APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday January 23, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Location
Bridge Preparatory Charter School
715 Ocean Terrace
Building A - Atrium (Main Floor)
Staten Island, NY 10301

557 5th st #3
Brooklyn, NY 11215

1 campus road
Staten Island, NY 10301

16 Sagamore Road
Bronxville, NY 10708

300 Cromwell Avenue
Staten Island, NY

142 Joralemon Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

300 S. Sykes Creek Pkwy
Merritt Island, Fl, 32952

Hi all,
Please review the minutes from the last meeting and send requests for changes to the Secretary in writing 48 hours before the meeting so that we can make any necessary adjustments.

Thank you,

Trustees Present
Amanda Wolkowitz, Geena Kuriakose (remote), Laurel Gyimesi, Mark Harmon-Vaught, Rebecca Peters (remote), Rose Kerr (remote), Traci Frey

Trustees Absent
Maria Casale

Ex Officio Members Present
Tim Castanza

Guests Present
Francesca DiCanio-Trombetta (remote), George Winn (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

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 Jan 23, 2024 at 7:03 PM.

C. Welcome from Chair

L. Gyimesi thanked everyone for attending and wished all a belated Happy New Year. She thanked the board members for their work with the school.

D. Approve Minutes of Board Meeting on 12/19/23

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 12-19-23.
G. Kuriakose stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the 12-19-23 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.

II. Votes

A. Vote to approve contract for School Mint

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve a 12-month contract for digital advertising services from SchoolMint Inc. as presented to the board.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
T. Castanza explained that SchoolMint will produce content about Bridge Prep Charter School that can be shared in print or digital media; they will create advertisements, brochures, promotional materials and forms in both English and other languages to help us with student and staff recruitment. Our school will own any content they create. They will not duplicate material created by SI Advance Media Group, and the two companies will work in different aspects of our media outreach.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Committee Updates

A. Academic Committee

T. Frey gave the following update on the topics discussed at the last *Academic Committee* meeting on January 17th:

- **Mid-Year MAP Data** - structures for reviewing data and what to do with that information; suggested protocols for staff to use as they're looking at this data and breaking it down
- **Role of Math Coach**
- **Teacher Observations** - how many are completed and how many still need to be completed; how the administrative team is using that information to drive professional learning for staff
- **Summary of Professional Development Day** - which was held on January 16th
- **Curriculum Accommodation (CAP) Plan**
- **Results of the Teacher Focus Group**

Executive Director, T. Castanza will give further details during his E.D. update later in tonight's meeting.

The next Academic Committee Meeting will be February 13th at 8:30 AM.

B. Finance Committee

G. Winn gave the following report on the *Finance Committee* meeting held on January 22nd:

- **Upcoming Committee Meetings & Budget Planning** - we reviewed the upcoming meeting dates and talked about how to plan our *Finance Committee* meetings to obtain a completed budget by the June 30th submission deadline. At the May board meeting, the board will vote on the budget, so it needs to be presented to the board prior to May; we are working backwards through the committee meeting dates to plan for a timely budget review and vote.
- **Budgeting for Staffing** - one of the biggest components of budget planning is staffing; what does the growth and development of staff look like? We need to be very

conscious of how we compete in the market. We hope to come back to the board with more information on this topic at upcoming board meetings no later than March. It will be useful for us as we look at where we want to go strategically. The other items the committee discussed were already covered tonight, such as the SchoolMint contract just voted on.

- **Cash Management Strategy** - we are also in the process of implementing the strategy that we discussed at our last meeting; E.D. is working on plan with 2 entities; he's working with BoostEd to get that done and we expect that to be completed in the next 3 weeks.
- **Spring Programming** - E.D. is still working on Spring programming and curriculum
- **Future Finance Committee Meetings** - the timing of future committee meetings have been adjusted and the new dates are posted online in the Board-on-Track calendar; essentially meetings will be monthly on Mondays at 3:45 PM-4:45 PM

Next Finance Committee Meeting will be February 26th at 3:45 PM.

C. Board Development & Governance Committee

L. Gyimesi gave the following *Board Development & Governance Committee* report:

- **Resignation of H. Nassef-Gore** - chair of this committee, H. Nassef-Gore has stepped down as a trustee; she has a very full plate and she just didn't feel like she could complete the term and do the job that she wanted to do. And in light of that, L. Gyimesi will be in charge of this committee through the rest of this school year. After that, there'll be a new term of officers and she's sure that they can find somebody to handle the job.
- **Annual Board Survey** - M. Harmon-Vaught was very helpful in distributing the annual board survey which all the trustees should have received. If we can get them back right away maybe at our next meeting we will be able to review the data from the survey results.
- **Possible New Board Members** - we have some very significant prospects wanting to join the board; there are 3 or 4 people that have an interest in joining, which would be very helpful to round out the board and provide plenty of board members for next year.
- **Bylaws Review** - by February, March at the latest. she will review the bylaws again; perhaps someone else would also like to look at the bylaws to see if there's anything that needs revision.

IV. Report of Executive Director

A. Executive Director Update

T. Castanza gave the following Executive Director update:

- **MAP Data** - as T. Frey mentioned, we discussed mid-year MAP data at the *Academic Committee* meeting; prior to that committee meeting, C. Volpe and E.D. sat down

and took a deep look at the data; They compared what they saw in the data, and discussed what do we ultimately want to use and how do we want to use this data; what do we want to communicate when we have conversations with teachers? What will teachers take away from the data? C. Volpe had initial conversations with the staff during our professional learning day around broader trends from this data. And we think that there needs to be a deeper dive with individual teachers into the data to support individual teachers and classrooms based on what the data is telling us, using the resources that we have and potentially some new resources to ultimately see improvement in outcomes.

- **ELA & Math Data Charts** - T. Castanza presented ELA and Math MAP data charts, indicating RIT scores and Proficiency scores from beginning-of-year (BOY) to Middle-of-Year (MOY). These charts show individual class growth, no/growth or decline in RIT scores and Proficiency scores for both ELA and Math. One chart indicates which classes are designated as no concerns, concerns, significant concerns or action required based on the MAP data. Other charts indicate which classes declined in RIT scores & proficiency, had no growth in RIT scores & proficiency or showed growth in RIT scores & proficiency. Some students will be recommended to a *Planning and Placement Team* (PPT) for support if they show a lack of progress; our students always show less proficiency compared to other students. T. Castanza explained the multiple charts and a question and answer session followed. He said we have a couple of months before the New York State assessments to dive in and find the areas and classes that need very deliberate support. We need to see what the students are not getting or maybe what standards they're not understanding. Do students understand the importance of the state tests? NYS tests need to be understood by students. The problem may be that some assessments that are being used are not necessarily aligned to standards; or to the types of questions using the same language that the MAP assessment or the NYS assessments are using; part of it is getting students familiar with the language, because it's a comprehension exam just as much as a knowledge exam and we have students that have trouble with comprehension.
- **New Support Structure** - as part of a newer support structure, there's going to be a weekly *Academic Leadership Team* meeting now; E.D. will be joining C. Volpe and Ms. Otterbeck and the instructional coaches to not only talk about the data, but also what they're seeing in observations and what support is being put in place based on those observations; how do we track and monitor the data for individual students going forward. Teacher preparation and teacher development is key as well as for students. We have a new Math Coach and will hire a part-time Literacy Coach, Ms. Otterbeck will oversee the coaches. This will allow C. Volpe to be in the classrooms on a daily basis doing informal observations. He thanked those on the board that have already helped work through this process and specifically the *Academic Committee* which has been very helpful.
- **Admissions Update** - we launched recruitment in January and our online application went live; we have 35 student applications already, including 13 first grade applications and we've even had inquiries about Kindergarten seats. Vanguard will

be doing a direct mailing as they've done in the past, but can be a little more strategic now; we want to recruit ELL students and Vanguard can potentially create a non-English language mailer. We have reached out to some local community organizations about having a table at their events, particularly in the Spanish-speaking communities. We are also acquiring social media promotions with *SI Advance Media Group* and *SchoolMint*.

V. Other Business

A. New Business

L. Gyimesi reminded everyone that the board voted at the January 4th *Strategy Session Meeting* to apply to SUNY for a middle school charter. We submitted a *Letter of Intent* to SUNY to apply and the charter application is due on February 8th to open a middle school. Everyone is working on the application; if anybody has any time that they want to devote to that, let her know. There's lots of application sections to fill out. She sent out a full *Request for Information* (RFI) to all the board members, for anyone interested in in being on the middle school Board of Trustees; please get that back to her or forward it directly to Nora at *Pasek Consulting*, which is helping us with the SUNY application.

T. Castanza added that during the next 2 weeks, prior to our SUNY application submission, he will be contacting and meeting with local politicians and elected officials to garner support for our middle school expansion. It looks like we will be able to obtain a comprehensive letter from the local officials supporting us, which can be submitted with our SUNY charter application. He also reached out the the Community Education Council (CEC) for District 31 and he will be presenting at their February 5th CEC meeting to obtain their feedback and to discuss Bridge Prep and the science of reading. He will be sharing information about the SUNY middle school expansion with the Bridge Prep staff on Thursday and with the families of our school. The potential opening of the Bridge Prep middle school would be in Fall 2025. Public surveys will be going out to families to prove the demand is there for a middle school. We are doing a dedicated email blast through SI Parent about our potential middle school expansion, which should get us many responses of support. We are also adding a feedback section to our website, thanks to F. Ebanks. SUNY requests documentation that applicants sought feedback on a proposal, and proof that there is community interest and support. We only have about 2 weeks to gather and submit our proofs of support with our SUNY application, so we will be very busy. He thanked everyone for being such a good resource and helping with this process.

L. Gyimesi stated that she is meeting this Thursday with Pasek Consulting regarding the SUNY application, and anyone else is welcome to join.

VI. Family Association

A. Family Association Update

A. Wolkowitz gave the following *Family Association* update:

- **Valentine's Day Grams** for Valentine's Day; last year we did 12 roses this year we're doing candy kebabs that we assemble ourselves. Parents can send them to their students, or to staff members. We don't offer a student-to-student option.
- **Show the Love Month** - school-wide in February; we will be offering a Bake Sale.
- **Cups of Kindness Coffee Cup Sleeves** - around Valentine's Day we have the students create cups of kindness coffee sleeves; we partner with a local coffee shop to give us their paper coffee cup sleeves, which our students decorate with words or pictures of kindness and happiness. Then the coffee shop leaves those sleeves on the counter for customers to take. We hope to partner with Beans & Leaves Café and a local Starbucks this year.
- **Dream Cake Sale** - will be offered in the Spring; it was a big hit last year.
- **Family Association Annual Fundraiser** is being discussed now; to be announced, hopefully sooner than later.

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 8:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano

Documents used during the meeting

- Student Data- Fall to Winter.pdf