

APPROVED



Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday May 21, 2018 at 5:30 PM

Location

ES2

Directors Present

D. McKee, E. Dickson, J. Almond, J. Diossa, J. Silva, J. Waters, R. Vrees

Directors Absent

J. Giraldo, J. Morton, M. Gwynn, M. Magee, W. Murray

Guests Present

B. Dowd, C. Colarusso, C. Heng, C. Losea, J. Chiappetta, Josh Falk, Kyle Quadros, M. DeMatteo, Marielle Emet, Michaela Keegan, OJ Marti, Sara Tucker, Tina Tonino, V. Douyon

I. Non-voting items

A. BVP K-12 Humanities Overview and Presentation

As this item was not up for vote, S. Anderson opened with her curriculum overview to present Board members until quorum was reached.

S. Anderson discussed the BVP English Language Arts curriculum across grade levels. She noted that BVP has an exemplary curriculum (which is one of the reasons she joined the team!) that is prioritized, carefully selected, responsive to teachers and their scholars,

and most importantly, effective. BVP's cannon is bold - hard texts that tackle hard subjects that are relevant to scholars' lives gives them a chance to grapple with difficult topics in a safe and constructive space. The BVP curriculum team is also responsive to families who struggle with some of the selected material, offering meetings, discussions, and in some cases alternative curriculum or learning space.

B. Public Comment

Sandi Ferretti spoke in support of the resolution that will be before the Board this evening that BVP apply for a waiver from RIDE regarding physical education requirements. Ms. Ferretti noted that her daughter is an athlete who trains 20+ hours per week, and therefore does not benefit as much from PE as she would from alternative academic support that could take place during that time in school.

High School scholar Michael Correa was also present for public comment, which was deferred until the Board Discussion of College Signing Day, as it relates to that topic.

II. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

B. Dowd called a meeting of the board of directors of Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy to order on Monday May 21, 2018 at 6:06 PM.

C. Approve Minutes 3/26/18

R. Vrees made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 03-26-18 Board Meeting on 03-26-18.

J. Waters seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Board Discussion: College Signing Day

J. Chiappetta noted that several Board members attended BVP's first College Signing Day on Friday, May 18.

Mayor Diossa described the event as very emotional and exciting, especially sitting next to the Lt. Governor who was clearly emotional and seeing the fruit of BVP's labor. He also noted the power of seeing so many first generation college students and Central Falls kids get into the school of thier choice.

Lt. Governor McKee extended a congratulations to scholars and staff and noted that College Signing Day was a well-run event that allowed for the excitement and energy for scholars to engage and participate. He was also impressed in hearing about the platform that BVP has given to staff who are moving on to exciting studies and next steps.

E. Dickson also noted that the event was deeply moving, allowing students to really celebrate each other. It was a joyful event that allowed scholars to shine and truly be themselves. She raised a point that the Board should also be considering how to support graduates in their paths forward, including introductions, networking, etc.

R. Vrees echoed many of the sentiments, and especially appreciated how each scholar had their own "Walk On" song and that BVP celebrated staff who were also moving on to continue their learning.

The Board invited Michael Correa to provide public comment related to College Signing Day. Michael is a senior who has been attending college since 5th grade; he discussed his plans as part of his AP Government class community service project to establish a fund to help the junior class pay for college applications, SATs, and other expenses related to getting into college. Fundraising events will include partnerships with local cafes and/or restaurants and network-wide dress down days. Michael extended a challenge the Board contribute to the Book Scholarship Fund a match for whatever he and his classmates raise for the junior class. The Board accepted the challenge.

III. Recurring Items

A. CEO Report

J. Chiappetta took questions from the Board about the CEO report presented in the Board Packet, and provided clarity on the following topics:

BVP High School graduation rates/college-going rates

- We will not know official graduation rates for our first High School class until the fall. If scholars make up all necessary credits by October, they will be counted in graduation rates for the current senior class.
- Not all scholars have immediate plans to enter four-year college. One scholar will be entering the Air Force, and a handful still need to earn credits towards graduation. All scholars have a path forward after the end of this school year.
- BVP's biggest impending challenge for the senior class is "summer slide" with the potential for scholars who are committed to college changing their plans between now and August. BVP has staff dedicated to keeping in touch with scholars over the summer to help manage this challenge.
- Average SAT scores are 1063. This is likely well above state average and potentially among the top in the state.

Network growth, staffing

- Right now, the network is on track to exceed 80% retention goal. This includes a small amount of "regrettable attrition" of staff we would love to keep. We are close to being fully staffed for next year.
- There are several key departures, particularly of staff of color. The Board expressed concern and offered support to plan and act in a way that can help both recruit and retain talented people of color that can enhance the "Mirrors and Windows" for our scholars' experience. J. Chiappetta noted that on an individual level, each of these departures is explainable and exciting for each of the staff members who are leaving, but on a systematic level, the trend is concerning.

Century Foundation Report

- E. Dickson encouraged fellow Board members to read the report noted in the Board Packet if they have not yet done so.

D. McKee made a motion to accept the CEO report as presented in the Board Packet and discussed.

J. Silva seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Finance Director Report

J. Silva made a motion to accept the Finance Director report as presented in the Board packet.

J. Almond seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Previous Business Items

A. BVP Strategic Planning

No updates or discussion.

V. New Business Items

A. 2018-2019 BVP Budget

C. Losea presented an overview of the proposed 2019 budget provided in the Board packet, drawing comparisons to the 2018 budget. The proposed budget prioritizes meeting the needs of all scholars, and notably includes enhancing Special Education services at the Middle and High school levels and recruiting high quality Secondary-level staff.

B. PE/Health Waiver Resolution

J. Chiappetta discussed the resolution included in the Board packet. The proposed resolution would allow BVP to seek a waiver from the state Physical Education requirements. BVP values PE and plans to use this waiver only to allow scholar-athletes to opt out of PE under particular circumstances, when scholars demonstrate that they are regularly participating in physical activity outside of designated class time. This policy would allow scholars to use time in the building to focus more on academics. This proposal is supported by the athletic director and would only apply to High School scholars. Exact criteria would be made clear and approved by the Board if the waiver is granted, so that the Board may hold the school accountable to best physical education practices even though the waiver exists.

D. McKee made a motion to accept the resolution as presented in Board packet to seek a waiver for PE/Health requirements.

E. Dickson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. BVP By-Laws Review and Update

The Board of Rhode Island Mayoral Academies (RIMA) has approved BVP bylaw amendments that allow the BVP Board to make their own amendments going forward. Ammended bylaws were included in the current and several past Board packets.

D. McKee made a motion to accept the ammended bylaws as presented in the Board packet.

R. Vrees seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Executive Session - Real Estate

A. § 42-46-5 (5) Real Estate

R. Vrees made a motion to Enter executive session.

D. McKee seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

J. Silva made a motion to exit executive session.

E. Dickson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Mayor Diossa reported out that a vote was taken relative to the real estate issue discussed in Executive session.

J. Silva made a motion to accept the report out from Executive Session.

R. Vrees seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

R. Vrees made a motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session.

J. Waters seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

J. Almond made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

R. Vrees seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

B. Dowd