APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday January 19, 2022 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

Guests Present
Christine Volpe (remote), Francesca DiCanio (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Maria Casale (remote), Rose Marie Illuzzi (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 Jan 19, 2022 at 7:03 PM.

C.

Approve Minutes

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 12-15-21. Geena Kuriakose seconded the motion.
Motion passed with 7 votes in favor, 0 against and 0 abstentions. Board member Maria Casale was present via audio only and not video conference, therefore she was unable to vote. Board member A. Volpe was absent for this vote.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Welcome from the Chair

R. Kerr welcomed all attendees and wished everyone a Happy New Year; thank you again to all who give of their time for Bridge Prep. COVID is still a big challenge for our school and families - we need to push on, although it's still very prevalent; day by day things are happening very quickly; thank you to the school staff for keeping it together; we want to avoid having to return to remote learning; we want to keep our children learning on-site.

II. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee

R. Kerr reported that the *Executive Committee Meeting* was held on January 11th; it was still early in the new year and the chairs of our various committees had not yet held their monthly meetings; what was discussed in that *Executive Committee* meeting will be covered tonight in the reports given by board members chairing those committees.

B. Finance Committee

G. Winn gave the following report: the *Finance Committee Meeting* was held today, January 19th; a presentation was given by *Executive Director* T. Castanza on the 5-year budget plan; it's preliminary but has an interesting format contained on one spreadsheet page; it looks at future growth and student population levels which are reimbursed to us by NYS per student; it contains information on potential surplus and governance budget; as we move into reauthorization, we will submit this budget plan to NYSED; we looked at our financial policy and procedures, contracts and compliance; followed-up regarding our audit and liquidity. Our audit was clean; we will probably vote on the budget in May instead of June this year.
T. Castanza added that we are putting things together that are multi-use documents, a concise financial overview that we can use as a working document - for example to see how a major purchase will affect us not only in the current year, but also in a future year. The budgeting calendar will impact all of us and all committees will have a role, i.e., with contracts. February's *Finance Committee Meeting* will cover a proposed fundraising plan with T. Castanza and R. Illuzzi.

C. Board Development and Governance

L. Gyimesi gave the following report: the *Board Development & Governance Committee Meeting* was held on January 13th; we are establishing a structured approach to board development; we will need to do a board evaluation - the evaluation questionnaire will be emailed to board members - please complete and return it before the next *Governance Committee* meeting on February 3rd; we are developing a job description and application to go out to potential board members; we want to encourage interest in our board of trustees; we need to decide what kind of board we want to develop; the *Charter Renewal Task Force* will have components on fundraising and public relations; Pasek Consulting will begin working with the task force and wants to give a presentation to our board on a date to be determined.

D. Academic Committee

R. Kerr gave the following report: the *Academic Committee Meeting* was held today, January 19th; Our new *Director of Teaching & Learning (DTL)* Christine Volpe was given 2 weeks to get acclimated; OG training had to be postponed due to COVID; slowly but surely a strong academic team is being formed with C. Otterbeck and C. Volpe; we need to build on the structures already in place and enhance those structures. E.D. will give more information on the academic structures in his report tonight.

E. ED Support & Evaluation

L. Timoney reported that the *E.D. Support & Evaluation Task Force* met last month and has reached out to Board on Track for the next steps in the process and are waiting for them to get back to us.

III. Votes

A. NYSED Resolution on Enrollment

Laura Timoney made a motion to Approve a Revision of Year 3 Enrollment Figures.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
The following resolution was presented to the Board for approval:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School approves an increase in the school's Year-3 enrollment from 190 to 195 students in the 2021-2022 school year.

Motion passed with 7 votes in favor, 0 against and 0 abstentions. Board member Maria Casale was present via audio only and not video conference, therefore she was unable to vote. Board member A. Volpe was absent for this vote.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Geena Kuriakose	Aye
Laura Timoney	Aye
Frank Santarpia	Aye

Roll Call	
Rose Kerr	Aye
Laurel Gyimesi	Aye
Azalia Volpe	Absent
George Winn	Aye
Mark Harmon-Vaught	Aye

IV. Executive Director Report

A. ED Report

T. Castanza gave the following update: Despite the challenges we had with COVID, we are excited to have a full school leadership team and academic leadership team; our new *Director of Teaching & Learning (DTL)* Christine Volpe started working at the school in the beginning of January and is exceeding all expectations; we are excited to have her as a partner on this journey. T. Castanza then introduced DTL C. Volpe to the board.
C. Volpe said she is happy to be part of Bridge Prep and is extremely impressed with the day-to-day operations of the school; the systems that are in place - from busing to lunch to communicating with staff and families - are all working like a well-oiled machine; the school culture is warm and welcoming; it is apparent that the students and staff love each other; a curriculum team and data assessment team are now in place; Francesco DiCanio has been very instrumental in supporting the DTL with the data; at the next board meeting, the DTL will present middle of year OG assessment and middle of year F&P assessment to the board.
T. Castanza added that the DTL has done even more in her 2 weeks here; we have been talking about our charter renewal; all of our academic goals affect our renewal; how we are meeting our charter goals; getting ready for the state assessments and making sure that necessary accommodations for all students are in place for the March testing.
R. Kerr added that regarding our IEP and testing accommodations, we've made strides in the last month, CSE is providing all mandated services, except SETSS, which we are doing at the school level; although they are not the best options, RSAs are also being given and we are in compliance. In addition, if the testing accommodations are not in place by January, then they may not be in time for the March testing. At today's *Academic Committee Meeting* we discussed the school working on the metrics for the merit salary increases for staff; formal evaluations are taking place; the DTL is working on those evaluations with T. Castanza and C. Otterbeck; the metrics of the *Danielson Framework* for teaching evaluation will be used to establish the tiered merit formula; more specifics will be given to the board next month.
M. Casale thanked DTL for taking on the state assessment goals and asked her to make sure that the students' 504 testing accommodations are being put in place; sometimes students are not getting those 504 accommodations because parents don't know to ask for them. C. Otterbeck is working on getting the proper accommodations in place for all students.

L. Gyimesi added that filling in the testing answer bubbles can be a critical issue for dyslexic children because the fill-ins don't seem to line up properly for someone with dyslexia.
T. Castanza said students are offered RSAs but families don't always want them; we are trying to get more services offered in-school; RSAs for counseling are now available in-school. We want to work on this more in the future. The school leadership team met with Pasek Consulting this week to discuss what we want to get from our charter renewal; we are looking forward to working with Pasek; they will support us in the process but they need more information from us for a productive partnership with us; looking forward to the board meeting with Pasek.
R. Kerr asked if Pasek knows that our school is special and can't be compared with other charter schools; NYSED can't be focused only on assessments. T. Castanza replied that Pasek is on the same wavelength as we are.
Updates on community engagement, fundraising and outreach can be found in the printed E.D. Report given to the board members. There is a crop of newly elected city and local officials whom we will be inviting to the school in early February or early March; we want to engage with them and apply for some of the available discretionary funding.
NYS Governor Hochul released her first proposed budget, there was no raise of the charter school cap; the per student allocation for charters has been increased 4.7%; NYS budget will be voted on in April. Our school's budget will be presented to the board over the next couple of months; NYSED wants to know how we are engaging with families, so we will send out a survey to families in February and again at the end of the school year; our admissions process has launched, our application format remains unchanged; we anticipate that we will have an admissions lottery this year, which will be held virtually on April 6th; a new strategy is to outreach by mail to individual schools in our district; we have gotten 26 admission referrals from other schools; we want schools that don't know us to learn about us; data indicates that we are starting to see more of our targeted students applying for admission; we are working with our legal counsel on modifications and adaptations to our *Discipline Policy, Code of Conduct* and *Complaint Policy;* NYSED wants community engagement related to the revision; our engagement includes feedback provided by our leadership team and student support team internally, a review by members of the board of trustees and feedback from families via an upcoming *Family Association Meeting*; board members will receive a final draft version of the entire policy before the February board meeting.

B. Monthly Financials

T. Castanza reviewed the monthly financial report with the board; under *Direct Education Expenses* it seems as if we are not spending as much as we projected we would spend; this is targeted spending; now that C. Volpe is putting systems into place, such as professional development, spending on this line will increase in the next few weeks. These figures are approximately a month behind so this financial report is for the month of December.

V. School Update

A. Parent Association

In the absence of A. Volpe, R. Illuzzi gave the following update:
On January 29th, Bridge Prep will be partnering with Barnes and Noble to host our "*Love of Literacy*" event at Barnes and Noble for families, students and community members; 5% off all purchases made that day will be donated to Bridge Prep. *World Read Aloud Day* is coming up; we will give each child in the school the book "*Aaron Slater, Illustrator*" by Andrea Beaty. Board members will be invited to school events via email by R. Illuzzi.
L. Timoney remarked that it's nice to hear good news.

VI. Other Business

A. Governor Extends Legislation Allowing Virtual Public Meetings

L. Timoney said that NYS Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation on January 14th extending virtual access to public meetings under New York State's *Open Meetings Law*, which allows New Yorkers to virtually participate in local government meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The law allows local governments to conduct meetings and hearings over online platforms like Zoom removing a requirement to hold those events in person. The new law will allow online-only meetings for as long as the state's COVID disaster emergency lasts.
This allows us to continue to meet remotely for board meetings.

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 8:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano