APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday November 17, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85362866716
Meeting ID: 853 6286 6716
One tap mobile +16465588656,,85362866716# US (New York)
Dial by your location 646 558 8656

Trustees Present
Frank Santarpia (remote), Geena Kuriakose (remote), George Winn (remote), Laura Timoney (remote), Laurel Gyimesi (remote), Mark Harmon-Vaught (remote), Rose Kerr (remote)

Trustees Absent
Azalia Volpe, Maria Casale

Guests Present
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 Wednesday Nov 17, 2021 at 7:00 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 10-20-21.
Frank Santarpia seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Welcome from the Chair

R. Kerr welcomed all participants and wished everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving, which can be shared with family and friends this year, unlike last year's holiday during the pandemic.

II. Committee Reports

A. Academic

R. Kerr gave the following report:
Tonight we will present the updated monthly dashboard.
At the *Academic Committee Meeting* on 11/10/21 we learned that all classroom vacancies are filled; a SETSS teacher still has not been hired but internal staff has thankfully filled that void; CSE is not fulfilling their responsibilities in this area to provide services that are in our students' IEPs; there is also a severe backlog in OT services and RSAs were given to seek services in the community, but special needs parents cannot find available providers for services; PT is coming along, but we require the services of another social worker because our students with IEP counseling are being offered only remote counseling, and parents are declining those services as not being right for their child; the burden is coming back to the school and our counselors have to do crisis counseling, behavior counseling, etc.; we had a learning loss due to COVID in the last year and afterschool programs have begun to address that deficit; since September some bus routes and bus stops were not being assigned for some students, but with the assistance of school staff and the Borough President most of the busing problem has been resolved. T. Castanza added that there are still 10 students needing to be assigned to bus routes and 4 students needing IEP bus approval.
R. Kerr then gave the floor to the Executive Director to review the dashboard data:
T. Castanza reviewed the MAP data in Reading and Math at BOY (Beginning of Year):

- Grade 1 Math: 50% at/above level; 40% 1 level below; same data for Reading
- Grade 2 Math: 31% at/above level; 43% 1 level below; Reading: 29% at/above level; 44% 1 level below
- Grade 3 Math: 25% at/above level; 38% 1 level below; Reading: 48% at/above level; 22% 1 level below
- Grade 4 Math: 12% at/above level; 27% 1 level below; Reading: 22% at/above level, 18% 1 level below

R. Kerr added that students scoring level 2 can be brought to level 3 with academic intervention or RTI to bring their scores up; when hired, the DTL can help with this.
T. Castanza said this data is also used to group students for the afterschool programs to place focus on the students' weak areas. We can also differentiate students that are new

to our school when we watch academic growth patterns. Today is only day 2 of the afterschool program; there will be a spring afterschool program (in February) and we can refer additional students to that program who need extra help.
There is a lot of debate about Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) data and how helpful and meaningful it is; F&P data is helpful when we write IEPs; F&P data is not a measurable goal for our charter; we previously recorded F&P data only at the BOY and EOY (End of Year), but we will now have F&P data for MOY (Middle of Year) as well.

- Grade 1 F&P: 29% at/above level; 57% 1 level below
- Grade 2 F&P: 21% at/above level; 45% 1 level below
- Grade 3 F&P: 4% at/above level; 48% 1 level below
- Grade 4 F&P: 8% at/above level; 63% 1 level below

The last page of the dashboard is data on demographics: Total enrollment: 199 students; 37% General Education; 63% Special Education; 97% Staten Island Residents; 3% Non-Residents. There is also breakdown by gender, by ethnicity, and data on daily attendance by grade level.
The next *Academic Committee Meeting* will be December 8th at 9:15 AM.

B. Executive

L. Gyimesi gave the following report: At the *Executive Committee Meeting* on 11/04/21 we had a presentation from Dan Pasek and Nora Clancy about Pasek Consulting LLC, a company which supports charter schools with renewal applications, authorizer reporting, charter changes, and board development. Most of the meeting was taken up with the presentation and the Q&A session that followed; we will vote tonight on a contract with Pasek Consulting to provide consulting for every stage of our charter renewal; there were some brief committee reports covered at the Executive Committee Meeting as well, details of those reports can be found in the minutes of the meeting.
R. Kerr thanked L. Gyimesi for organizing the *Strategy Meeting* held on 11/11/21 at the Petrides Science Center; it was very informative and well attended by members in person as well as remotely.
The next *Executive Committee Meeting* will be on December 14th at 7:45 AM.

C. Finance

G. Winn thanked L. Gyimesi for the *Strategy Meeting* and thanked the board for honoring his late father with contributions to *Doctors Without Borders*.
At the last *Finance Committee Meeting* held on 11/15/21, we clarified some of the bill paying processes and streamlining payment methods; in particular (based on previous bills and contracts) we discussed increasing the spending authority of the Executive Director from $5,000 to $7,500 without requiring a second signature; this will be brought forward for approval at the next board meeting; a *Financial Policies & Procedures Manual* is being reviewed by the Executive Director; we also discussed a compliance calendar - a draft is being worked on by the school now; it will be a tool to see the upcoming deadlines; we talked about the budget and beginning the budget cycle at least 2 months

earlier; some of our contracts renew automatically when they expire and we want committees to look ahead at contracts coming up for renewal to make recommendations on the contracts in a timely way; starting now we need to address what is coming next year; a line of credit needs to be available - the Executive Director will recommend some ideas in December.
T. Castanza added that a compliance calendar/tracker will be very helpful to meet our deadlines; a *Boards of Cooperative Educational Services* (BOCES) calendar is given to us in advance so we know what our reporting deadlines are.
A *Department of Youth & Community Development* (DYCD) grant is being worked on now, $54,396 will be sent in 2 payments and will be applied towards professional development.
The next *Finance Committee Meeting* will be December 13th at 4:30 PM.

D. Hiring Committee

T. Castanza reported that the *Hiring Committee* has been working on hiring a *Director of Teaching & Learning* (DLT) for several weeks due to vetting candidates we felt strongly about; we made an offer to a candidate and expect to have their answer within 48 hours Looking at what our school needs from our academic team, we found 2 really strong academic leaders to hire; we are excited to have a leadership team with specialized instruction as a focus. In the next couple of weeks we will discuss this in greater detail. We are still looking to hire a SETSS teacher. We hired a fantastic social worker a month ago (Ms. Polacastro) who is very dynamic, with a focus on student negative behavior and the responses and causes of negative behavior; she has jumped right in with ideas about our behavior & discipline code to make it responsive to our students' needs. We want to hire an additional social worker to support this behavioral component and work with our academic team.

E. ED Support & Evaluation

L. Timoney reported that she will set up a trimester check-in meeting for ED Support & Evaluation for sometime in December on a date to be determined. We are working with Board on Track regarding the evaluation and everything is moving forward.

F. Board Development and Governance

L. Gyimesi thanked board members for coming together at the *Strategy Meeting* held on 11/11/21; it was very productive with energy and give & take which was great; we were able to focus on a vision for our school both for now and the future; we talked about what we want to accomplish, our plans and goals, and bringing on a consulting firm to assist with our charter renewal. The last *Board Development & Governance Meeting* on 11/04/21 was concerned with planning that *Strategy Meeting* and setting its agenda.
She thanked Administrative Assistant K. Baldassano for creating an orientation packet for board members, which is now posted online in Board on Track.
The next *Board Development & Governance Meeting* will be on December 2nd at 8 AM.

III. Votes

A. Pasek Consulting

A copy of the *Pasek Consulting LLC* contract was reviewed by the board. The contract is a 2.5 year agreement with a cost of $24,000 per year or $6,000 per quarter; they will assist with complete charter renewal submission (due August 2023), manage all charter changes for implementation; assist with governance activities including ongoing strategic planning for current and future charter term, regular monthly check-ins with board renewal task force and board self-evaluation/assessment if requested. This contract can be cancelled by either party within 30 days of billable quarter.
The presentation they gave at the last Executive Committee Meeting was very informative. This company limits their management to only 25 schools at any time.
Laurel Gyimesi made a motion to retain Pasek Consulting LLC to assist us with our charter renewal and approve the presented 2.5 year contract effective January 1, 2022.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Executive Director Report

A. ED Report

T. Castanza gave the following report: Our annual report has been submitted; Title 1, 2 and 4 grants have been submitted; we submitted additional documentation needed for our *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security* (CARES) *Act* funding; compliance calendar/tracker is being worked on; website vendor is working with F. Ebanks and will be rolled out in December/January; the *Strategy Meeting* was wonderful and it was great to have the board members in the building; would like to have board members visit the school while in session; in December we are doing "Coffee with Castanza" at the school and would love to schedule it when board members visit.

B. Monthly Financials

V. School Update

A. Parent Association

In the absence of A. Volpe at tonight's meeting, T. Castanza said that the Family Association *Trunk or Treat* event was wonderful and well received. Families of upper grade students have been talking about middle school and there was a family meeting last Monday about transition to middle school. A. Volpe can update us on the outcome of that meeting when she is again present.

VI. Other Business

A.

New Business

L. Gyimesi stated that we need an update of our school's *Code of Conduct & Complaint Policy;* it needs to be tightened up and be vetted by our attorney, Susan Briggs to be compliant under the law. There are some things in the existing policy that are imperfect as there have been changes since it was created. Susan Briggs expects that the review of the entire policy and bringing it into compliance will take between 6-9 hours of work; regardless of the cost, this needs to be done. There are particular areas of concern regarding IEP students and we need to be compliant with ADA law, NYS law, etc. The *Executive Committee* members were aware that we were addressing this and the Executive Director will be approving payment for the attorney's services and working with her on this. The board members will be given the updated policy for approval at December's board meeting.

G. Winn asked if people noted that in October, the JCC of Staten Island honored Rose Kerr for her many years of work benefiting children; under her leadership as founding principal of the *Staten Island School of Civic Leadership*, the school reached acclaim as the top-rated public school in New York City. He offered his congratulations to R. Kerr, who thanked him and said that it was a great honor because the JCC does so much for many schools on Staten Island.

VII. 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 8:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano