires explicit and systematic instruction. This research emphasizes the importance of teaching students foundational literacy skills in a direct and explicit way.

Structured Literacy best practices are directly informed by the SOR. Structured Literacy instruction involves systematic, explicit, and diagnostic instruction to address the diverse needs of learners. Educators utilizing a structured literacy approach continuously assess students' progress and adapt instruction based on their individual requirements. By identifying areas of difficulty and providing targeted interventions, students receive personalized support, enhancing their literacy development. One of the strengths of structured literacy is its inclusivity. Both students with and without disabilities benefit from this approach. For students with language-based learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, structured literacy provides a supportive framework tailored to their specific challenges. The explicit and systematic nature of instruction helps these students develop essential reading skills they may struggle with in traditional approaches. Similarly, students without learning disabilities also thrive under structured literacy instruction. The emphasis on foundational skills like phonemic awareness and phonics enhances their reading abilities and comprehension. The diagnostic aspect of structured literacy ensures that advanced learners are appropriately challenged, preventing stagnation in their literacy development.

The SOR serves as the bedrock for effective literacy instruction, and structured literacy aligns with its evidence-based practices. By integrating these approaches, BPCS creates inclusive and supportive learning environments where students, regardless of their learning profiles, can develop strong literacy

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<sup>5</sup><https://www.silive.com/education/2022/02/as-nyc-eyes-creating-new-schools-for-dyslexic-students-bridge-prep-on-staten-island-is-doing-it-right.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/nyregion/dyslexia-programs-reading-schools.html>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/new-type-of-public-schools-specialize-in-teaching-students-with-dyslexia/2023/06>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-new-york-school-wants-to-focus-on-children-with-dyslexia-11582136660>

<sup>9</sup><https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/education/2022/02/10/as-city-eyes-news-schools-for-students-with-dyslexia--one-charter-school-is-already-serving-them>

<sup>10</sup><https://nypost.com/2023/02/22/nyc-parents-speak-out-on-how-charter-schools-changed-their-kids-lives/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/new-york-city-schools-students-dyslexia-learning-disabilities-program/>

skills. The combination of explicit teaching, ongoing assessment, and individualized support empowers all students to achieve their full potential in reading and equips them with a crucial skill that will serve as a foundation for lifelong learning and success.

Each day, all students have three periods of our Structured Literacy Block made up of 1 period ELA, 1 period Orton-Gillingham (OG) and 1 period of Structured Reading. Writing is a critical component of Structured Literacy and is crucial to the academic achievement for all of our students. While elements of writing are taught within the classes in the Structured Literacy Block, it is not taught in isolation and writing activities, prompts and practice are done across subject areas.

### *Orton-Gillingham Approach*

As indicated above, the highly structured and multisensory OG approach to teach reading is critical to the SOR and to teaching Structured Literacy effectively to all students. OG is a specialized approach within the broader framework of structured literacy, which encompasses a comprehensive set of instructional principles for teaching reading, writing, and spelling to all learners, including those with dyslexia and other language-based learning needs. BPCS implements the highly structured and multisensory OG approach to teach reading. OG is an effective, research-proven approach to teaching literacy and improving reading skill development for all students in the areas of decoding, letter identification and phonological awareness. OG instruction includes explicit, structured language instruction, which is crucial for developing readers, ELLs, and for those who need additional support with reading, phonological awareness and language development.

At BPCS, OG is uniquely taught as both a separate class, where students are grouped based on their ability level, and infused into the core curriculum. Each student at BPCS receives a one-hour (60-minute) class period each day of OG instruction, which equates to a total of 300 minutes per week of direct OG instruction per student. Students are grouped in OG classes based on their reading readiness, determined by a Reading Readiness Assessment (RRA) developed in conjunction with the school's OG coach that focuses on literacy acquisition and foundational reading skills development. Each trimester, students are re-assessed to determine growth and monitor progress. Students move throughout groups fluidly based upon classroom and individual assessments. BPCS also administers the NWEA MAP Fluency assessment as an additional measure of identifying foundational reading skills. The daily OG period includes the following elements:

- *Warm-Up and Drills:* Students participate in warm up activities every day to practice their letter identification and phonological awareness skills prior to learning new concepts. Teachers then initiate visual and auditory drills, reading review, and other activities that emphasize multisensory learning and help prepare students for the next portion of the class.
- *New Concept:* After reviewing skills, teachers introduce a new concept that corresponds to one of the skills that students are working on that week, such as a new sound or letter pattern. Teachers provide an explanation of the new idea and show students how to use their coding skills to read and say the letter or pattern. Students then practice coding the new concept, followed by a reading exercise.
- *Reading:* Every day, students practice reading teacher-created stories containing words with both new and review skill concepts. Students also practice rereading and grouping phrases to develop reading fluency.
- *Spelling and Dictation:* After learning the new concept, students review spelling and dictation. This may include a short spelling quiz.
- *Activities:* Finally, students end the class every day by participating in activities aligned with specific OG skills. These activities are designed to engage students in hands-on practice, helping them retain what they have learned by building strong visual and kinesthetic associations with different concepts.

We have a robust collection of resources that teachers use to plan engaging lessons aligned to the elements above. Every week, teachers administer an OG-aligned assessment measuring student proficiency on the skills from that week. We also administer our RRA every trimester to measure individual- and grade-level progress. Please see page 11 for more information on the RRA.

All teachers at BPCS are uniquely supported in delivering and implementing OG instruction. In addition to a summer intensive training program, mandated for all staff, all teachers receive weekly personalized coaching and professional learning. BPCS partners with *Edwards Orton-Gillingham, Inc*<sup>12</sup>, to support and continuously train our staff. These direct coaching sessions include modeling, lesson planning support and individualized instructional strategies based on the needs of each classroom, teacher and group of students. Through this partnership and commitment to mission-driven and results-proven professional learning for our staff, BPCS is uniquely positioned as one of the only public schools in the country to have a teaching staff fully trained under the guidance of an Accredited OG Training Fellow from the OG Academy (OGA). The OG coach meets with teachers on a weekly basis to provide feedback and support with lesson planning and instruction. BPCS has also developed a practicum program, that creates avenues for teacher certification in the OG approach, thus ensuring a sustainable, expertly-trained future for the BPCS educational community. See page 31 for more information on OG training and professional learning.

In addition to the OG approach, BPCS uses a range of curricular and instructional resources to support our students and meet the diverse learning needs of our population. The following section describes our approach to curriculum at BPCS, including how structured literacy principles, strategies and foundational skills are integrated across our entire instructional program.

## 1. Curriculum

### *a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the CCLS.*

BPCS offers a rigorous curriculum aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLs) and designed to serve the diverse needs of our neurodiverse student body. In addition to core academic classes, students in all grades are provided with class periods designed to support the development of the whole child, including visual art, physical education, social-emotional learning (SEL) and in 2023-2024, a STEM class. Each class is offered to students one time a week.

Research indicates that students with learning differences learn best from a variety of instructional approaches that address their individual needs and strengths. In this section, we describe our curricular resources and the adjustments we have made to these resources in our first charter term, followed by a description of our approach to interdisciplinary literacy.

#### *Curricular Resources*

Please see the following table for a list of the core curricula used at BPCS.

Curricular Resources	
ELA	HMH Into Reading
Math	enVision
Science	HMH Science Dimensions
Social Studies/Humanities	HMH Into Social Studies

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<sup>12</sup> Formerly known as Literacy for Life, Inc.

Social-Emotional Learning	Leader in Me
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### *Structured Literacy*

As part of our school wide focus on literacy, all students attend at least one period each of OG and ELA every day. In addition, literacy-based skills are integrated throughout each subject, giving students the chance to reinforce and build their skills frequently. The specific components of our literacy-based approach include:

- *Daily OG*: As described on page 5, all students attend a daily standalone OG class. Teachers also use OG components in all subjects as part of our school model. In 2022-23, we adjusted the schedule to allow more time for OG class in response to performance data and feedback from teachers. All students now receive a full hour of standalone OG instruction every day.
- *ELA*: In ELA, teachers use HMH Into Reading, a comprehensive, evidence-based curriculum grounded in phonemic awareness and phonics. The program is differentiated by design, providing our teachers with resources to help each student achieve their literacy goals.
- *Writing*: As a key pillar of structured literacy, writing is incorporated into all content areas. Teachers use materials from HMH Into Reading and The Writing Revolution (TWR), a comprehensive program that focuses on the development of writing skills for students of all ages. The approach is based on the Hochman Method, a set of research-backed writing strategies that are explicitly taught and sequenced to help students improve their writing ability across subjects. The Hochman Method is beneficial for students with learning disabilities as it provides them with a structured and systematic way to learn the writing process, breaking it down into smaller and more manageable parts. The focus on consistent writing practice, along with explicit and aligned instruction, helps build the confidence and fluency of all learners, including students with learning disabilities, leading to improvement in their writing skills. Importantly, the approach is designed to be embedded across curricular areas, aligning with our interdisciplinary approach.
- *Math, Science, and Specials*: In all classes at BPCS, teachers use literature as the starting point for every lesson. For example, during a math unit on the concept of doubling, the teacher introduced the content with a book called *It Takes Two*. In science and social studies, students participate in at least one unit using fiction and non-fiction texts that are further explored in ELA. This approach has led to strong science outcomes, higher than both the district and state averages: in 2021-22, 76% of Grade 4 students were proficient on the NYS science test.

*b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.*

The process of creating, revising, and getting feedback on unit and lesson plans at the school is structured in our daily and weekly schedule. All teachers have a daily preparation period and weekly collaborative planning time, allowing time to create and revise lesson plans in teaching pairs. All lesson plans must include learning objectives, standards met, differentiation strategies, activities, academic vocabulary, multisensory components, and success criteria. Assessments, including exit tickets, are required in all lessons, reflecting our commitment to data-driven instruction. Grade-level team leaders offer support to teachers in aligning their lesson plans with the GRR approach, and the OG coach and Dean of Specialized Instruction work with teachers to incorporate OG elements into lessons. The lesson plans are submitted on Google Drive every Monday, and the academic leadership team provides feedback on the plans as needed. In 2023-2024, the Math Coach and Speech and Language Pathologist will play a key role in working with teachers on planning lessons.

Within each content area, teachers plan engaging, thematic Creative Learning Extensions (CLEs), which are meaningful extensions of the regular curriculum designed to promote students' imaginative and



inspirational growth. These CLEs are meant to build a deeper conceptual understanding of content and enhance the standards-based curriculum.

*c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.*

Curricular alignment at BPCS is supported by our curricular mapping process. Every summer, grade team leaders develop curriculum maps, which include standards, learning objectives, academic vocabulary, differentiation, and resources. Teachers and grade team leaders continue to revise curriculum maps throughout the year during PL days and common planning. This process allows for grade-specific maps that show continuity from one grade to the next, providing vertical alignment. The maps also identify continuity between different subject areas within each grade. The mapping process is collaborative, encouraging teachers to discuss best practices and share resources. Our team approach to curriculum mapping ensures that all teachers are invested and engaged in the revision process.

In each subject, teachers use the same curricular program for all BPCS grades; these programs provide detailed progressions of grade-level content and goals that ensure our program is vertically aligned. Our emphasis on literacy-based instruction also provides alignment: in all classrooms, a common understanding of foundational literacy skills and strategies allows our teachers to identify connections and build skills across different classes.

*d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.*

The elements of our program that support our differentiated model are briefly described below; additional differentiation strategies are described throughout Benchmark 2.

- *Integrated Co-Teaching:* Co-teaching is a cornerstone of our academic approach and one of our key strategies for providing differentiated instruction. All BPCS classes follow the Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) model, with at least one of the two teachers certified in special education (SPED). During class, teachers work with students in small groups and one-on-one to provide individualized support. When considering teacher grade assignments for the following year, we strive to have at least one teacher loop with the class to ensure that students' unique learning styles are continuously supported from year to year.
- *UDL:* Teachers use the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework to design curriculum maps and lesson plans. As part of that approach, all lesson plans are required to include differentiated strategies that proactively address different learning styles. Teachers identify the needs of each student and plan accordingly, offering multiple entry points for each lesson and ensuring that there are multiple ways in which students can demonstrate growth and mastery. UDL also helps teachers set and meet academic goals for specific students.
- *Professional Learning:* BPCS provides teachers with extensive professional learning (PL) opportunities that support the development of the skills required to deliver differentiated instruction, including analyzing student data, using appropriate instructional modalities based on student needs, and understanding the learning profile of each student. Please see page 31 for more information on our PL offerings.

*e. The curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised.*

*Curriculum Review and Revision*

The BPCS curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised, a process led by the Director of Teaching and Learning (DTL). Throughout the year, the DTL leads the BPCS Curriculum Team in weekly meetings to review student data and identify changes in response to the data. Grade Team Leaders also participate

in a collaborative curriculum mapping process every summer, during which they review each element of our curriculum and determine whether changes are necessary.

#### *Curricular Changes in First Charter Term*

In our first three years of operation, we used Math in Focus, following our chartered plan. However, based on assessment data showing that students were not making the same level of progress in math as they were in ELA and in response to teacher feedback, we identified that Math in Focus did not offer enough scaffolding for teachers and lacked a variety of resources for multisensory teaching, which is necessary for serving students with learning disabilities. In response, we introduced enVision as the math curriculum for all grade levels in 2022-23. The BPCS Curriculum Team identified enVision as the best option for our students because the program uses a problem-based, visual learning approach to support students in developing a deep conceptual understanding of math. In 2022-23, MAP assessment data showed that the percentage of students testing on grade level in math increased in every grade. On average, the percentage of students on grade level increased by 26% percentage points over the course of the school year. Based on the demonstrated success of this program we will continue using enVision going forward for all grades.

In the 2022-2023 school year, we introduced an additional resource, Math and Movement, as a strategy to target math proficiency by engaging students in a whole-body approach to learning math. In alignment with our school wide focus on multisensory learning, Math and Movement is a supplementary math curriculum that uses kinesthetic activities to engage students in movement while learning math. Teachers in all grades incorporate activities from Math and Movement into every math lesson and teach at least one official Math and Movement lesson each week. This practice not only supports math proficiency, but also provides students with an opportunity to develop body awareness and learn how to harness their energy in a productive and positive manner.

## **2. Instruction**

- a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.*

Teachers at BPCS use a variety of rigorous instructional strategies to maintain a high-quality academic environment in which all students have the skills to progress as learners. As previously described, we have a number of structures including lesson planning requirements, collaborative planning time, and curricular alignment, to ensure that staff share a common understanding of our model.

All teachers follow the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model, an instructional strategy that shifts the responsibility of learning from the teacher to the student over the course of a lesson. This approach generally begins with explicit, direct instruction as the teacher introduces a new concept, followed by collaborative learning and multisensory activities. Each class ends with time for independent work.

Small-group learning in every class is an essential strategy used at BPCS to provide targeted instruction that meets the specific needs of each student. This model is driven by frequent assessments, including MAP Growth and RRA. Teachers use data from these assessments to create groupings in ELA, math, and OG periods, identify areas that need to be retaught, and provide students with assignments to practice certain skills.

- b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.*

Our primary tool for engaging all students is through multisensory instruction, which is one of our KDE. Teachers use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic-tactile pathways in every lesson to enhance student

engagement and memory. This type of instruction has been shown to be especially beneficial for SWD and ELLs, as it provides multiple pathways for learning and can help to address different learning styles and strengths. For example, a student who has difficulty with reading may benefit from having text paired with images or spoken aloud, while a student with attention difficulties may benefit from incorporating movement into their learning. This not only helps to keep students engaged, but also creates a physical connection to the content that can help students with recall. By incorporating multiple sensory inputs, multisensory instruction makes the learning experience more accessible and engaging, leading to greater understanding and retention of information for all students, especially SWD.

### 3. Assessment and Program Evaluation

#### *a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic, and summative assessments.*

BPCS uses diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to inform instructional decisions and promote student learning. Within our specially designed program, assessments are a critical part of understanding where students are in their learning and determining what specific supports they need to progress. We use several assessments to measure reading, spelling, and other skills associated with literacy, as well as assessments for math, social studies, and science. Please see the table below for a summary of assessments administered at BPCS, followed by a description of how we use these assessments to drive our program.

Assessments 2023-24		
Assessment	Subject	Frequency
MAP Growth Assessment	ELA and math	Beginning, middle, and end of year
OG Reading Readiness Assessment (RRA)	OG	Every trimester
enVision	Math	End-of-unit
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH)	Science and social studies	End-of-unit
NYS Tests	ELA and math	Once per year
Mock NYS Tests	ELA and math	Twice per year

#### *NWEA MAP Growth*

BPCS administers the NWEA MAP Growth assessment (MAP) in ELA and math to all grades three times every year. The MAP assessment is an adaptive, standards-aligned test that tracks each student's current mastery of standards and their growth over time. The assessment is a valuable tool for teachers; data from the assessment helps teachers identify common misconceptions and standards that need to be addressed with the whole class, as well as create instructional groupings in these subjects. MAP also generates individual student reports, which teachers can use to create intervention plans as necessary. Our Accountability Plan includes three goals for the MAP assessment.

MAP data provides information on student proficiency as well as growth. In our first years using the assessment, we were focused primarily on proficiency data. As teachers and leadership have gained familiarity with the assessment, we are increasing our focus on growth data, which provides information on how much and in what areas students are progressing over time. This is particularly important at BPCS, which has a high population of SWD and other at-risk learners. Growth data is informative and useful for teachers serving these populations, as it helps them to identify specific areas where students need additional support and determine appropriate student groupings for instruction.

MAP data also informs curricular changes initiated by the academic leadership team. For example, the change in math curriculum in 2022-23 was driven by MAP data showing a difference in student growth between ELA and math. In the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, we are focused on refining our use of the MAP assessments to ensure that teachers are using the data it provides in the most effective ways.

#### *OG RRA*

As part of the OG approach, a core component of our program, we administer an RRA that was created internally in collaboration with our OG coach. The assessment is aligned with OG skills and provides teachers with data that determines student groupings for the OG period. The OG assessment is administered once per trimester.

After identifying several areas of overlap between the skills measured by the RRA and MAP, we implemented several changes to the OG RRA in 2022-23. Going forward, we are continuing to use the OG RRA as a fundamental component of our program, allowing teachers to constantly adjust instructional groups in response to demonstrated need.

#### *Mock NYS Assessments*

We administer mock NYS assessments twice per year as a strategy to familiarize students with the test format, practice test-taking strategies, and identify strengths and weaknesses. We also prepare students for state tests through daily exit tickets: in 2022-23, teachers focused on aligning formative data with state test questions so that students are exposed to the language used in state tests on a daily basis.

#### *b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.*

BPCS leaders and teachers use assessment data to inform every aspect of our program as part of our individualized academic approach. Teachers collect data throughout each day, as a natural extension of instruction. This frequent and systematic approach to data collection encourages teachers to use real-time information about individual student needs to adjust instructional strategies and identify additional interventions as needed. In our first charter term, teachers used data from the assessments listed in the table on page 10, in addition to observational data, class work, and exit tickets, to adjust student groups, instructional strategies, and curricular resources. This process is supported by the data team.

The BPCS data team, led by the DTL, oversees the assessment cycle and data collection process. Student assessment data is then reviewed and analyzed in curriculum and grade team meetings. Grade teams meet on a weekly basis, led by the grade team leader, to discuss trends in the data and identify adjustments that teachers can make in response to student outcomes. The DTL and Executive Director (ED) may attend grade team meetings to provide support with this process.

#### *c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.*

In addition to informing instructional strategies and student groupings, data analysis also drives programmatic changes at BPCS. For example, in response to MAP data from 2021-22, we introduced the enVision math curriculum and Math and Movement program, as described on page 9. We also extended the daily instructional time OG in 2022-23 in response to data indicating that students were not reaching proficiency in reading comprehension. All students now receive one hour of OG instruction every day; previously, students received 40 minutes of OG instruction.

While teachers and grade teams engage with student data every day in the classroom and in weekly meetings, we also emphasize student data during each PL day. On PL days, teachers are supported with the data analysis process through different opportunities facilitated by BPCS leadership as well as outside groups, such as the Core Collaborative. Please see page 31 for more information on our approach to PL at BPCS.

## 2. Supports for Diverse Learners:

- a. *The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students, including but not limited to: students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students.*

BPCS is the first and only public school in New York State (NYS) that is designed to provide an inclusive education for students with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia. Our students have a range of unique needs and strengths. To help our students reach their fullest potential, we designed every aspect of our program, from the curriculum and instructional strategies to daily routines, to maintain a cohesive, student-centered learning environment. Our differentiated design is reflected in our staffing structure, which includes numerous roles dedicated to providing interventions. This work is led by the DSI, who oversees all support staff. In the 2022-23 school year, BPCS employed 17 SPED-certified teachers, two special education teacher support services (SETSS) teachers, and three social workers.

Our students benefit from a specially designed school day that is slightly longer than the average elementary school which provides the opportunity for a range of activities beyond the usual classes to be offered to students and provides additional time for direct instruction, small group programming, targeted interventions and enrichments.

Class sizes at BPCS are smaller than classes at other schools in our district. The structure of our classrooms allows various members of our instructional team— teachers, service providers, and social workers—to work with groups of students and directly collaborate to use their specific areas of expertise. This means that each class is staffed by multiple instructional team members at a given time, resulting in a low teacher-student ratio.

We are continuing to increase our capacity for serving the needs of at-risk students with the addition of the Dean of Student Support in the 2023-24 school year. In the following section, we include a breakdown of the demographics of SWD at our school, followed by a description of the strategies that we implement to serve at-risk subgroups at BPCS.

In 2022-23, 67% of our students were identified as a SWD. Of these students, the majority have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) indicating speech or language impairment (SLI), learning disability (LD), or other health impairment (OHI); these classifications are associated with dyslexia and other language-based disabilities, aligning with our lottery preference. Please see the table below for a breakdown of the disability classifications among our SWD population. In addition, most of our students have other factors that place them at risk for academic failure: in 2022-23, 65% of BPCS students were economically disadvantaged (ED), 1% were ELLs, and 2% were homeless or in foster care.

Disability Classification	% of total enrollment in 2022-23	% of SWD in 2022-23
Autism	1.70%	3%
Emotional Disturbance	0%	1%
Intellectual Disability	0%	1%

Learning Disability	21%	33%
Other Health Impairment	11%	17%
Speech or Language Impairment	30%	46%

*Strategies for supporting SWD:*

- *ICT:* All classrooms at BPCS are ICT classes, which provide at least two teachers in each classroom, one of whom is certified in SPED. ICT allows teachers to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners and is one of our most effective tools for supporting our substantial population of SWD.
- *Daily small-group instruction periods:* Students participate in small-group instruction in every class each day. Our ICT model facilitates this approach.
- *Executive Functioning:* During the school day, specifically at the beginning and end of the day, all students are provided time to work on Executive Functioning skills with teachers, which is critical for all students, especially our SWD.
- *Response to Intervention:* BPCS follows a Response to Intervention (RTI) model that provides students with tiered interventions and serves as an identification and pre-evaluation process for SWD. This includes the following tiers:
  - Tier I (core): Schoolwide core curriculum rendered to all students with low student-to-teacher ratios, differentiated instruction and specialized interventions based upon student assessment data;
  - Tier II (double dose): The SPED teacher provides small homogenous groups of three to five students with a targeted double dose of OG instruction, offered three to five times per week for 20-30 minutes; and
  - Tier III (intensive): Intensive individual OG instruction rendered in small groups or one-on-one, offered five times per week for 60 minutes over 15-20 weeks, with frequent progressing monitoring by the SPED teacher and Pupil Progress Team (PPT). Students receiving tier III interventions are also scheduled for weekly meetings with our social worker in order to proactively address issues that may be interfering with, or a result of, their struggle with academic progress.
  - If students continue to struggle after Tier III interventions, they may be referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) to be evaluated for a disability. BPCS works closely with the CSE to ensure that the evaluation process is completed.
- *Multisensory approach:* Our schoolwide implementation of multisensory instruction is particularly effective for SWD. Many of our students struggle with sensory processing skills. To address this, BPCS has a sensory hallway where students can engage with sensory tools to calm down, re-energize, or build other skills; each classroom also has a cozy corner that serves a similar purpose. We work closely with occupational therapy providers and parents to determine the best strategies for supporting students with sensory needs.

*Strategies for supporting ELLs:*

- *Literacy-based curriculum:* As described on page 7, BPCS implements a literacy-based approach in which students have multiple opportunities each day to build their literacy skills. Through daily OG and ELA periods, teachers use multisensory instructional methods to support all students with literacy acquisition; this approach is especially beneficial for ELLs. Across the curriculum, BPCS uses multicultural literature to maximize a sense of belonging for all students and provide students with a chance to connect to the coursework.
- *ICT:* As described above, all classrooms at BPCS are ICT. This model supports ELLs by facilitating small-group instruction and allows students to receive individualized support with language acquisition.



- *Skills Enrichment:* Throughout the school day, students are provided time for Skills Enrichment (SE) where teachers provide targeted remediation and enrichment in response to student needs as demonstrated by in-class assessments and observations.

*Strategies for supporting ED students:*

- *Summer school:* In the summer of 2022, we introduced a summer program for at-risk students through the Summer Boost grant. The grant allowed us to provide 40 students in Grades 1-4 with daily ELA and math instruction and opportunities for enrichment for five weeks. We will host the Summer Boost program again in the summer of 2023, increasing our capacity to serve 46 students in Grades 1-4.
- *Academic intervention:* BPCS offers an after-school academic intervention period twice per week that is open to BPCS students. While the program is not mandated, it is open to all students free of charge. BPCS teachers provide targeted, small-group instruction in ELA and math during academic intervention.
- *After-school care:* We partner with the New York Center for Interpersonal Development (NYCID) to provide a fee-based after-school program for students. During after-school, students participate in activities and clubs such as chess, coding, and dance. The NYCID program is especially useful for working parents.
- *Connect Saturdays:* BPCS hosts “Connect Saturdays” each trimester for students and families. These events include learning extensions, such as workshops for parents and student-parent activities, and provide families with a better understanding of what their child is working on in school and how that can be supported at home.

*b. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.*

To monitor the progress of individual students, BPCS has a PPT led by the DSI that includes the DTL, school social workers, and grade team leaders. The PPT meets biweekly to monitor the progress of students receiving interventions. Classroom teachers may also bring specific concerns to the DSI and DTL for review with the PPT team to discuss potential interventions.

### **Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement**

#### **1. Behavior Management and Safety:**

*a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy.*

BPCS is committed to providing a safe, orderly, and nurturing environment in which students can achieve academic excellence and flourish socially and emotionally. We have a clear and consistently applied Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct that allows students and teachers to maximize class time and promote student learning. Our school wide approach to behavior management is restorative, with the goal of re-integrating students into the learning environment if an infraction occurs. When a student exhibits a behavior that has a negative impact on the community, the BPCS team uses a range of student support interventions, outlined in our Discipline Policy, to help the student understand and learn to manage their behavior. These interventions are in place to prevent the behavior from continuing, teach the student appropriate replacement behaviors, and reinforce when students are exhibiting positive behaviors.

We also implement proactive strategies to ensure that our students are supported with developing positive behaviors, and our staff works with students to help them understand how their actions can lead to positive or negative consequences. For example, BPCS has a monthly “bucket-filler” celebration, aligned

with a concept from the book *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* The book is based on the premise that each person carries around an invisible bucket containing their feelings; when the person is happy, the bucket is full, and when they are sad or upset, the bucket is empty. A bucket-filler is someone who acts in such a way that they are able to fill other peoples' buckets with their behavior. The bucket-filler of the month award is given to the classroom that exemplifies these behaviors and celebrated with a pizza party. Schoolwide, we promote positive behavior by rewarding students who exhibit behaviors that reinforce the Seven Habits outlined in The Leader in Me (TLIM) framework. These students earn tickets that can be redeemed for prizes, such as books.

*b. The school appears safe, and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment.*

The 2021 Annual Survey of Charter School Parents/Guardians, Teachers, and Students administered by the NYSED CSO showed that 98% of families agreed that BPCS provides a safe environment, 22 percentage points above all other surveyed charter schools. At BPCS, we are committed to maintaining a safe environment, free of bullying and harassment. We achieve this through consistent use of our discipline and DASA policies as well as proactive strategies such as our SEL instruction through TLIM, and our focus on conflict resolution. In the 2022-23 school year, we offered trainings in conflict resolution for staff and parents during a Connect Saturday session. Staff are encouraged to use conflict resolution strategies when addressing student behavior. BPCS shares space in a NYCDOE facility. We collaborate with our co-located school to ensure that the facility is safe and secure.

*c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination.*

BPCS maintains a safe environment free from harassment and discrimination. This is achieved through several methods, including the distribution of a Family Handbook every year. The Handbook includes our Discipline Policy and Code of Conduct. This document outlines the student support interventions that BPCS staff may use when students demonstrate behavioral challenges. For students that violate our school's community behavioral expectations, the policy outlines the appropriate disciplinary response. We strive to create positive working partnerships with students and their families; accordingly, we always inform parents or guardians of behavioral incidents. This allows us to best support students both in and out of the classroom.

We maintain compliance with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) with oversight from the school's Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC). The name and contact information for the DAC is shared with staff and families and is posted on our website.

BPCS is co-located on a NYC DOE Campus, in a building that is accessible for all, including individuals requiring wheelchairs. The space is compliant with all safety codes for school buildings. Regular fire and health safety checks are conducted. BPCS has systems in place for school lockdowns, evacuations, and sheltering sites.

*d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.*

As described above, BPCS has a number of structures in place to proactively address student behavior and ensure that classrooms are conducive to learning. All BPCS classrooms have a "cozy corner," which students can visit when they need a safe, calming space to self-regulate; we also offer a sensory hallway where students with sensory processing challenges can calm down or re-energize. These structures ensure that the classroom remains generally free from disruption. Each classroom is also outfitted with flexible seating to accommodate the various learning styles of students within the classroom. Classroom design,



specifically furniture and seating, is developed through feedback from students and staff to ensure that the learning environment provides the conditions necessary for learning to happen.

## **2. Family Engagement and Communication:**

### *a. The school communicates with and engages families with the school community.*

As reflected in our KDE, building strong and trusting partnerships with families is a critical factor in maintaining a positive learning environment. This has been a part of our school since before we opened: our name was born from direct conversations with parents and teachers, with the word “bridge” symbolizing the connections and transitions in a student’s educational journey. Our school design was and continues to be supported and informed by community feedback, specifically in the areas of instructional programming, opportunities for creativity, in-depth teacher training, and specialty programming. This work continues, with families and the community involved in every aspect of our school’s program. BPCS’ Director of Family and Community Development (DFCD), a member of the school’s Leadership Team, directly supports this key component of our model. The DFCD acts as the primary contact for families and engages families with the goal of increasing their involvement with our school. The DFCD maintains a partnership with the Family Association (FA) and supports the Executive Director in the coordination of events and establishment of external community partnerships. In addition to the DFCD, BPCS also has formal and informal structures to facilitate communication between families and BPCS staff, and we present a variety of activities and events in an ongoing effort to engage families. These strategies and tools include:

- *Schoolwide Messaging App:* We use a schoolwide messaging app to communicate with parents every day. Through the app, teachers can communicate directly with parents; school leadership also uses the app to make school wide announcements and share highlights from the school day. We introduced this form of communication in the 2021-22 school year as a strategy to maintain a high level of communication with families as students returned to in-person learning and continue to use the platform based on positive feedback from families.
- *Connect Saturdays:* We host Connect Saturdays for families each trimester, during which our families participate in a day of learning extensions, workshops, and student-parent activities. Connect Saturdays provide parents with the opportunity to engage meaningfully with their students’ learning and our school community. This targeted engagement opportunity is especially beneficial for working parents, who might not have time during the week to engage with students’ learning. The programming for Connect Saturdays is responsive to family feedback; in the past, we have hosted training on topics such as social emotional health, cyberbullying, and conflict resolution.
- *Family Association:* BPCS has an active FA that meets on a monthly basis. The FA is led by a president, who is also a voting member of the BPCS Board of Trustees (the Board), and has a vice president, treasurer, corresponding secretary, and recording secretary. The FA plans events and celebrations for our school community and gives families the opportunity to provide feedback and engage in meaningful conversations about our school. The FA facilitates a monthly “theme” that contributes to an inclusive community environment; for example, in February, we celebrated “show the love” month at BPCS. The FA maintains a website, which is used to communicate information about upcoming events and meetings.

### *b. Teachers communicate with families to discuss students’ strengths and needs.*

BPCS teachers have a systematic approach to discuss students’ strengths and needs with families. Teachers host parent-teacher conferences three times per year, in conjunction with the progress report period of each trimester. Teachers focus on growth during parent-teacher conferences, sharing MAP assessment data and OG progress. In addition to the parent-teacher conferences, families receive three report cards and three progress reports every year. We also communicate with families when students are

absent to ensure that students are supported in returning to school; after the first absence, a student's teacher will contact the family.

- c. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions.*

#### *Parent Satisfaction*

BPCS is committed to measuring and responding to family and student satisfaction. We have several strategies for doing so, including the New York City Department of Education's (NYC DOE) annual satisfaction survey and the NYSED Charter School Office's annual family survey. We also administer an internal survey for families and students every trimester, a process we formalized in the 2022-23 school year.

In 2021, we administered the 2021 Annual Survey of Charter School Parents/Guardians, Teachers, and Students, facilitated by the NYSED Charter School Office. Responses indicated a high level of parent satisfaction with our program, as demonstrated by the following sample of responses to the open question "why did you choose this school for your child to attend?":

- I chose this school because its focus on literacy and small class size. [My child] continues because he is now a confident reader.
- My child was struggling in reading and showed no interest. Ever since he started Bridge Prep, he has gained more confidence and looks forward to reading.
- Their mission and academic expectations as well as the close-knit community. The staff is truly amazing with an exceptional leader!

Further highlights from this survey are summarized below:

BPCS Response Rate: 28%	BPCS: % Strongly Agree	All Charter Schools: % Strongly Agree	Difference (percentage points)
The teaching quality at this school is very high	91%	72%	19
The school has social, emotional, and mental health programs and supports for all students	93%	61%	32
The school provides a safe environment	98%	76%	22
Classroom environments support learning and are generally free from disruption	93%	65%	28
The school seeks feedback from parents through surveys, meetings, or some other way	96%	76%	20

Family and community satisfaction is also evident in the community response to our program. Since the school's opening, numerous articles have been published highlighting the positive impact our program has had on families of students with learning disabilities.<sup>13</sup> As noted in the *New York Times*, city officials have

<sup>13</sup><https://nypost.com/2023/02/22/nyc-parents-speak-out-on-how-charter-schools-changed-their-kids-lives/>;  
<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2018/7/3/21105363/we-didn-t-have-options-a-new-staten-island-charter-school-aims-to-fill-a-gap-for-students-with-dyslexia>;  
<https://www.nyl.com/nyc/all-boroughs/education/2022/02/10/as-city-eyes-news-schools-for-students-with-dyslexia-one-charter-school-is-already-serving-them>.

worked closely with the BPCS administration to learn more about the school's model as part of the city's efforts to expand dyslexia programming.<sup>14</sup>

We encourage parent participation from our current families at monthly FA meetings, during which parents have the opportunity to ask questions, express concerns, and share ideas that school leadership then responds to. For example, in our initial years of operation, parents advocated for increased after-school offerings. In response, we administered a survey to identify the specific programs that our families wanted, and ultimately introduced a basketball program in partnership with a youth organization on Staten Island. This basketball program has led to an increase in parent engagement, with at least 50 families attending every home basketball game, and has also facilitated increased opportunities for engagement with our wider community beyond BPCS.

### *Student Satisfaction*

We measure student satisfaction through an internal, school-developed student survey that we introduced in 2022-23, focusing on the following areas:

- Engagement: *Describes the degree to which students believe their teacher and classroom foster a love of learning and a desire to succeed.*
- Academic Rigor: *Describes the degree to which students feel they are challenged by their coursework and teachers.*
- Relevance: *Describes the degree to which the student feels their learning is connected with life inside and outside the classroom.*
- Culture: *Describes the degree to which students feel their classroom is developed based on premises of respect, motivation, and organization.*
- Relationships: *Describes the degree to which students feel supported in academic success through positive interpersonal interactions.*
- Student Motivation: *Describes students' relationship with, and sense of ownership over, their learning experience. Themes include students' ability to work independently, their investment in their peers, and their confidence in their abilities to learn and grow.*
- Safety: *Describes students' level of perceived safety while on campus, in the community, and at home. Themes include drivers of conflict at school and responses to bullying and harassment.*

In the first year of administration, students demonstrated strong satisfaction with various aspects of our school, with a majority of students indicating that:

- They felt safe while at school.
- They felt that their teachers treated them with respect and care.
- They were expected to give a high amount of effort on their classwork daily.
- Their teachers pushed them often when the work was challenging for them.
- The work they did in their classroom required them to use their critical thinking skills as opposed to memorization.
- They believe they are learning and improving in their knowledge daily.

We also use student retention to measure satisfaction: from 2019-20 to 2022-23, the average retention rate was 86%. In our first charter term, we introduced several additional initiatives to support student satisfaction and encourage retention, including:

- *Student Government Organization:* In the 2022-23 school year, BPCS students formed a student government organization (SGO). The SGO is led by a student president and supported by a vice president, secretary, treasurer, and liaisons for Grades 4 and 5. The SGO is a valuable learning opportunity that helps our students develop leadership skills, encourages civic engagement, and promotes a sense of community.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/nyregion/adams-dyslexia-nyc-schools.html>

- *Athletic Teams:* Students at BPCS have the opportunity to participate in basketball, cheerleading, cross country, and track. These programs foster an environment of cooperation and teamwork, giving our students the opportunity to work together towards a common goal and represent our school with pride and enhancing their sense of belonging and identity within our community. Our sports offerings also provide an opportunity for students to develop social-emotional skills including resilience, perseverance, and self-control.

Additionally, we administer the Measurable Results Assessment (MRA) from TLIM to students, families and staff as a tool to start larger conversations about the school's growth in leadership, culture and academics.

*d. The school has a systematic process for responding to family or community concerns.*

BPCS fosters an environment of open communication where families and students can provide informal feedback and address concerns with teachers and leadership. In addition, we have a complaint policy that is distributed to families annually in the Family Handbook and outlines the process for filing informal and formal complaints. For informal complaints, the process starts with the relevant teacher or staff member; if the issue is not resolved, the complainant may bring the complaint to the DTL or ED. The formal complaint policy outlines a process for filing a complaint when the law or charter is violated. Families making a formal complaint can file a written complaint directly with the Board, which must respond in writing within 30 days of receiving the complaint or by the next scheduled meeting. If the complainant believes that the Board has not adequately addressed the formal complaint, the complaint policy describes the process for bringing the complaint to BPCS' authorizer.

*e. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among families, students, and school constituents.*

BPCS communicates school-level data to the broader community each year. We publish an Annual Report, which is available at the school and on our website. We also provide information on the performance of BPCS through Connect Saturdays, newsletters to our community, and in-school communication.

### **3. Social-Emotional Supports:**

*a. The school has systems or programs in place to support the social-emotional needs of students.*

BPCS offers a range of services and programs designed to support the social-emotional needs of our diverse population. We recognize that the social-emotional wellbeing of our students is integral to academic performance, and continuously invest in the whole child to support our students holistically. This work is led by the Student Support Team (SST), which includes BPCS' social workers. In addition to providing direct services to mandated and at-risk students, the SST creates responsive SEL lessons that are taught on a weekly basis. Our SEL program is supported through the structure of Morning Meetings and weekly SEL instruction and the use of curricular materials from TLIM.

Morning Meeting is a cornerstone of our approach to SEL. Students begin each day with a morning meeting, following the Responsive Classroom structure. During morning meetings, students practice skills such as active listening, empathy, and respect for others. They also practice communication and problem-solving skills by collaborating on group activities and discussing classroom expectations. Morning meetings provide a space for students to express their thoughts and feelings in a supportive, non-judgmental environment, which helps students develop a sense of self-awareness and emotional regulation. By beginning the day with a focus on these skills, students are better equipped to succeed academically.

All students receive weekly SEL instruction taught by a social worker. The curriculum for SEL classes is responsive to the needs of the students in that class and may include materials from TLIM and other resources. For example, when teachers observed that students in first grade were struggling to articulate their feelings, our social worker taught a lesson that supported students with expressing their emotions. We also partner with outside organizations to provide additional SEL support to our students. In 2022-23, we partnered with the YMCA, who provided an eight-week series of SEL programming for BPCS students during the weekly SEL period.

We use TLIM, a schoolwide program designed to teach students leadership and life skills. TLIM is based on the principle that every child can be a leader and encourages the development of self-confidence, responsibility, and positive interpersonal relationships. All teachers receive training in TLIM and are expected to integrate components from the model into their classrooms. Through this program, students learn strategies for self-regulation that impact positive behavior. In 2022-23, we partnered with a TLIM Lighthouse School on Staten Island, which provides mentorship as we continue to expand our use of the program. In the future we intend to pursue certification as a TLIM Lighthouse School. As part of this initiative, we are introducing a new design and focus of our daily Morning Meeting period (30 minutes) for the 2023-24 school year. The new design will integrate TLIM activities into morning meetings for all students. Students in all grades will read a book of the month during morning meetings that aligns with one of the 7 Habits identified in the TLIM framework.<sup>15</sup> Students will also participate in activities tied to that habit. The integration of TLIM in Morning Meeting aligns with our school culture of leadership and will provide students with an additional opportunity to develop literacy skills at the beginning of each day.

*b. School leaders collect and use data to track the social-emotional needs of students.*

Our social workers and teachers identify trends in social-emotional needs through frequent classroom observations and plan our SEL curriculum accordingly. The SST also monitors individual student progress during SEL classes and may refer students to the PPT if further support is necessary.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.leaderinme.org/the-7-habits-of-happy-kids/>

- c. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students' social and emotional health.*

We use students' attendance, academic, and behavioral data, as well as their participation in SEL classes, to measure the impact of programs designed to support students' social and emotional health. When behavior or academic data indicates a trend, our social workers may adjust the program. Our morning meeting and SEL program offer flexibility to address grade- and classroom-level trends in social-emotional needs.

## **SECTION 2: ORGANIZATIONAL SOUNDNESS**

### **Benchmark 4: Financial Condition**

- 1. Summarize the school's financial history, including the history of net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations, support for the academic program, and consistent operation within budget.**

BPCS is financially healthy. Throughout our first charter term, we maintained a strong financial condition, with a balanced budget and positive cash flow in every year of operation to date.

Our strength of cash/cash equivalents grew from \$729,680 on June 30, 2020 to \$7,798,199 on June 30, 2023 (unaudited). In 2019-20 and 2020-21, BPCS earned a financial composite score of "strong" and met the standard for working capital, debt-to-asset ratio, cash position, and total margin ratio, as indicated in the most recently available NYSED CSO Charter School Fiscal Accountability Summary.

Fiscal Year	Net Income	Net Assets
FY 2023	\$1,1637,050	\$6,704,027
FY 2022	\$1,860,219	4,150,970
FY 2021	\$1,561,071	\$2,290,751
FY 2020	\$381,311	\$729,680

We use the services of an independent NYS Certified Public Accounting firm to conduct a yearly fiscal audit of the school's financial statements. In each year of operation during the first charter term, our audit has resulted in an unqualified opinion and no major findings. BPCS anticipates that financial audits going forward will result in the same unqualified findings.

- 2. Describe how the Board provides fiscal due diligence and financial stewardship of the school.**

The Board has well-developed structures for financial oversight, including a Finance Committee and an annual budgeting process. The Board's treasurer chairs the Finance Committee, which meets monthly to review financial reports. Four trustees, including our parent representative and a charter school finance expert, serve on the committee. In 2022-23, the Board identified the goal of building our capacity for financial oversight; in response, we introduced a new trustee to the Board who has extensive experience working in charter school finance. The Board conducts oversight over the budget in comparison to actual spending, priorities and restrictions. The Executive Director is responsible for executing the budget, respecting the operating and spending parameters around the day-to-day decision making at the school.

A representative from our back-office provider, BoostEd Finance (BoostEd) attends monthly Finance Committee meetings and full Board meetings to present our financial data. In addition to attending monthly meetings, BoostEd supports our operations staff with accounting, student and staff records, payroll, and enrollment billing. On a yearly basis, the BPCS Board and Leadership Team collaborate with BoostEd Finance to develop and adopt the annual budget and cash flow projection.

**3. Provide several examples of how the Board has provided long-term fiscal direction to the school.**

In our first charter term, the Board has focused on maintaining financial health while ensuring that our program has the resources necessary to operate with fidelity to our charter. Several examples of long-term fiscal direction include providing appropriate support for our finance department, continuously planning for enrollment in our next charter term, and adjusting our policies to support teacher retention:

- *Finance department support:* Recognizing the value of using independent parties to assist with financial management, the Board contracts with BoostEd, a firm with extensive experience working with charter schools in NYS. BoostEd Finance offers expertise and allows for the segmentation of duties and responsibilities that would otherwise not be possible or economically feasible for a smaller school. We also built capacity for internal financial management with the hiring of a Director of Operations (DOO) in the school's second year, who works with two operations assistants. The DOO oversees day-to-day accounting processes, facilitates the district billing process, manages purchasing and distribution of supplies, materials, and services, and supports the ED with identifying school-level budgetary priorities. The DOO is supported by members of the operations team, including the operations assistants and school aides.
- *Continuous planning:* The Board engages in annual conversations about the future enrollment of the school, and updates multi-year projections on a regular basis. In 2023, the Board voted to add kindergarten to the grades served by the school. The board determined that this would be a fiscally-responsible addition that would help meet substantial demand for our program in the community.
- *Adjustment of policies:* The Board initiated an adjustment to our Family Leave Act and adjusted the additional benefits we offer our staff beyond the federal and state mandates. We made this decision to increase teacher retention.

**4. Describe how the Board monitors the school's financial condition on a monthly basis.**

The Board Treasurer serves as the Chair of the Finance Committee. On a monthly basis, the Committee reviews detailed financial reports. During Board meetings, the BoostEd representative reports to the Board about current finances including a comparison of the actual-to-annual budget, balance sheet, and long-term forecasting. At the mid-year point, or earlier if deemed necessary, the Finance Committee and BPCS Leadership Team determine if a budget amendment needs to be prepared to account for material changes in the school's revenue and/or operation expenses. In the case that an amendment is necessary, the Board reviews and adopts the updated budget.

**5. Provide several examples of the documents the Board reviews as part of the process to monitor the school's financial condition.**

The Finance Committee reviews a monthly financial reporting package prepared by BoostEd. The information in the package is also provided to the full Board during monthly meetings. The package includes:

- A Profit & Loss statement that compares actual results against the budget;
- A Balance Sheet as of the end of the month;

- A Statement of Cash Flows for the year-to-date period; and
- A Capital Expenditure report.

**6. Provide any additional information the school wishes to convey regarding its financial condition.**

Not applicable.

**Benchmark 5: Financial Management**

**1. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.**

As described above, we provide monthly budget updates prepared by BoostEd. These are rooted in an accurate and functional accounting system that provides the school and Board with timely financial updates.

**2. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget in relation to those objectives.**

As part of our annual budget process, the Board sets budget objectives aligned with our school goals. One primary Board objective is to maintain a sufficient cash reserve to ensure operations in the event of unforeseen challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the annual budget process, the Board also updates a long-term forecast to ensure that the school is actively planning for the future.

**3. The school has allocated budget surpluses in a manner that is fiscally sound and directly attends to the social and academic needs of the students attending the school.**

The Board allocates budget surpluses to support the social and academic needs of students and professional growth of our staff while continuing to strategize around the best uses of surpluses to support student learning and organizational growth. For example, the Board has allocated additional funds toward staffing and resources for the addition of Kindergarten, the launch of our Structured Literacy Practicum Center, additional of new staff positions that support student learning (Math Coach, Speech and Language Pathologist), various professional learning opportunities for staff including external conferences, and new math curriculum.

**4. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.**

BPCS maintains a Fiscal Policies and Procedures manual (FP&P) that guides school staff while meeting proper internal controls to protect our financial resources. The manual was last revised in July 2022 and will be revised again during Summer 2023.

**5. The school has complied with state and federal financial reporting requirements.**

BPCS has a record of timely compliance with state and federal reporting requirements. For example, our school has completed independent audits and posted them, as required, with our annual report. We also have a record of submitting the required final expenditure reports on time and budget amendments as necessary, for the management of our federal funds.

**6. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.**



The FP&P manual includes information on procurement, approval levels and amounts, check signing authority, handling of cash/checks, competitive bidding, enrollment/attendance tracking, free and reduced-price eligibility, and SWD/ELLs tracking and inventory. BPCS works with our audit firm on an annual basis to update the FP&P manual so that it remains compliant. BPCS has internal controls integrated throughout day-to-day activities. To date, our annual audits have not identified any deficiencies in internal controls.

The Finance Committee and BoostEd work with school leadership each year to update our FP&P manual as necessary. These policies and procedures are developed in close consideration of the NYSED Charter School Audit Guide.

- 7. The school follows generally accepted accounting principles as evidenced by independent financial audits with an unqualified audit opinion, a limited number of findings that are quickly corrected, and the absence of a going concern disclosure.**

BPCS is committed to developing and maintaining fiscal policies and procedures that ensure sound internal controls, fiscal responsibility, and accountability in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and adherence to the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) rules and regulations.

#### **Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance**

- 1. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.**

As of July 1, 2023, the BPCS Board of Trustees has ten members, with experience in education leadership, law, fundraising, IT, business development, teaching, psychology, and SPED. The Board includes a voting seat for the president of the FA, which we identified as a goal in our original charter application as part of our KDE of “a supportive network for families.” Four of these trustees are BPCS founding Board members with terms set to expire in 2024. In anticipation of this change, the Board Development and Governance Committee initiated a recruitment process in 2022-23, which included a survey of the Board to identify the areas of need. As a result of this effort, we successfully added three new members to the Board in 2022-23, with backgrounds in business management, charter school finance, and education. The Board is currently developing a succession plan to ensure a smooth transition as new trustees replace departing trustees. Our goal is to have eight members for our upcoming charter term.

- 2. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school’s mission and educational philosophy.**

The Board hosts at least two strategy sessions each year, open to the public, to set goals and priorities and monitor progress. The Board refers to our charter frequently to ensure that all initiatives are aligned with the school’s mission and program. In the 2022-23 school year, the Board identified ways to provide additional PL opportunities for teachers related to structured literacy as a priority, which is a goal identified in our original charter. As of the submission of this application, we are set to launch the Structured Literacy Practicum Center at BPCS as a first step in meeting this goal. The Center, which we plan to open in 2023-24, will allow BPCS teachers to work towards various certification pathways in structured literacy; see page 32 for more information.

**3. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.**

The Board has structures to maintain oversight, including the Governance Committee, Academic Committee, Finance Committee, and Executive Committee. Each committee meets on a monthly basis and reports to the full Board at monthly meetings. To support continuity between the work of the Board and school-based staff, a BPCS leadership team member serves on every committee and the ED regularly attends all committee meetings. The ED communicates with the Board on a regular basis, providing a written report of monthly activities for every Board meeting. In committee and full meetings, the Board reviews academic, operational, and financial data. The Board also uses task forces to address initiatives as they arise. For example, a Renewal Task Force was formed in 2022-23 in anticipation of our renewal application.

**4. The board regularly updates school policies.**

The Board conducts an annual review of the bylaws. Revisions for BPCS manuals, policies, and procedures are initiated by the ED and provided to the Board for review and approval. When necessary, the Board engages outside counsel for review of policies to ensure compliance with state and federal laws. In our first charter term, the Board revised the Code of Conducts and Discipline Code and Complaint Policy. The Board also revised the Family Leave provision in our Employee Handbook and adjusted the benefits package we offer to BPCS staff, decisions that were made to help support teacher recruitment and retention.

**5. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers.**

The BPCS Board has conducted a formal, annual self-evaluation every year since 2020-21 using a custom survey. Data from the 2021-22 survey showed that Board members wanted increased involvement in the school's finances. In response, we now invite our BoostEd partner to every Board meeting to present our monthly financial information. We also implemented a new practice of sending direct invitations for all committee meetings to ensure that Board members are able to participate.

To evaluate the school, the Board reviews progress towards school goals, including academics, organizational, and financial goals. All providers are evaluated based on a review of the services in their contract compared with the services being provided.

To evaluate the ED, the BPCS uses a customized evaluation tool that we created in partnership with Board on Track. In the 2022-23 school year, the Board refined the system to better support school leadership throughout the year and align evaluations with specific goals. Within this system, the BPCS executive leadership team is reviewed on a trimester basis, in December, March, and June. The evaluation process begins with the identification of goals at the beginning of the year, which are aligned to each NYSED Performance Benchmark. The Board's Evaluation Committee leads the evaluation of the ED. The ED and school leaders have the opportunity to earn bonuses based on how many goals they meet.

**6. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.**

All new Board members receive an onboarding packet that includes the Board bylaws, Code of Ethics, and an agreement outlining the role and expectations of both the trustee and the Board. All new members are trained by our board parliamentarian who is responsible for overseeing the rules, procedures, and

conduct of the Board. Each year, Board members complete conflict of interest forms. To date, there have been no conflicts of interest.

The Board follows a clear process for conducting and publicizing monthly Board meetings. Prior to the Executive Order<sup>16</sup> issued in March 2020, the BPCS Board held meetings at the school and publicized the dates on our website and posted them at the school, as well as in the local newspaper. Meetings were also accessible via video conference, and any Board member attending via video conference complied with notice and public access requirements. The public was also able to attend via phone and/or video conference. After the Executive Order issued in March 2020, the Board shifted to remote meetings held on Zoom. A link to the video conference meeting is posted for public attendance on the calendar on our website. All meeting minutes and notices are posted on the Board on Track page linked on our website. Our Board continues to follow all Open Meetings Law guidelines. On April 20, the COVID state of emergency order was extended in New York City. While this extension allows NYC schools the option to continue operating under the remote participation rules for public meetings, BPCS has returned to offering in-person Board meetings.

## **Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity**

### **1. School Leadership**

- a. The school has an effective school leadership team that obtains staff commitment to a clearly defined mission and set of goals, allowing for continual improvement in student learning.*

BPCS is led by our founding ED, who oversees the DTL, DOO, and the DFCD. This structure provides clearly defined roles for our leaders. The DTL oversees the Academic (Instructional) Team (teachers, DSI, Dean of Student Support, Instructional Math Coach, Speech and Language Pathologist and Social Workers) and the DOO oversees our operational staff (school aides and operations assistants).

BPCS is a mission-driven school that prioritizes academic and social emotional growth and increased literacy acquisition for all students; as part of this approach, all teachers join our school with a clear understanding of our vision and our hiring process is designed to reveal candidates with interest and experience in serving our population. We provide all teachers with PL that prepares them with the skills to deliver our differentiated, structured literacy curriculum; this includes extensive training in the OG approach. In our upcoming charter term, we plan to launch the Structured Literacy Practicum Center, which will further support teacher development related to OG and structured literacy. This is described on page 32.

- b. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and board members are clearly defined. Members of the school community adhere to defined roles and responsibilities.*

Please see the tables below for roles and responsibilities for the Board and senior management. Job descriptions for all staff members are available upon request.

Title	Trustee
Role	The Board is entrusted with the charter agreement by the Board of Regents and has overall legal, financial, and fiduciary responsibility to hold the school accountable to the terms of its charter.

<sup>16</sup><https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-2021-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency>

Responsibilities	The Board's primary responsibilities include approving the school's annual budget and strategic goals, ensuring that the school operates in a fiscally sound manner, and establishing and maintaining policies governing the operation of the school. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that the school is accountable for the academic success of its students, adheres to its mission and state and federal guidelines, follows the Performance Framework, and uses achievement and performance data to improve decision-making. Additionally, the Board facilitates long-term strategic planning, holds ultimate accountability for the school in its relationship with the Board of Regents, participates in the grievance process as appropriate, and provides support with public outreach and other services.
Reports to	Authorizer, Stakeholders
Oversees	ED

Title	Executive Director (ED)
Role	The ED is responsible for overseeing the management of the school and its programs and is accountable to the Board of Trustees.
Responsibilities	<p>The ED has the ultimate responsibility for every facet of BPCS, reports directly to the Board, and is responsible, in the chain of command, as the officer in charge of all school level staff, as well as ensuring a safe and orderly school environment and a caring and supportive school culture for all members of the school community. Beyond the accountability to the Board, students, staff, and school community, the ED has a substantial role in engaging, supporting and ensuring our families are significant partners in their child's education.</p> <p>The ED provides monthly updates including financial, enrollment and demographic data, attendance, student performance and achievement data, and staffing. The ED meets with the Board's Academic Committee to review data reflected in the data dashboard and each trimester, the ED reports to the Board on student achievement goals based on the Performance Framework. During the spring, the ED works closely with the school's finance committee.</p>
Reports to	The Board of Trustees
Oversees	The ED directly supervises the DTL, DOO, and DFCD.

Title	Director of Teaching and Learning (DTL)
Role	The DTL is responsible for overseeing and leading BPCS' instructional and academic programming. The DTL is a critical member of the School Leadership Team, responsible for assuring that BPCS delivers on our mission of providing students with a rigorous and student-centered school experience and providing teachers with critical supports to ensure success for our students inside and outside the classroom.

Responsibilities	The DTL manages the Academic Team, develops and facilitates academic programs and services, manages external academic-related contracts/partnerships, and supports the ED in the development of academic reports for NYSED reporting and charter renewal. Additionally, the DTL conducts teacher support and evaluation activities, develops and implements professional learning sessions, reviews and revises BPCS' curriculum, and collaborates with the Academic Team to schedule and implement various schoolwide assessments. Finally, the DTL uses various forms of data to track and evaluate academic progress towards the school's identified benchmarks, making adjustments as needed.
Reports to	ED
Oversees	The DTL directly supervises: Teachers, DSI, Instructional Coach (Math) and Dean of Student Support.

Title	Director of Operations (DOO)
Role	The DOO is a critical member of the organization and is responsible for both the daily operational needs of the school and supporting the ED in assuring that the school's mission and vision are operationalized optimally to assure success.
Responsibilities	The DOO is responsible for a wide range of tasks, including leadership and culture, finance, compliance and data, and operational leadership. This includes overseeing the daily operational needs of the school, supporting the ED in assuring the school's mission and vision are optimally operationalized, managing and promoting teamwork among staff, developing and implementing organizational policies, and researching best practices. The DOO also manages the school's finances, maintains bookkeeping records, manages purchasing and distribution, and attends Board of Trustees Finance Committee meetings. In addition, the DOO manages school compliance and data, supervises all student data entry, and coordinates with technology consultants to develop and improve IT infrastructure. Finally, the DOO ensures smooth school operations, oversees safety and health compliance, and manages special events, field trips, and transportation services.
Reports to	ED
Oversees	Operational Staff (School Aides and Operations Assistants)

Title	Director of Family and Community Development (DFCE)
Role	The DFCD oversees family involvement and engages the community.
Responsibilities	The DFCD serves as the primary contact for families. The DFCD plays a vital role in maintaining a steady partnership with our families by helping the FA coordinate school/fundraising events and school trips, student carnivals, and visits to seasonal events such as pumpkin patches. Another critical role for the DFCD is planning specific parent training, working with the social worker and teachers on staff to aid in their communication, and forming a nexus for families with local agencies to offer services to families.

Reports to	ED
Oversees	N/A

Title	Dean of Student Support (DSS)
Role	The DSS supports students' social and emotional needs to ensure that all students can succeed in the school's academic program.
Responsibilities	The DSS at BPCS will work with administration, staff, and families to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are integrated throughout every aspect of the school community, inside the classroom and out. The DSS will support staff in ensuring the consistent implementation of behavior management systems and schoolwide incentive programs, and analyze school-wide data to design responsive student behavioral and support interventions. The DSS will also model and promote positive classroom systems and work with Grade Team Leaders as needed to respond to student behavioral trends. This role will supervise the Student Support Team, composed of school social workers and agency-provided behavior paraprofessionals, to oversee the implementation of IEP-driven counseling mandates and behavioral support interventions.
Reports to	DTL
Oversees	Social Workers

Title	Dean of Specialized Instruction (DSI)
Role	The DSI is a critical position that provides teachers with appropriate and critical support to ensure success for students with disabilities, inside and outside the classroom.
Responsibilities	The DSI supports teachers through observations and coaching in the implementation of strategies and best practices related to supporting all of our students, including differentiation, modifications of lesson plans and materials, classroom organization and structure and behavior management issues that are manifestations of a student's learning difference. The DSI also works closely with our OG coach to support teachers' instructional practice in Structured Literacy (ELA, OG, reading and writing) to improve literacy outcomes for all students. The DSI manages external agency provided service providers (OT, PT, Speech).
Reports to	DTL
Oversees	Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP)

*c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place to ensure effective communication across the school.*

BPCS leaders maintain frequent communication with the school community at large via newsletters, events, and in-person meetings. We use a schoolwide messaging app to deliver relevant information to families on a daily basis. Through our school messaging app, staff can send direct messages to parents about an individual student; school leaders use the app to share schoolwide reminders and information; families have access to schoolwide calendars, events, and the school store in addition to the capability to translate into over 40 languages. We also communicate with our school community through the Bolt, our monthly newsletter, which we first introduced during remote learning as a strategy to keep our families informed and engaged. We continue to provide all families with a hard copy of the Bolt every month, which contains information on upcoming events, relevant school news, and highlights from each classroom.

BPCS leadership fosters trust within our community through transparent communication strategies and frequent opportunities to provide feedback. To communicate with teachers, the ED sends out a monthly newsletter that describes what school leadership is working on and previews upcoming events; relevant teacher resources are also included in these newsletters, such as classroom management strategies. BPCS leadership also supports transparency through our open-door layout, which allows our leadership team to remain visible and accessible to all BPCS staff throughout the day. Staff communication occurs via frequent emails and weekly meetings with school leaders.

*d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.*

Staff recruitment at BPCS is led by the ED in consultation with the Board, DTL, DOO and other relevant school team members. We seek qualified candidates that are adept in providing differentiated instruction and demonstrate interest in our mission. BPCS uses a variety of strategies to hire staff, including hosting information sessions for potential candidates, conducting outreach at networks such as Teach for America and the NYC Teaching Fellows, and conducting outreach at local colleges and universities that have strong literacy acquisition specializations. All recruitment efforts highlight our competitive salary and health benefits. In addition, the school's literacy-based approach attracts applicants.

Retaining quality teachers is a high priority at BPCS. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, our teacher retention rate increased, reaching 91%. To retain teachers, BPCS offers a supportive environment that values teacher voice and provides ample PL opportunities. All teachers complete a satisfaction survey at the beginning and end of each year; the results of these surveys inform changes to our program, ranging from the lesson plan format to our compensation model. Teacher retention is further supported by our competitive salary and retention bonus.

We follow an evaluation model that provides a clear structure for making decisions to remove ineffective staff members when necessary. If areas of weakness are identified during observations, teachers are given support to improve. If a teacher does not show growth in the area of concern, that teacher may not have their contract renewed.

## **2. Professional Climate**

*a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication.*

BPCS follows an organizational structure led by the ED with key leadership positions to support our school model. Our leadership team includes the ED, DTL, DSI, DOO, DFCD and as of 2023-24, the DSS. The academic program at BPCS is led by the DTL, with support from the DSI and instructional coaches. Our teaching staff includes general education teachers and certified special education teachers, teachers with dual-certifications in General Ed and SPED and teachers certified in Teaching English to Speakers of

Other Language (TESOL); notably, of 32 teachers, 17 are SPED-certified. The DSI is dedicated to serving students in special populations and works directly with related service providers to ensure that each student is receiving the appropriate support.

Our operations team is led by the DOO and includes four operations assistants and the school's aides. The operations team is responsible for the daily operational needs of the school while ensuring that the school's mission and vision are operationalized optimally.

Going forward, we are introducing a Dean of Student Support, who will oversee the BPCS social workers and report to the DTL. Please refer to page 29 for more information on this role.

*b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers*

Teachers at BPCS have dedicated time for collaborative planning during daily preparatory periods and weekly grade team meetings. Teachers are expected to use preparatory periods for collaborative planning, grading, and data analysis. Because all BPCS classrooms follow the ICT model, teaching pairs engage in collaborative planning for every lesson. During grade team meetings, teachers work collaboratively, using protocols to look at student work and trends in the data to make decisions about teaching and learning. In addition, teachers engage in lesson studies in which they collaboratively create a lesson, one teaching team implements the lesson while the rest of the team observes and provides constructive feedback. We have also implemented a school wide initiative called, “# Observe Me”, where teachers identify an area for self-growth around the Danielson Framework and invite staff and administration to observe them in that specific area and provide feedback.

As previously described, we also have a structure for biweekly PPT meetings to ensure that this team has dedicated time to review student data. These meetings are attended by the DSI, DTL, school social workers, and grade team leaders, and allow for discussions about strategies to improve student performance.

*c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students' needs.*

BPCS offers a variety of PL opportunities for teachers, reflecting our KDE of “extensive, supportive staff development.” Each summer, teachers participate in pre-service PL, which includes training on core aspects of our instructional program such as: OG, our standards-based curriculum, goal setting, differentiation, co-teaching, classroom management, TWR, and TLIM. Teachers are also provided PL on operational protocols, school policies, and procedures. We also provide staff PL around behavior management and trauma informed teaching. We have partnered with an applied behavioral analysis (ABA) specialist to provide classroom management strategies and an understanding around behavioral support. Given our instructional support model and through our unique partnership with our OG coach, PL is provided on a weekly basis for all teachers. Teachers also work an extra hour, two days per week where they are engaging in various forms of PL, either collaborative in nature or led by a member of the leadership team.

The PL schedule for the school year is determined by trends in student data, instructional quality, and other needs expressed by teachers or leaders. To meet these needs, BPCS utilizes internal and external providers for PL. In addition to our OG coach, one of the external providers we brought in for PL during our first charter term is The Core Collaborative, a professional learning organization that offers a range of resources to support teachers with the process of curriculum mapping, identifying criteria for success, and responding to student work to improve teaching and learning.



In addition to the PL offerings described above, we offer OG coaching to our teachers. BPCS contracts with an on-site OG coach, who conducts observations and provides coaching to teaching pairs. The OG coach also works with teachers that need extra support with OG and may provide real-time modeling during lessons and further mentoring. We are continuing to formalize this component of our program in 2023-24 with the launch of our Structured Literacy Practicum Center.

In our original charter application, we identified the intent to develop a center for teacher training. We are making progress towards this goal with the introduction of the Structured Literacy Practicum Center in 2023-24. This expanded PL offering will ultimately support our school in earning accreditation from the OG Academy (OGA); only 19 schools nationwide have this accreditation. The Center will also support individual teachers with certification in OG or dyslexia through the following pathways:

- Structured Literacy Teacher Practicum, which leads to certification as a Structured Literacy Teacher (C-SLT)
  - A C-SLT is a classroom teacher that is qualified to apply the principles of the OG Approach to modify and provide literacy instruction for the classroom of small groups. (Tier 1 and 2).
  - A C-SLT is recognized for having completed a supervised practicum over a minimum of eight months, in which OG instruction was reviewed and discussed in detail by the teacher and their OG Supervisor. Upon certification, Structured Literacy teachers can begin to lead PL seminars in the SOR and structured literacy.
- Dyslexia Interventionist Practicum, which leads to Certified Dyslexia Interventionist (C-DI)
  - A C-DI is qualified to provide 1:1 and small group (3 students max) OG instruction under the mentorship of an Academy Fellow. (Tier 3).
  - A C-DI is prepared to work with those students who despite appropriate classroom instruction are not meeting grade-level benchmarks. These individuals also work with and support classroom teachers in planning and implementing literacy instruction in their classrooms that meets the needs of all students. A C-DI is able to provide academic interventions in the form of 1:1 tutoring.
- Support Specialist Practicum, which leads to certification as an EOG Support Specialist (SS).
  - The SS will be able to assume the role currently held by Jill Edwards and EOG as the primary point person for teacher development, coaching, and training in OG at BPCS.
  - The SS will be the person responsible for running and managing all elements of the Structured Literacy Practicum Center at BPCS Charter School as it grows and develops.
  - The SS will be equipped to support the school and serve as the point person during the OGA Accreditation Process.

*d. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality—which includes a formal process for teacher evaluation geared toward improving instructional practice.*

Teachers at BPCS are observed daily by a member of the Instructional Team (DTL, DSI and in 2023-2024, Instructional Math Coach and Speech and Language Pathologist) the ED, and/or our OG coach. A majority of these visits are non-evaluative and are meant to provide teachers with immediate feedback and real time coaching. The instructional team also is able to use these observations/classroom visits to determine which teachers are in need of additional support and then tailor that support to individual teachers, classrooms or teams. This level of support has continuously grown during our first charter term and has been a primary driver of improving instructional practice and increasing teacher retention. In addition to these non-evaluative observations and classroom visits, all teachers receive informal observations that are part of the teacher evaluation process, which is led by the DTL.

The DTL also conducts a minimum of one formal evaluation for each teacher annually. During formal evaluations, teachers participate in pre- and post-observation conferences and receive written feedback aligned to the Danielson rubric. During our first charter term, all teachers were required to complete a portfolio at the end of each year that contained samples of lesson plans and student work and included a self-reflection summarizing their areas of success and growth. This process has been valuable as it shifts the focus of evaluation from one observed lesson to a more holistic evaluation of what the teacher has accomplished that year.

*e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.*

Teacher feedback is welcomed at BPCS. Feedback is obtained through a variety of methods, including formal surveys conducted at least twice per year and multiple informal teacher feedback sessions. For example, in 2022-2023, the ED led Teacher Focus Groups and the DTL held informal meetings with individual teachers to understand needed support and gauge satisfaction. Survey data has been used to improve our PL offerings and adjust paid leave time, among other things. We also refer to teacher retention data as a measure of satisfaction: in both 2022-23 and 2023-24, the teacher retention rate at BPCS was 91%, indicating high satisfaction with our program.

### **3. Contractual Relationships (If Applicable):**

*a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive management service provider.*

Not applicable.

*b. Changes in the school's charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.*

Not applicable.

*c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.*

When contracting with a service provider, the BPCS Board reviews contract terms and monitors the quality of service provided to ensure that services are provided as described in the contract.

## **SECTION 3: FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER AND LAW**

### **Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements**

#### **1. Describe your current NYSED-approved mission statement.**

The mission of Bridge Preparatory Charter School (BPCS) is to provide all students, especially differing learners struggling with literacy acquisition, with an innovative, student-centered learning environment that challenges them with academic rigor, builds their resiliency and fosters their academic progress and social and emotional growth. Our goal is to graduate students who are confident and creative learners prepared for secondary school and beyond.

#### **2. List your current NYSED-approved Key Design Elements.**

- A multisensory, cross-curricular instructional design
- A balanced approach to interdisciplinary literacy

- A student-centered school structure
- A supportive network for families
- Extensive, supportive staff development
- Connections to the larger community

Note: We are proposing revisions to the approved KDE. Please see Section 4 for more details.

**3. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school’s mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.**

BPCS is a mission-driven school and our entire community, including the Board, leadership, staff, students, and families, know and embrace our mission and KDE. All elements of our school are structured to align with and support our mission. We have remained faithful to the elements outlined in our charter and reinforce our school’s community-focused design through events such as Connect Saturday and FA meetings. The Board’s understanding of the mission and KDE is evident through its effective oversight of the charter, particularly in its recent actions to launch the Structured Literacy Practicum Center in 2023-24 and introduce kindergarten grades in 2024-25.

**4. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.**

BPCS has fully implemented our chartered mission and KDE. Please see the table below for a summary of our current KDE.

Key Design Element (KDE)	Example of How KDE Was Implemented
A multisensory, cross-curricular instructional design	BPCS uses the OG method, a multisensory approach to teaching literacy, as a cornerstone of our academic approach. All students receive explicit OG instruction in a daily period, and teachers use multisensory methods in all classes beyond OG.
A balanced approach to interdisciplinary literacy	All teachers are trained in OG and TWR and reinforce literacy skills which are implemented and infused into all content areas.
A student-centered school structure	We maintain a student-centered school structure through our ICT model. All BPCS classes are co-taught, allowing teachers to frequently work with students individually and in small groups.
A supportive network for families	Our supportive network for families is grounded in our FA, which meets monthly. The president of the FA is a voting member on the Board, ensuring that families have an active voice in decision-making. We also support our families by facilitating frequent communication between teachers and families, accomplished through the schoolwide messaging app.

Extensive, supportive staff development	BPCS staff receive extensive and highly unique PL, delivered on a daily basis throughout the year and for two weeks during summer pre-service. In our first charter term, we demonstrated our ongoing commitment to and development of this KDE through the development of a Structured Literacy Practicum Center, which will open in 2023-24.
Connections to the larger community	<p>BPCS engages with the Staten Island and broader NYC education community on a regular basis. Some of the organizations we collaborate with in support of this KDE are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staten Island Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Catholic Youth Organization</li> <li>• Pride Center of Staten Island</li> <li>• Eye to Eye</li> <li>• Superpower Mentors</li> <li>• Consortium of SI Charter Schools</li> <li>• Sundog Theatre</li> <li>• El Centro</li> <li>• YMCA</li> <li>• United Activities Unlimited</li> <li>• NYCID</li> <li>• The Reading League</li> <li>• National Dyslexia Association</li> <li>• Community School District 31</li> <li>• Staten Island Foundation</li> <li>• Staten Island Business Outreach Center</li> <li>• Staten Island Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• New York City Department of Education</li> <li>• Promise Project</li> </ul>

### **Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention**

#### **1. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter. If the targets are not met:**

In every year of our first charter term, we met our enrollment targets. In 2022-23, we reached our full chartered grade span, serving Grades 1-5. In that year, our BEDS day enrollment reached 242, which met our maximum authorized enrollment of 242.

#### **2. The school is making regular and significant annual progress towards meeting the targets.**

BPCS is located in Community School District (CSD) 31, which represents the entire borough of Staten Island. In 2022-23, 98% of BPCS students were from CSD 31. The enrollment of SWD at BPCS is substantially higher than that of CSD 31, with 67% of BPCS students classified as SWD in 2022-23 and 27% of CSD 31 students classified as SWD in the same year. BPCS also enrolls a higher population of ED students than that of CSD 31: in 2022-23, 65% of BPCS students were ED, compared to 61% of students in CSD 31. While our enrollment of ELL students has increased slightly in every year of our first

charter term, we are below the target for our district. We continue to implement the strategies described below to recruit and retain students in at-risk subgroups. In addition, we are proposing the addition of a lottery weight for ELLs in our admissions policy. Please see Section 4 for more details of this proposed revision.

- 3. The school has implemented extensive recruitment strategies and program services to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch. Strategies include but are not limited to: outreach to parents and families in the surrounding communities, widely publicizing the lottery for such school, efforts to academically support these students, and enrollment policy revisions, such as employing a weighted lottery or enrollment preference, to increase the proportion of enrolled students from the three priority populations.**

BPCS enrolls a proportion of ED students and SWD that exceeds that of the district. While BPCS is below the district in enrollment of ELLs, our ELL population has increased in every year of our charter term. Recruitment for all students is directed by the ED with the support of the DFCF. We recruit students by attending local community events and organizations and sharing marketing materials. All BPCS marketing materials describe our school's structured literacy approach and the support we offer for at-risk students, including SWD, ED students, and ELLs. The specific strategies we use to recruit students in these groups are described below.

#### *ED Students: Recruitment Strategies*

- Marketing materials describe our school's inclusive model and the support offered by the school, including Connect Saturdays and our athletics programs;
- Our ED, DCFD and other staff members attend relevant community meetings to distribute marketing materials; and
- Collaborate with community partners such as: Project Hospitality, the CYO, NYCID, and the NYC DOE.

#### *ELLs: Recruitment Strategies*

Our enrollment of ELLs is below that of CSD 31. As of the submission of this application, BPCS is not currently serving kindergarten grades. We believe that this puts us at a disadvantage, as many ELL students join a program in kindergarten and stay there for the remainder of their education. We are proposing to add kindergarten starting in the first year of our next charter term, and we anticipate that this will help drive enrollment of ELLs at BPCS. In addition, we are proposing to add a lottery weight for ELLs in our next charter term. To address our enrollment of ELLs, we introduced several specific strategies for recruiting ELLs in our first charter term, including:

- We hosted a Spanish-language version of a popular play on the BPCS campus and invited community members to attend the performance.
- We have initiated a partnership with community-based organizations on Staten Island, to help us sponsor the play and identify further opportunities for outreach. We believe that these partnerships will be a critical recruitment opportunity going forward;
- The ED facilitated recruitment efforts in neighborhoods throughout Staten Island and southern Brooklyn with high populations of ELLs, such as Port Richmond, West Brighton, South Beach, Rosebank, Tottenville, Sunset Park, Bensonhurst, and Bay Ridge. These outreach efforts included visits to local establishments, targeted mailings communication with community leaders and engagement with current BPCS families who live in these communities;
- We continue to strengthen our relationships with local organizations that serve ELL families, such as the Staten Island Immigrants Council, La Colemena, the CYO, and Island Voice, to ensure that these families are aware of our program; and

- All BPCS recruitment materials highlight the benefits of our multisensory curriculum and structured literacy approach for ELLs.

#### *SWD: Recruitment Strategies*

BPCS has built a reputation throughout New York City, especially on Staten Island, as a school designed to meet the needs of diverse learners, and families of SWD choose our program accordingly. When recruiting for students, we partner with local organizations that work with diverse learners to ensure that all families in the community are aware of our mission and vision and receive direct referrals and recommendations for placement from schools across Staten Island, private and NYC DOE schools.

#### *Retention*

As shown in the 2022 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard, the average retention rate for all students at BPCS to date was 87%. Notably, the retention rate for SWD at BPCS exceeded that of SWD in CSD 31 by 10 percentage points in 2021-22. Supporting retention is an ongoing process at BPCS that begins in our first trimester, when the SST completes targeted outreach calls to families.

As a school built to support the needs of students with learning differences, many elements of our program also support the retention of ELLs and ED students. Every choice we make, in and outside of the classroom, is intended to support at-risk student populations. This is especially important as we grow and continue to serve a significantly higher percentage of SWD than our district, city and state. A BPCS classroom is rooted in multisensory, research-based instructional strategies designed to target the needs of SWD, ELLs, and ED students. Our ICT model provides small group instruction that targets individual students' needs and differentiation and scaffolding to bolster students' skills, with two teachers in every classroom. Our SST provides push-in and pull-out social emotional instruction to further provide targeted intervention. Our school social workers provide students with behavioral intervention and support, in addition to outreach to families dealing with grief, relocation, trauma, and other familial affairs that impact student learning.

Over the course of our first charter term, BPCS has established positive relationships and partnerships with community-based organizations across Staten Island that allow us to support students outside of the classroom.

- 4. The school has implemented a systematic process for evaluating recruitment and outreach strategies and program services for each of the three categories of students, and makes strategic improvements as needed.**

BPCS reviews annual enrollment data in comparison with our district and prior years of data to evaluate our recruitment strategies for ELLs, SWD, and ED students. We have historically met or exceeded the target for our district for enrollment of SWD and ED students, indicating that the comprehensive recruitment strategies described above are effective. We continue to expand our recruitment efforts for ELLs and have also proposed to add a lottery weight for ELLs.

### **Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance**

- 1. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter including, but not limited to those related to student admissions and enrollment; FOIL and Open Meetings Law; protecting the rights of students and employees; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health and safety requirements.**

The BPCS Board of Trustees ensures compliance with applicable state and federal laws by following the requirements of the Board bylaws and the school's charter. The Board reviews and approves updates to school policies regularly to ensure that we are in compliance. In our first charter term, we revised our hiring policy to ensure that new hires are fingerprinted and approved in the NYSED TEACH system prior to working at the school. In addition, the Board and staff periodically review the school's charter to ensure compliance.

**2. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.**

No legal issues occurred in the first charter term.

**3. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.**

We requested and received approval from the NYSED CSO for the following non-material charter revisions:

- Enrollment increases in both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years;
- Change to the arrival and dismissal times;
- Adjustment to key design element ("A Student-Centered School Structure") to remove the number of minutes referenced; and
- Change to enrollment/admissions policy to allow for a preference for students with IEPs that indicate they have a LBLD.

#### **SECTION 4: CHARTER REVISIONS**

With this renewal application, BPCS is submitting revision requests for the following:

Admissions Policy  
Proposed Enrollment  
Discipline Policy  
Organizational Chart  
Accountability Goals  
Key Design Elements  
Calendar and Schedule  
Educational Plan

## Cover Letter

New York State Board of Regents  
State Education Department Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

August 15, 2023:

To the Board of Regents:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School (BPCS), I am writing to request consideration of the BPCS Application for Charter Renewal. BPCS opened for operation in August 2019 and currently serves students in first through fifth grade. BPCS is designed to support students with language-based learning challenges, and offers a lottery preference for students with dyslexia, an impairment in reading or difficulties with/an impairment in phonological awareness skills and development.

Students at BPCS receive daily Orton-Gillingham instruction and differentiated support to help them reach rigorous academic goals. As the only charter school with a program designed to serve these students, our school offers a vital option for families in Community School District 31.

If renewed, we plan to continue building our program through the addition of kindergarten as well as a teacher training program for Orton-Gillingham. This will allow BPCS to serve more students who need our program and train more teachers to support students with language-based learning challenges.

Thank you for your consideration of our application for renewal.

Sincerely,

Laurel Wedinger-Gyimesi

Chair, Board of Trustees  
Bridge Preparatory Charter School



# Attachments

*Note: attachments are submitted through separate individual submissions in the portal. They are not part of the narrative document, however we have included them here for ease of review.*

The following attachments are included in the next section of this document for your review:

- A. School Calendar
- H. Organizational Chart
- G. Board of Trustees Information
- K. Projected Enrollment Table
- M. Fiscal Impact Table
- N. Innovative Narrative

We will also submit these additional attachments with the application in August:

- [B. Master school schedule](#)
  - *We are waiting on this as of July 17*
- [C. Complaint policy](#)
- [D. Student discipline policy/code of conduct and DASA Policy and Statement from school's attorney regarding discipline policy](#)
  - *Note: the revised version of this is submitted separately. We are required to submit the current version here.*
  - *Requested letter from Susan on July 17.*
- [J. Enrollment and Admissions Policy \(current, authorizer approved version\)](#)
  - *Note: the revised version of this is submitted separately. We are required to submit the current version here.*
- [E. Proposed five-year budget](#)

## Attachment A: School Calendar

BPCS 2024-25 Calendar (Draft)

· 715 Ocean Terrace · Staten Island, NY 10301 · 718-274-3437 ·

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

17-21 Winter Break - School Closed

15 Instructional Days

March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

31 Eid-al-Fitr - School Closed

20 Instructional Days

April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

21 Easter Monday - School Closed

21-25 Spring Break - School Closed

17 Instructional Days

May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	20	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

26 Memorial Day - School Closed

21 Instructional Days

June 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

19 Juneteenth - School Closed

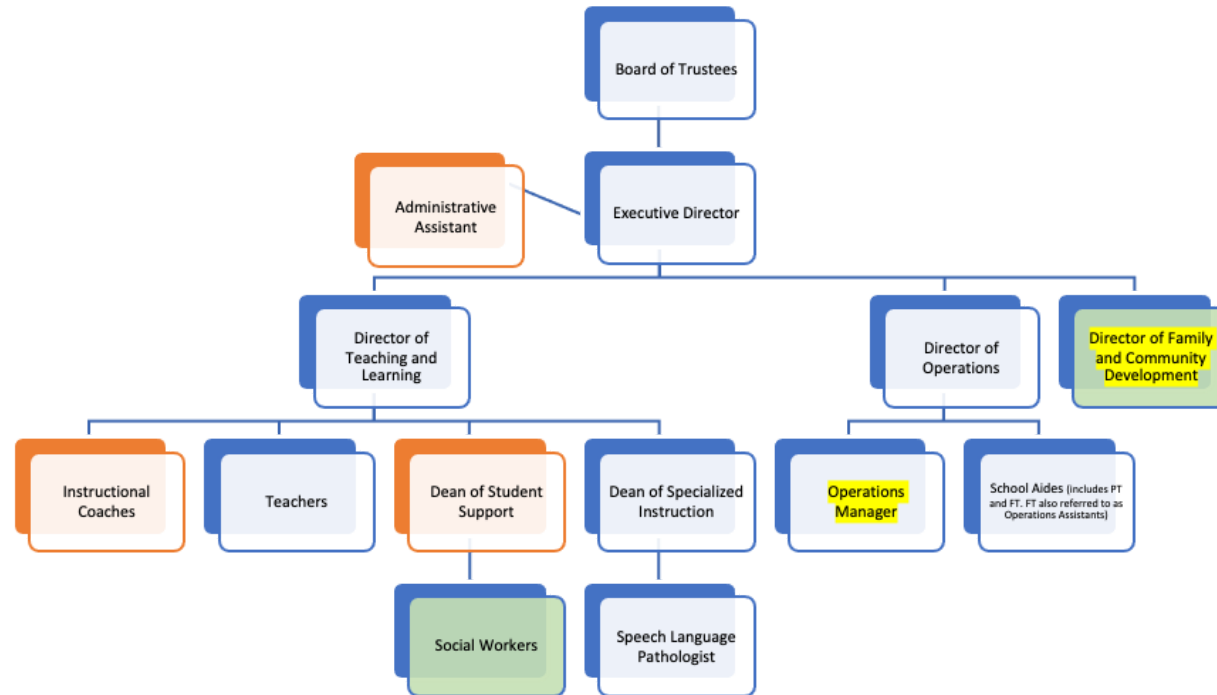
25 Last day of school

17 Instructional Days

186 Total Instructional Days

## Attachment H: Organizational Chart

Proposed: 2023-24—2028-29



Summary of Changes between original and proposed org charts:

Introducing three new positions to build organizational capacity:

- Administrative Assistant: supporting the Executive Director
- Instructional Coaches: additional support for coaching instruction (this replaces the Literacy Specialist previously in the chart)
- Dean of Student Support: a new position dedicated to supporting students' SEL and behavior

Moving the reporting for two positions:

- Social workers now report to the Dean of Student Support (a new position), instead of reporting directly to the Dean of Specialized Instruction
- The Family Coordinator is now the Director of Family and Community Development and reports directly to the Executive Director

Two title changes:

- The Family Coordinator is now the Director of Family and Community Development
- Office Manager is now the Operations Manager

## Attachment G: Board of Trustees Information

Current Board Members				
Trustee Name and Email Address	Position on the Board (e.g., officers or constituent representatives)	Committee Affiliation(s)	Areas of Expertise	Number of Terms Served including Duration of Each term (MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY)
Laurel Wedinger-Gyimesi, <a href="mailto:lwedinger@bridgeprepcharter.org">lwedinger@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Chair	Executive, Board Development and Governance; Finance	Law	1: 07/01/2018 – 6/30/2021 2: 07/01/2021 – 6/30/2024
Maria Casale, <a href="mailto:mcasale@bridgeprepcharter.org">mcasale@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Trustee	Academic	Reading Disorders, Orton-Gillingham	1: 07/01/2018 – 6/30/2019 2: 07/01/2019 – 6/30/2022 3: 07/01/2022 – 6/30/2025
Mark Harmon Vaught, <a href="mailto:mharmonvaught@bridgeprepcharter.org">mharmonvaught@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Vice Chair	Governance	Higher Education	1: 10/01/2021 – 6/30/2024
Rose Kerr, <a href="mailto:rkerr@bridgeprepcharter.org">rkerr@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Trustee	Executive; Academic; Finance	Education	1: 07/01/2018 – 6/30/2021 2: 07/01/2021 – 6/30/2024
Geena Kuriakose, <a href="mailto:gekuriakose@bridgeprepcharter.org">gekuriakose@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Secretary	ED Support and Evaluation	Psychology	1: 07/01/2021 – 6/30/2024
George Winn, <a href="mailto:gwinn@bridgeprepcharter.org">gwinn@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Treasurer	Executive, Finance, Board Development & Governance	Business, Charter Schools	1: 07/01/2018 – 6/30/2021 2: 07/01/2021 – 6/30/2024
Heba Gore,	Trustee	Governance	Law	1: 8/17/2022 – 6/30/2025

<a href="mailto:hgore@bridgeprepcharter.org">hgore@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>				
Amanda Wolkowitz, <a href="mailto:awolkowitz@bridgeprepcharter.org">awolkowitz@bridgeprepcharter.org</a>	Family Association President	Finance	Family Association Member	1: 8/17/2022 – 6/30/2025
Becky Peters, <a href="mailto:peters.rebecca41@gmail.com">peters.rebecca41@gmail.com</a>	Trustee	Finance	Finance	1: 6/20/2023 – 6/30/2026
Traci Frey, <a href="mailto:inertia96@gmail.com">inertia96@gmail.com</a>	Trustee	Academic	Education	1: 6/20/2023 – 6/30/2026
<b>Total members joining the board over the charter term:</b>				10 (Cerrullo, Tobacco, Langella, Harmon-Vaught, Kuriakose, Wolkowitz, Gore, Volpe, Peters and Frey)
<b>Total members leaving the board over the charter term:</b>				8 (Cerrullo, Tobacco, Langella, Volpe, Santarpia, Margolis, Timoney, Halle)
<b>Total members at the beginning of charter term:</b>				5
<b>Total members at the end of charter term:</b>				10

## Attachment K: Projected Enrollment Table

Grade	Year 1 2024-2025	Year 2 2025-2026	Year 3 2026-2027	Year 4 2027-2028	Year 5 2028-2029
<b>K</b>	30	30	30	30	30
<b>1</b>	40	40	40	40	40
<b>2</b>	46	46	46	46	46
<b>3</b>	52	52	52	52	52
<b>4</b>	52	52	52	52	52
<b>5</b>	52	52	52	52	52
<b>Total</b>	272	272	272	272	272

## Attachment M: Fiscal Impact Table

### Projected Fiscal Impact upon District of Location

Projected Fiscal Impact upon District of Location							
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
Year	Number of Students Residing in the District	Charter School Basic Per Pupil Tuition Rate	Total Tuition Payments (b*c)	Additional Costs to District (e.g. SPED, Transportation, Health Services)	Total Projected Costs to District (d+e)	District General Fund Budget	Projected Impact on District (percentage) (f/g)
2023-2024	272	18,340	4,988,480.00	2,570,228.00	7,558,708.00	37,500,000,000	0.02%
2024-2025	272	18,340	4,988,480.00	2,570,228.00	7,558,708.00	37,500,000,000	0.02%
2025-2026	272	18,340	4,988,480.00	2,570,228.00	7,558,708.00	37,500,000,000	0.02%
2026-2027	272	18,340	4,988,480.00	2,570,228.00	7,558,708.00	37,500,000,000	0.02%
2027-2028	272	18,340	4,988,480.00	2,570,228.00	7,558,708.00	37,500,000,000	0.02%
Column c: Basic tuition rate accessed for 2023-24 from <a href="https://stateaid.nysed.gov/charter/pdf_docs/2023-2024_charter_rates.pdf">https://stateaid.nysed.gov/charter/pdf_docs/2023-2024_charter_rates.pdf</a>							
Column g: "For the 2023-2024 school year, our total budget is \$37.5 billion." Accessed: <a href="https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/funding/funding-our-schools">https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/funding/funding-our-schools</a>							

## Attachment N: Narrative Outlining Innovative Aspects of the Charter School

*Referencing the charter, describe what makes the academic program of this school innovative and different from other options currently available in the district of location. What sets this school apart from others? These may be academic or operational components of the charter school. Note: Limit this narrative to no more than one page.*

Estimates indicate that as many as 10 to 20 percent of New York City students have a language-based learning difference (LBLD), the largest of which is dyslexia. Bridge Preparatory Charter School (BPCS) is the first public school in the state, and one of several nationwide designed to serve and meet the needs of this group of students.<sup>17</sup> BPCS is a diverse community of learners that currently serves students from every zip code across Staten Island, as well as several from Brooklyn. A majority of BPCS students enter multiple grade levels below in reading, with many lacking basic foundational reading skills, and most of our students have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes one or multiple related services such as Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Counseling.

Our academic program and school design promotes literacy equity for all students with a specially designed, innovative learning environment. The research is clear that explicit and structured language instruction is valuable for all students, but is critical for students with language-based learning differences (such as dyslexia), those who struggle with literacy acquisition, and English language learners (ELLs).

To ensure that our program reaches our target population, we have a special lottery preference for differing learners, specifically students with IEPs that indicate dyslexia, an impairment in reading, or difficulty with/an impairment in phonological awareness and development. In 2022-23, 67% of our students were identified as students with disabilities (SWD), 40 percentage points higher than the enrollment of SWD in Community School District (CSD) 31, where BPCS is located. The majority of these SWD are classified with a speech or language impairment (SLI), learning disability (LD), or other health impairment (OHI); these classifications are associated with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities.

As of the submission of this application, there are no other public schools in New York City that are designed to meet the needs of students with dyslexia or other language-based learning differences. To meet the needs of our students, a significant proportion of whom have language-based learning disabilities, our approach to teaching and learning is rooted in the Science of Reading (SOR). The SOR is an evidence-based and comprehensive understanding of how individuals acquire reading skills. It draws from extensive research in cognitive science, psychology, linguistics, and education to inform effective literacy instruction. The key components of the SOR encompass phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies. Research highlights that reading is not an innate skill but rather a learned process that requires explicit and systematic instruction. This research emphasizes the importance of teaching students foundational literacy skills in a direct and explicit way.

The SOR serves as the bedrock for effective literacy instruction, and structured literacy aligns with its evidence-based practices. Each day, all students have three periods of our Structured Literacy Block made up of 1 period ELA, 1 period Orton-Gillingham (OG) and 1 period of Structured Reading. Writing is a critical component of Structured Literacy and is crucial to the academic achievement for all of our

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/09/nyregion/dyslexia-programs-reading-schools.html>



students. While elements of writing are taught within the classes in the Structured Literacy Block, it is not taught in isolation and writing activities, prompts and practice are done across subject areas.

As indicated above, the highly structured and multisensory OG approach to teach reading is critical to the SOR and to teaching Structured Literacy effectively to all students. OG is a specialized approach within the broader framework of structured literacy, which encompasses a comprehensive set of instructional principles for teaching reading, writing, and spelling to all learners, including those with dyslexia and other language based learning needs. BPCS implements the highly structured and multisensory OG approach to teach reading. OG is an effective, research-proven approach to teaching literacy and improving reading skill development for all students in the areas of decoding, letter identification and phonological awareness. OG instruction includes explicit, structured language instruction, which is crucial for developing readers, ELLs, and for those who need additional support with reading, phonological awareness and language development.

At BPCS, OG is uniquely taught as both a separate class where students are grouped based on their ability level, and infused into the core curriculum. All teachers at BPCS are uniquely supported in delivering and implementing OG instruction. In addition to a summer intensive training program, mandated for all staff, all teachers receive weekly personalized coaching and professional learning. BPCS partners with *Edwards Orton-Gillingham, Inc*<sup>18</sup> to support and continuously train our staff. These direct coaching sessions include modeling, lesson planning support and individualized instructional strategies based on the needs of each classroom, teacher and group of students. Through this partnership and commitment to mission-driven and results-proven professional learning for our staff, BPCS is uniquely positioned as one of the only public schools in the country to have a teaching staff fully trained under the guidance of an Accredited OG Training Fellow from the OG Academy (OGA). The OG coach meets with teachers on a weekly basis to provide feedback and support with lesson planning and instruction.

BPCS has also developed a practicum program that creates avenues for teacher certification in the OG approach, thus ensuring a sustainable, expertly-trained future for the BPCS educational community. The Structured Literacy Practicum Center will support teachers with gaining certification in OG or dyslexia intervention; we additionally hope to earn school-wide accreditation from the Orton-Gillingham Academy and International Dyslexia Association through this program. The Center is located on the BPCS campus and provides teachers with the opportunity to conduct practicum hours, under the supervision of OGA-certified members, with the goal of earning certification as a Structured Literacy Teacher, Certified Dyslexia Interventionist, or EOG Support Specialist.

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<sup>18</sup> Formerly known as Literacy for Life, Inc.