APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday February 28, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Location
Bridge Preparatory Charter School
715 Ocean Terrace
Building A - Atrium (Main Floor)
Staten Island, NY

300 Cromwell Avenue
Staten Island, NY

300 S. Sykes Creek Pkwy
Merritt Island, FL

Christ Episcopal Church
17 Sagamore Rd
Bronxville NY 10708

Trustees Present
Amanda Wolkowitz, Geena Kuriakose, George Winn (remote), Laurel Gyimesi (remote), Maria Casale (remote), Mark Harmon-Vaught, Rose Kerr (remote)

Trustees Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
Tim Castanza

Guests Present
Christine Volpe (remote), Heba Nassef-Gore (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Rebecca Peters (remote), Traci Frey (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

M. Harmon-Vaught stated that as per Public Officers Law, Article 7, § 103-a *(Videoconferencing by public bodies)* board member Laurel Gyimesi is attending this meeting via videoconference and has been determined to meet "extraordinary circumstances" for remote attendance at a location not open to the public; she therefore is considered to be in attendance for purposes of quorum and is permitted to vote.
In addition, board members Rose Kerr, George Winn, and Maria Casale are attending via videoconference from locations posted on the public meeting notice/agenda and therefore open to the public; they are considered to be in attendance for purposes of quorum and are permitted to vote. **QUORUM IS MET FOR THIS MEETING.**

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Geena Kuriakose called a meeting of the board of trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Tuesday Feb 28, 2023 at 7:05 PM.

C. Welcome From Chair

L. Gyimesi welcomed all and thanked everyone for their efforts and hard work on behalf of Bridge Prep.

II. Approve Minutes

A. Approve Minutes from Board meeting 1/31/23

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 01-31-23.
G. Kuriakose stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the 01-31-23 meeting will be adopted.
As there was no objection, the motion is adopted and the minutes are approved by unanimous consent.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Committee Reports

A. Academic Committee

R. Kerr reported that the *Academic Committee* met on February 14th and focus centered on:

- Data from assessments in OG and MAP, which will be covered further tonight;
- We have a wonderful partnership with PS 23, "Leaders in Me" program;
- Traci Frey will be joining our *Academic Committee* in March while her paperwork is processed for membership on the Board of Trustees. The floor was given to T. Castanza and C. Volpe to discuss additional academic matters.

T. Castanza reported on the following:

- We'll meet once more in March before the NYS assessments in April and May; tomorrow we have our second mock ELA assessment and we will hold a mock assessment in Math on March 3rd; our academic team has been focusing on test-day readiness and reflecting on last year's testing experience.
- The data from our Summer Boost program has arrived and is being shared with the board tonight; the results are promising and we are happy to see them.

C. Volpe reviewed the following and shared various data charts with the board:

- **OG Data** - we are seeing growth in all grades; growth is smaller in the lower grades due to several factors, including that the lower grades were not yet explicitly taught some of the skills; in addition we have identified some students in 1st and 2nd grade who have other contributing factors in addition to dyslexia and are learning the OG skills at a much slower rate; they are in small remedial groups. We implement our OG by diagnostic-prescriptive method, which means we don't move to the next skill until the first skill is mastered; some students are entering our school in the later grades and haven't had OG before; we may offer those students a "boot camp" for OG skills during the summer or in early September before the start of the school year; as our teachers become more skilled in OG, we are able to make groups smaller and more targeted.
- **MAP Growth & Projections** - charts were shared with the board indicating projected growth and actual growth for the whole school and for each grade individually; our actual growth is greater than our projected growth, especially with students in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades who have been with us for more than 2 years;
- **MAP Data for ELA/Reading & Math -** beginning of the year (BOY) and middle of the year (MOY) data charts were shared with the board showing data for each individual grade; the data is based on national percentiles and where they students fall in grade-level expectations; projected scoring is based on NYS testing;
- R. Kerr added that in the *Academic Committee Meeting* the data points were reviewed and an examination of this data allows us to know what we need to do next and apply interventions where needed; for example, the 2nd grade Reading data shows slower progress and will cause reassignment to more intensive tiers of intervention for those students.

- L. Gyimesi asked about the projected Level 1 Reading scores shown for grade 4 (46.8%) and grade 5 (69.1%) and C. Volpe responded that the teachers' feedback on what is impacting the scores is that some students are not taking these tests as seriously as we would like; in response, under the "Leaders in Me" program, we will have the leader-students go over the data and set goals with our students, letting them know where they are, where they need to be and how to get there. We can see from the data that all students are making progress.
- **Actual & Projected Growth Data (Fall 2022 to Winter 2023)** - data is shown for grades 3, 4 and 5 in both ELA and Math; the data indicates our students are making growth, but are not making the projected growth according to MAP; we are getting more granular in our MAP data and are using all our identified staff plus our classroom teachers to provide targeted RTI to the identified grades and students; from the MAP testing, we are able to see where each student is in the learning continuum in ELA and Math so we can help them master each skill to move onto the next skill.
- **Developing Our "Leader in Me" Program** - visited PS 23 for a workshop last month on their Leader in Me program; the leader-students there took us for a learning walk and told us how they became designated a "Lighthouse School"; they spoke about their growth and goals (classroom goals, school goals, individual goals); we need to bring something like that into our school; our students need to know their data and get really invested in their academic growth. The principal of PS 23, Paul Proscia will be visiting our school on March 7th, and is very interested in learning about our OG program, and he will share his experience with the "Leader in Me" program so that we can implement our own program; we will be taking our identified leader-students to PS 23 so they can meet the PS 23 leader-students and be given the same learning walk tour at PS 23.

B. Board Development and Governance

M. Harmon-Vaught gave the following update:

- Traci Frey will be joining our board soon, we are excited to welcome her and her expertise to our board; he invited R. Kerr to introduce T. Frey.
- R. Kerr said she has known Traci Frey for quite a few years; T. Frey was founding principal of the Gaynor McCown Expeditionary Learning School here on Staten Island; she left that position to become the Deputy Superintendent of District 31 and we are excited to welcome her to our board.
- T. Frey spoke about her experience in founding a high school, but she said that she also had the opportunity to work with principals of elementary schools and middle schools on Staten Island; while working as Deputy Superintendent she became even more familiar with all grades, as well as students with IEPs and learned about the supports needed at all grade levels; she is looking forward to becoming part of the Bridge Prep family.

- M. Harmon-Vaught said that Becky Peters application to become a board member is almost fully approved, but there is one small minor area that is holding it up and which may be a scanning error; he will look into it; it should be resolved quickly.
- Our *Board Strategy Meeting* is on Saturday, March 4th, at our school location.
- Reminder to complete the Board Self-Evaluation Survey, so we can review the results at the end of the strategy meeting on Saturday.

C. Renewal task Force

L. Gyimesi gave the following update:

- She has been meeting with Pasek Consulting on a weekly basis; because we have things to discuss and decide on by the May deadline, we will hold our board strategy session this Saturday. Some of those decisions regard whether to open a Kindergarten or not and do we want to expand any existing grades; we will discuss our charter and what material changes or additions we want to make. We don't need to rewrite our entire charter; we just need to let Pasek know what material changes we want to make; R. Kerr joined Pasek at our last meeting and was able to explain the charter structure that she helped to create.
- At the strategy session we will also discuss a plan for a teachers' institute that E.D. has been developing with Jill and Ann Edwards - a structured literacy practicum - an institute for teachers with OG training; if we are interested in doing that we can include it in our renewal application; T. Castanza will give a presentation on the plan at our strategy session. R. Kerr added that the teachers' institute was written into our charter, so we need to show some progress in that area in our charter renewal.
- At our strategy session we will be discussing board development, the self-evaluation survey results and what we need to do to make sure that we have the board members with skill sets to round out our board; many board members have terms that will end next year and the board openings will need to be filled; also, do we want to recruit a board member to help with fundraising?
- She attended a "speed dating" meeting with local politicians and legislators to talk about funding and grants; we should follow up on some of our financial requests to the legislators.
- She will meet with Pasek on Thursday to see what else they need us to cover at the strategy session and our deadlines for decisions.

Becky Peters asked if it is possible to see the the marked-up charter before the strategy session; T. Castanza said he would share that with the entire board via email, but the marked-up charter is more of an internal document for us, it's only the material changes that NYSED needs to see and the Regents need to vote on. L. Gyimesi added that our original charter document is available to view on Board on Track.

D. Finance Committee

G. Winn reported that the *Finance Committee* met on February 23rd and the following was covered:

- **Budget** - we had a wide-ranging discussion on our current budget and what's coming, such as staffing and things that involve other committees; we will formally offer a staffing plan to the board when ready. We'll have to produce our draft of the next year's budget while working on our charter renewal;
- **Contracts** - each committee should be thinking about which contracts run through them, but keep in mind that some contracts have automatic renewal components; and some will be expiring/renewing by the end of March; be aware of this when meeting this month with the school's executive team.
- **Cash Management** - E.D. is working with Josh and BoostEd for recommendations on getting an enhanced return on our current cash balances; we hope to ladder the investments so that we have short term and long term possibilities.

T. Castanza added that we are working on grant requests; discretionary funding grants from our 3 city councilmembers, as well as requests to our State legislators, also grant requests to the Richmond County Savings Foundation and the Staten Island Foundation which will be directed to building our multi-sensory decodable library; we also have requested small grants for technology purchasing for the new library. We will be targeting additional grants in May and June for the playground we hope to be adding to our campus.

IV. Executive Director Report

A. ED Report

T. Castanza gave the following update:

- **Admissions** - this is the first year that we haven't added a grade, and admission lotteries are held when needed for a particular grade; and what grades will we need a lottery for this year; we are about 72% to our goal for applications at this point; we already have 60 applications and only 55 fifth graders leaving our school; many applications come in after April and over the summer months; some of our families are moving out of state and won't be back. We will need a lottery for 4th & 5th grade seats and we many need a lottery for 3rd grade as well. We don't expect to need a lottery for 2nd grade seats and we don't yet know about 1st grade.
- **Proposed Long-Term Co-Location at Petrides Campus** - DoE is proposing to extend our location on site to include classroom space at Petrides in our current footprint plus 3 additional sections of excess space; those additional sections could accommodate any additional grade expansions we want to make; additional half-size spaces; space for the decodable library and administrative space are being given to us as well; periods of gym during the week will be allocated to our school in the Petrides gymnasium for P.E. classes; in addition, DoE will build a 2,000 sq. ft. adaptive-gym room in our building to accommodate our students. This proposal

will be voted on by the Panel for Educational Policy in May when they hold their meeting here on Staten Island. A virtual Joint Public Hearing on the proposal will be held on March 8th at 6 PM via teleconference. Copies of the DoE Educational Impact Statement, Building Utilization Plan and Notice of Joint Public Hearing was shared with board members.

- We finally received our mid-term report from NYSED and it looks really good, but is a little surprising; it will be shared with the board members at the strategy session on Saturday. We still do not have a NYSED liaison assigned to our school.

V. New Business

A. Other New Business

T. Castanza said that our 5th grade boys basketball team won their first championship after an undefeated season of 19 wins-0 losses. About 300 Bridge Prep family members were in the gym on Sunday morning to watch them win. It was a very emotional and happy event.

VI. Family Association Update

A. Family Association Update

A. Wolkowitz gave the following update:
March 1st is the Read-a-Thon kickoff; it's our biggest fundraiser of the year; letters went home today; we have a very large monetary goal; there are incentives for the students and school incentives including getting an ice cream truck to visit the school. If we far surpass our goal, we get to slime the E.D. The students are excited and already competing with each other on how many books they can read; the monies raised at the Read-a-Thon will go towards Family Day in June and we also want to start funding a bigger project in the school.

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 8:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano