

DRAFT



Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday February 16, 2023 at 7:30 AM

Location

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3972868255?pwd=Z0xnV0N3VDdBcnBhZVQ3UWpwZWE3UT09>

Meeting ID: 397 286 8255

Passcode: 7yMQKh

814 Rte 9W

Upper Grandview, NY 10960

51 Ionia Ave

Staten Island, NY 10312

312 Midland Avenue

Rye, NY 10580

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1 Campus Road

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Committee Members Present

Geena Kuriakose (remote), George Winn (remote), Laurel Gyimesi (remote), Mark Harmon-Vaught (remote), Rose Kerr (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

Kathy Baldassano (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

As per Public Officers Law, Article 7, § 103-a (*Videoconferencing by public bodies*) although board members G. Kuriakose, George Winn, Laurel Gyimesi, Mark Harmon-Vaught and Rose Kerr are not present in person for this meeting, they are attending via videoconference from locations posted on the public meeting notice/agenda and open to the public, and therefore quorum is met for this meeting.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Geena Kuriakose called a meeting of the Executive Committee Committee of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Thursday Feb 16, 2023 at 7:34 AM.

C. Welcome from Chair

L. Gyimesi welcomed everyone to this early meeting today and thanked everyone for their efforts on behalf of Bridge Prep.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes from EC Meeting 12/8/22

Motion to approve the minutes from Executive Committee Meeting on 12-08-22.

G. Kuriakose stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the 12-08-22 meeting will be adopted. As there was no objection, the motion is adopted and the minutes are approved by unanimous consent.

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

III. Committee Updates

A. Academic Committee

R. Kerr reported that the Academic Committee met on February 14th and the following was discussed:

- There will be a presentation at this month's full board meeting on academic data of OG, Math and ELA MAP data, which shows growth in most areas across all grades; with a concern about 2nd grade OG data; OG data measures all the different components in OG of whether a student has the underpinnings for formulating reading skills;
- Although our students are showing progress, NYSED requires that students have "adequate" progress. The data shows Math growth and Reading growth; but there is recognition of issues with 5th grade students' focus and behavior and this can slow their progress. The problem is being identified and strategies are being applied to correct it.
- There will be a fuller Dashboard presentation given to the board at this month's regular board meeting with academic data folded into that Dashboard.
- We visited a comprehensive "Leader In Me" program hosted by the principal of PS 23, Paul Proscia; PS 23 will be partnering with our school to share information; we will learn from their Leader in Me program and they will learn from us about OG, interventions in OG and how we teach OG.
- Part of our Charter is about using interdisciplinary OG, we should see OG in Math and that is a goal that we have not yet reached. This will be an emphasis and goal of the *Academic Committee* and we will be working with C. Volpe to achieve this.

- We are also working on professional intervention, with tiers set up among the staff to help the faculty that requires focused attention; a full-time experienced teacher has been designated to do this mentoring and intervention along with C. Volpe and the E.D.
- Publicity for our school seems to be lacking; good news about Bridge Prep hasn't appeared in the newspapers and R. Kerr asked C. Volpe to bring up this topic at the school leadership team meetings. Someone at our school should be designated to offer information on our school's events, share the children's projects and have good news items published in the SI Advance or on CTV.
- We have invited other school-based support teams to come visit Bridge Prep to see who we are, and what we do; there is a lot of misunderstanding and some of the other schools don't know that they can recommend students with dyslexia to us. Hopefully that outreach will bring knowledge, which is power and understanding.

The next *Academic Committee Meeting* will be March 14th at 11 AM.

B. Finance Committee

G. Winn reported that the *Finance Committee* had to postpone yesterday's planned meeting and reschedule it to February 23rd at 4 PM. He expects to discuss the following:

- Our budget should be rolled out soon and we are waiting to see what we have in that area;
- We have a January financial report and would like to see what is being done about our cash management, which should be simple since short-term interest rates have gone up; he knows what needs to be done and he wants to see what is being suggested.
- Should we revisit the idea of having a relationship with a larger bank, such as Chase or Citibank? We'll see what is advised on that.

Next month's *Finance Committee Meeting* will be March 16th at 4:30 PM.

C. Board Development and Governance Committee

M. Harmon-Vaught thanked those who attended the last *Board Development & Governance Committee Meeting* on February 14th and said that the following was discussed:

- Reminder to all board members to complete the Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation Survey; he will send out a reminder email to the board today; the survey is very comprehensive and will help us with our planning; to understand where we need to grow and how we need to do that; please complete the survey as soon as possible; he would like to discuss the results during a small segment of our upcoming Strategy Session on March 4th.

- The principle focus of the Strategy Session on March 4th from 10 AM to 1 PM at Bridge Prep will be the renewal application;
- Are there any material changes to the Charter which need to be approved by May; do we go forward with Kindergarten or not; do we do grade expansions or not; and the middle school question that we may still need to address.
- The OG Teacher Certification plan, what it needs and what will be its impact on the school;
- Board development is another topic for our Strategy Session.

Becky Peters application to join the Board of Trustees is still pending; it should be approved very soon. He asked R. Kerr to announce the exciting news about a new board member candidate.

R. Kerr said that she had a conversation with a former principal that she has known for a long time, Traci Frey, who is retired for about a year; she was the founding principal of a very successful Staten Island high school, the Gaynor McCown Expeditionary Learning School; when she left the school, she became Deputy Superintendent of District 31 and in that capacity she became familiar with the K-12 schools; she worked in the district office at the Petrides Complex and knows about Bridge Prep. She has a skill set that includes extensive academic knowledge and has helped run 55 district schools; we need her skills on our Academic Committee and our Board of Trustees. She is excited to join our board and hopefully it won't take too long; she can join our Academic Committee by next month.

M. Harmon-Vaught responded that he is sending her an email today and is looking forward to having her join the board as soon as possible.

Discussion followed about the current number of board members and how many more we should recruit before current board members' terms expire. M. Harmon-Vaught said that is why he wants to discuss board development at the Strategy Session so we can determine what areas we should target for new members' skill sets; also how do we develop a model to be self-perpetuating - for people to come onto the board from committee positions.

The next *Board Development & Governance Committee Meeting* will be March 7th at 7:45 AM.

D. ED Support and Evaluation Committee

M. Harmon-Vaught said he is looking to schedule meetings with E.D. in late March and also in May to do the next 2 check-points in the trimester schedule; we have a full presentation of Dashboard data at the February board meeting and he hopes to get something in for March so this committee can participate. He will let the board know when he schedules the upcoming meetings with E.D.

E. Renewal Task Force

L. Gyimesi gave the following update:

- The Renewal Task Force is still meeting weekly with Pasek Consulting; they are very much on-target; R. Kerr attended the last meeting and was able to explain parts of our Charter; whether it's still structurally sound or not; helping them to develop what their narrative will be; she feels very secure to have Pasek on board and to having weekly meetings. Pasek also meets with the executive leadership team at the school.
- Our Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation Survey is mandated and each year we have come in at the same level 3; part of the problem is that there are so many questions in the survey about fundraising, which are often left unanswered or answered "No". She will bring this problem to the attention of our consultants. A Student Survey and Parent Survey is also mandated and was distributed to our school by DoE.
- She participated in a *Charter School Advocacy Day* on February 10th at the Hellenic Charter School; local legislators were there and it was designed like a "speed dating" process; each charter school had a table and the legislators moved from table to table every 10 minutes. Board of Regents member Christine Cea attended and said she gets letters from parents asking about possible middle school growth at Bridge Prep; L. Gyimesi responded to her that we are working on renewal of our charter and looking into opening Kindergarten and perhaps grade expansion and we are not in a position to expand into middle school at this point, but we are hopeful that it might be in our future.
- There are now 8 charter schools on Staten Island and we have significant competition; other schools need to know what our target student population is.
- A larger Dashboard may actually address some of our school's recent disciplinary problems; the school is very good about notifying the board about these issues; it's a small group of students that are problematic but it's not unusual for this to happen; it's being addressed legally and appropriately and the safety of the school is addressed within our disciplinary code; E.D. should reach out to our attorney for advice on responses.
- G. Winn asked if the PAX Program used in our school; R. Kerr responded that she doesn't see it in the classrooms and she has not heard it discussed, so no.
- R. Kerr added that even a handful of students can disrupt, especially in a small school; and they can tie up administrators for days on end; especially when legal and technical steps are needed. Discussion followed about positive behavior plans and IEPs, positive incentives and the importance of what behavior specialists advise and how staff commitment is essential.
- R. Kerr said that in our new partnership with PS 23, their 5th graders are creating goal-oriented journals of academic and behavior goals; this is a very positive skill that our teachers can learn from PS 23; and our 5th graders have a lot of upcoming trips and events and any student who is disruptive can be denied those perks. L. Gyimesi said that the entire school is very engaged in what is going on; parents are very engaged too; positive reinforcement and negative consequences

are being used. R. Kerr added that we should not be afraid to bring in any behavioral staff that we need right now and not wait until next year.

- L. Gyimesi is looking forward to the upcoming Strategy Session; there is a lot to cover and Pasek representatives may attend for a short time; the E.D. has drafted plans for adding Kindergarten and the OG Teacher Certification and he will discuss them at the Strategy Session, but we have multiple important topics to discuss and only 3 hours to do so.

IV. Other Business

A. New Business

G. Kuriakose said that she may know another potential new board member; the middle school director at *Staten Island Academy* may be interested in joining our board; she was invited to visit our school and attend a meeting.

V. 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 8:12 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano