APPROVED

# Bridge Preparatory Charter School

# Minutes

## Special Board Meeting to Analyze Academic Data

**Date and Time**
Tuesday February 23, 2021 at 7:00 PM

**Location**
Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81119585366
Meeting ID: 811 1958 5366

**Trustees Present**
Amy Margolis (remote), Azalia Volpe (remote), Frank Santarpia (remote), George Winn (remote), Laura Timoney (remote), Laurel Gyimesi (remote), Maria Casale (remote), Rose Kerr (remote)

**Trustees Absent**
*None*

**Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened**
Maria Casale

**Guests Present**
Francesca DiCanio (remote), Geena Kuriakose (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Tim Castanza (remote)

### I. Opening Items

#### A. Record Attendance

#### B. Call the Meeting to Order

Laura Timoney called a meeting of the board of trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Tuesday Feb 23, 2021 at 7:02 PM.

Maria Casale arrived at 7:07 PM.

### C. Welcome

R. Kerr welcomed the attendees and Geena Kuriakose, who is thinking of joining the Board. The goal of tonight's meeting is to have an oversight of how our students are doing; to look at the data and understand where the children are academically; what are the implications and what is needed regarding staff support and procedural changes, etc. Meeting was tendered to T. Castanza for his presentation of the academic data.

## II. Academic

### A. Academic Analysis

T. Castanza began by mentioning what would *not* be covered in tonight's presentation: qualitative data; feedback from parents and students; attendance data; formative classroom data that teachers use to assess students, i.e. verbal recognition, exit ticket, informal student evaluations. He then offered a PowerPoint report to the Board covering the following topics:

**Academic Assessments:**

- **Orton-Gillingham** –Designed to help struggling readers by teaching the connections between letters & sounds; focused on decoding; student reading readiness skills emphasizing letter identifications; phonological awareness; auditory sound-to-letter identification; rules to help decode words & syllable patterns; sight words; spelling.
- **NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)** *(performed 3 times a year using scales that span grade levels)* – Determines what a student knows & is ready to learn next; designed to measure student achievement in the moment & growth over time.
- **Fountas and Pinnell (F&P)** - provides teachers with precise tools & texts to observe & quantify specific reading behaviors, then interpret & use that data to plan instruction & monitor student progress. Enables teachers to determine students' instructional & independent reading levels based on a gradient associated with school grade.

**What the Data Tells Us:**

- **OG:** Formal/informal assessments, observations & progress monitoring indicate that across all grade levels, most students have shown amazing active growth in OG decoding skills. 1st grade students decoding skills at-or-above grade level have increased from 0% to 12% at mid-year; 2nd grade students decoding skills on grade level increased from 9% to 37% with several students above grade level at mid-year; 3rd grade students decoding skills at grade level increased from 4% to 29% at mid-year. A “focus group” has been created for the 31% of 3rd grade

students who are still decoding multiple levels behind. Data is tracked for individual students for targeted interventions.

- **NWEA MAP:** Data represents students' overall achievements in both math & reading compared to students within the same grade level in all 50 states. Our 1st graders fall between grade-level & 1 year below grade-level; 2nd graders have a higher than expected level for both reading & math; many 3rd graders are on the cusp of grade-level with almost half indicating 1 term behind. Student profiles are given to each teacher showing the specific standards which need to be focused on for each group.
- **F&P:** Students are given combination of fiction & non-fiction books; are asked questions to gauge understanding & to verbalize their thoughts; texts are classified by word count, number of different or high-frequency words, sentence complexity, illustration support, etc. 1st graders: 12% at-or-above grade level, 36% are 1 year below, 52% are 2 or more years below; 2nd graders: 10% at-or-above grade level, 31% are 1 year below, 59% are 2 or more years below; 3rd graders: 23% at-or-above grade level, 31% are 1 year below, 46% are 2 or more years below.
- Crossover analysis from OG data and F&P data indicates that students in all grades are showing clear improvements in decoding skills due to OG; students remain below grade level in reading due to F&P data measuring reading comprehension & fluency but not exclusively measuring decoding like OG data. OG succeeds & our students' decoding is improving, but is that enough to move them to the next level of fluency? NYS exams will involve questions that require student reading & comprehension - are OG interventions sufficient to allow our students to be proficient on the NYS exams?

**NYSED Renewal & Review:**

*(No testing has occurred yet; awaiting state guidance for 2021 testing)*

The *NYS Education Department (NYSED) Charter Performance Framework*, Benchmark 1 (Student Performance) will determine if our school has met or exceeded progress in achievement goals based on NYS ELA & Math exams for grades 3-8 & Science exam for grade 4. The measurements are based on:

- *Similar Schools Comparison* on ELA & Math Performance – However we are not similar to many other schools in NY State with the same grades, populations, disabilities & English Language Learners (ELL).
- *Proficiency Percentage* in ELA & Math – School level, grade level & subgroup level. At minimum we are required to meet the district-wide average for District 31.
- *Percentage Trending Towards Proficiency* – Proficiency maintenance or improvement of all students compared to previous year's test scores. Minimum requirement is 75% of students to maintain or increase proficiency. Schools can track students' growth by percentage who progressed from level 1 to levels 2/3/4; moved from level 2 to levels 3/4; remained at level 3; moved from level 3 to 4; remained at level 4.

**NYS Charter School Goals:**

- Reading/ELA & Math: 75% of students should increase MAP Growth Reading & Math assessments from one trimester to the next; 75% of students who have been enrolled in our school for at least 2 years must be proficient on their final MAP Reading & Math assessments.
- Science/Social Studies/Curriculum/Supports for Diverse Learners – *Not discussed in detail at this meeting due to time constrictions, but are included in the PowerPoint.*
- Student Attendance – Each year, a 95% average daily attendance, a very high goal.
- Student Behavior – Each year a decrease in disciplinary referrals, suspensions and severity of incidents from prior year.
- Family Involvement – Each year a 90% completion rate of annual family surveys & increases in family attendance at school events.
- Staff Retention *(very important)* - Each year retain at least 90% of staff who have positive end-of-year evaluations.
- Family Satisfaction – Each year 85% of families indicating satisfaction with our school program in their annual family survey.

**Recommendations & Interventions:**

- Increase of in-person student attendance
- Attendance team/student support team
- Academic reset sessions with staff; skill enrichment period for teachers; guidance & support for inclusion of formative assessments in daily practice; increased planning & prep time in teachers' schedules
- Implementation & launch of Guided Reading Program
- Focus on staff retention, which is critical for our instructional model
- Board of Trustees feedback is critical for school year 2021-2022
- Return of OG programming to level-based grouping
- Targeted planning for daily Skill Enrichment Period
- Improve academic organizational efficiency/reporting/accountability
- Hire *Instructional Coaches* for ELA & Math to support teachers practices, data management & lesson planning; coaches will emphasize, coach & review Guided Reading Program with teachers
- Retain OG consultant
- Restructure daily school schedule to prioritize core content & planning to avoid teacher & student burnout
- Launch 2 new non-mandatory intervention programs for targeted students: *Lightning Saturday Academy* (2x per month, 3 hours per session) and *After-School Academic Enrichment* (3x per week, 1 hour per session).

**B. Q&A**

Question & answer session followed comprising the following:

Q: Who are the people being hired as Instructional Coaches?
A: No one has been hired yet; the Board of Trustees will have input on these decisions; we will not be dialing back on OG programming but we would like someone in ELA to incorporate OG methods. Our teachers have been with us for 2 years and we need to build capacity.

Q: We would like to see more activities built-in that are fun for these students, not only academic after-school activities. Academics should not be the sole focus; parents need choices in after-school programs.
A: We will offer fun choices for after-school activities such as clubs, Saturday programs & after-school programs in areas other than academics. The academic activity options are for students that need additional help or students whose parents feel they could benefit from additional academic support. We get feedback from families regarding the need for academic intervention.

Q: Is staff at the point where they can give feedback regarding what they need?
A: Our school day runs well without cramming too much into each day; we ask for feedback from parents and staff on ways to make the school day run most efficiently. We don't have an Academic Administrator at this time.

T. Castanza asked R. Kerr if she had anything she wished to add to tonight's report, as chair of the Board's Academic Committee.
R. Kerr offered the following:

- Master teachers must have an Orton-Gillingham foundation; that is non-negotiable. Pedagogical masters will instruct new teachers on how to become master teachers themselves.
- Everyone world-wide is trying to set up additional supports for help with Covid deficits.
- Regarding *Response to Intervention* (RTI) process – each individual child's needs are being addressed. We are also homing in on Guided Reading.
- Looking forward to seeing our 2nd Math assessment data; we have no NYS test results to use as a baseline for progress from previous year.

*Additional comments by meeting attendees:*
OG needs to be in place, but some parents feel that math is not being addressed enough. Families are so happy that in-person school has reopened. All agreed we only have "good problems".

## III. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano