



Breakthrough Public Schools

Minutes

BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday December 10, 2025 at 5:00 PM

Location

Hampden Professional Learning Center (10118 Hampden Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44108)

Meeting of the Boards of Breakthrough Public Schools, Citizens Academy Southeast, Village Preparatory School Cliffs, and Village Preparatory School Woodland Hills.

Directors Present

A. Amefia, A. Garg, A. KOPIT, A. Lee, C. Lipscomb, G. Burrows, J. Howard, J. Johnson, J. LeMay, L. Mimura (remote), M. Hakim, M. Harris, R. Novak, S. Steinhouse, S. Vyas

Directors Absent

None

Guests Present

A. McRae, C. Farmer, H. Perkins, J. Kaye, J. Padlan, K. Day, M. Sattler, S. Ertle (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

S. Steinhouse called a meeting of the board of directors of Breakthrough Public Schools to order on Wednesday Dec 10, 2025 at 5:02 PM.

A. Garg called this meeting to order at 5:02 PM on December 10, 2025.

B. Record Attendance

C. BPS and School Boards Vote to Approve the Minutes of the October 15, 2025 BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting

C. Lipscomb made a motion to approve the minutes from BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting on 10-15-25.

A. KOPIT seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

R. Novak made a motion to approve the minutes from BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting 10-15-2025.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Public Comment

A. School Boards Public Comment

No one was present for public comment

III. FOB Update

A. FOB Updates

- Susan informed the board that they just received a pledge for a donation for Beyond Breakthrough and an IT lab at Willard
- Bash will be centered around the library project
- Nothing else to report on besides the summary that is in the packet

IV. Network & Schools Update

A. CEO Report

- Video testimonial from Amanda Schechter (principal at Midtown)
 - Simply Great Schools has had a meaningful impact on her leadership and direction of the campus
 - SGS has been the most aligned network initiative she has experienced - provides much clarity
 - Good change can still be challenging which is to be expected
 - Arc 1 has shown strong results and Arc 2 is showing steady growth
 - Concerned about staff retention with these high expectations and taking away autonomy but what has been a free for all is now a unified front
 - Hope to continue this positive trajectory as they continue in SGS
- Andrew thought it was important to start with the voice of a leader
- We can see the organizational health trending positively as we move into Arc 3

- Discussed how Aug-October we see the most mobility in scholar enrollment. It then levels out late October through the spring

Scholar Voice Survey Results

- 1,800 scholar responses received representing 1st-8th grade
- Overall satisfaction - 87.1% are satisfied
- Scholar positive response to safety - 76.9% feel safe
- Scholars feel cared for - 88.6% feel cared for
- Scholar belonging/connectedness - 77.4% feel belongingness
- Learning - 84.4% responded positively
- We have to continue to strengthen school culture and the learning environment
- The numbers do look quite positive with a few schools trending a bit lower. The board asked if there's anything that the network sees as concerning.
 - The classroom environment needs work and we need to make sure 100% of the classrooms are somewhere students feel they can learn.
- The board also asked how the questions vary for grades.
 - They vary slightly to be age appropriate but the core questions are still the same.

Staff Satisfaction

- Spark survey through Attuned - 80% or higher participation goal | Fall 2025 - 87.4% participation
- Individual purpose and leadership efficacy continue to be strengths
- Increase in leadership efficacy from Spring 2025 and Fall 2024
- Significant increases in Willard, Southeast, and Glenville

Areas of Opportunity

- We need to investigate why there are 50% positive responses in Relationships & Teamwork and why were these questions answered this way.
- We raised expectations and teachers are saying this is hard. This can take multiple years to shift perspective and create change.
- Even with other challenges, staff remain aligned to the mission of the organization.

Actions Taken & Next Steps

- In depth leadership review (ELT, Principals, NLT)
- December: Network Wide Communication
 - Follow up survey
- January - staff focus groups & concern validation
- Winter: Potential Pulse Survey
- The board discussed the quote from a staff member who took the survey saying there is no incentive to be a great teacher

- We need to have an effective teacher in every class and an effective principal in every school, so there is an expectation for everyone to grow which is why even when teachers are performing well, they still have the same amount of observations
- This may also create the feeling of there being less autonomy
- Staff intent to return - only 50% feel positively about coming back
 - How do we make sure those who are enjoying SGS are coming back and can be champions in promoting positivity with SGS?
 - We had a similar response to last year's survey, but this year we had the highest retention to date
 - We will still be starting a series of conversations facilitated by the principals in December to understand what staff intentions are
 - There is a PR level to this - we have to center kids and families in the messaging, but we still care a lot about what the teachers think. We spend this time with these surveys and conversations so we can figure out how to address the teacher concerns
 - How do we see a split in the data for those that have been with BPS for a while and those who have not?
 - That data is available and we can make available to the board.

Home office support survey

- Key Takeaways by Function
 - Overall, departments received more positive than negative ratings. IT continues to receive the strongest ratings
- Academics was viewed more positively by teachers than leaders
- Family experience team was rated favorably by both school based operations staff and principals, though principals expressed their concerns
- Network Ops and Facilities received favorable ratings by school based operations staff and principals

Year over Year Comparisons

- We continue to be above last year, but given our earlier conversations, we know that will continue to evolve
- The board asked Andrew to discuss the discrepancy in feeling less support in academics even though there is more support being provided this year
 - With SGS, leaders are under the most pressure with the most PD and trackers
 - There is a perception of what people may view as the Academics team job vs what it actually is
 - The Academic team is here to support school leaders to be great leaders and create the framework
 - In previous years, the Academic team would bypass the leaders and go straight to teachers

- When they are following the plan and leveraging their leaders, they are more satisfied

Midtown Available Space

- Matt Sattler is asking the board for guidance on real-estate
- Tenant occupying the northernmost space adjacent to Breakthrough Midtown - opportunity to get an addition 5,000ft space
- 12.5 years remaining on current lease
- Ballpark \$770,000 for startup and year 1 expenses
- Matt is asking to go back to the landlord to improve deal terms (rent rate, landlord contribution, and free rent runway)
- There is more space on third floor that is very raw and theoretically available but would be a heavier lift than this expansion
- This would not be extending the term - this would be expanding the space in the current lease
- Can come back in January with more information
- Board agrees that we should pursue looking into this opportunity

Academic Roadmap Progress

- Dr. Day walked the board through some progress updates
- Practical applications - instructional focus, leadership and staff, student and staff well-being, early intervention
- We believe the principal seat is the most important seat in moving, so we have put a lot into their development
- We continue to think about how stress affects school environments

Areas of Focus

- Timeframe - if we are improving, we will see the growth this year however significant improvement often takes 2-4 years
- Sustainability - Gains in test scores may not only last but could even increase over time after the initial intervention period
- Mechanisms - Successful turnarounds have been linked to reduced unexcused absences and improved teacher professional capacity

Arc 1 Classroom Progress Update

- We have 49 teachers who are still in classroom environment Arc
- We have 195 total teachers in our network, so this is about 25% of BPS teaching force
- This is not unexpected with late hires

- In response, teachers are being coached weekly and engaging in real time feedback with coaches. We still have work to do on ensuring the principals are keeping up with action steps from APIs.

Root Cause and Interventions: Glenville

- Overall, we are still working to improve classroom environment and leadership processes. We have a novice principal who is getting intense coaching from Managing Director, Schools weekly.
- We are looking to complete an internal hire at the API level to add capacity. Also working to reduce intervention specialist caseload. SGS will observe with HOS, CAO, and CEO on 12/16
- We are starting to see some positive early data that is coming in
- We have to get to a consistent practice that can address the root cause of issues at any of our campuses - we should be overperforming for the families that are coming to us with more needs so it is a consistent practice at all campuses

Root Cause and Interventions: Southeast

- Overall, AP leadership is continuing to be challenging at SE. Inconsistencies with job responsibilities and attendance are impacting coaching. Additionally, an uptick of students with needs for 1:1s showed a need for regrouping of support

Arc 2 Classroom Progress Update

- Our current Arc 2 goal is to have 75% of teachers achieving proficiency on 3 of the 4: grade level bar, pacing, evidence of intellectual preparation, curriculum and schedule alignment
- Our improvement threshold was that 50% of teachers would hit the goal by Thanksgiving. BPS is at 41% as a network. WH, Willard, and Midtown are at 49%.

Arc 2 Next Steps

- We prolonged the rigor arc to give more coaching opportunities to improve instruction
- SGS coach will be and has been visiting to conduct observations
- All principals and network academic leaders will be trained on resent arc
- We are creating an exemplar hub to collect artifacts where teachers are strong with implementation
- We hope to hire our second MDOS by the end of January

B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Michelle has had a lot of conversations lately around a number of the concerns that have been raised and wanted to address that

- AEC is meant to be a key level in supporting the administration

- Create space to talk about about accountability and collaboration, monitor and support, and have open and honest discussions about systems and their implementation
- Directed the board to discuss concerns or questions that come up with Andrew - there could be an answer or a pathway or even an agreed concern that the team is already working on
- Reminded everyone to bring concerns into the light, communicate honestly, and move forward together
- Michelle also highlighted the new flow of the meeting

C. CFO/Treasurer Report

October 2025 Financial Summary

- Cash balances are down YoY and projected to be below budget deficit
- The state caught up on their payments, so we saw 5 million extra dollars - no cause for alarm with YoY
- If enrollment stays at current level, it will even out the deficit. If it dips below, we will need to address budget cuts at a later time
- Kicked off the FY27 budget process in the last finance committee meeting - more to come on that soon

D. Finance Committee Updates & Vote

A. Garg made a motion to approve the Schools' September and October 2025 Financial Reports as presented.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

J. LeMay made a motion to approve the BPS September and October 2025 Financial Reports as presented.

J. Howard seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

E. NLT Reports

No questions on the NLT reports

V. Board Updates

A. Governance Committee

Governance Committee

- We will have 2-3 positions that we need to fill
- Want to keep a pipeline going
- Clarifying and upholding board membership attendance/activity
- Coming up with proposed date for retreat

- Sam also brought up if anyone is interested in being the BPS board chair

B. CEO Support & Evaluation

- Sanjay provided an update on activities of the committee
- There were no questions at this time

VI. School and BPS Boards Approve Consent Agenda

A. School Board Vote to Approve Consent Agenda

C. Lipscomb made a motion to approve the Schools' Consent Agenda.

G. Burrows seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. BPS Board Vote to Approve BPS Consent Agenda

A. Lee made a motion to approve the BPS Consent Agenda.

J. LeMay seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VII. School Board Resolution

A. Legal Name Changes

G. Burrows made a motion to approve the School Legal Name Changes and Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B. Assistant Principal Appointment CAS

The APO Appointment resolution was reordered to be approved by the board prior to the Legal Name Changes resolution. The agenda has been updated to reflect this change, and this note was made to call attention to the change within the minutes

M. Harris made a motion to approve the Assistant Principal Appointment at Citizens Academy Southeast.

R. Novak seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VIII. Sponsor Updates

A. CMSD Updates

Matt Rado discussed that the CMSD annual sponsorship report is in the packet. Also discussed the results on the report cards from last year

- CAS didn't meet any standards

- CAG met one standard
- Midtown and Willard both met standards (three stars overall)

Site visits

- Although there are 2 schools/contracts, there are still 4 locations, so CMSD will still walk through all 4 locations
- They use the same visit process that they used in past years
- It's expected that all schools will have some high things and some low thing, so he looks for common things to be aware of that were high and low
- All schools were teaching what they said they were and it was at the level it should have been
- Glenville and Willard both had strengths in structured grading environments
- Both Midtown and Willard could use improvements in assessment strategies - how are we making sure all students are able to understand/engaged?
- Both Southeast and Willard could use improvements in feedback for the kids - giving more than a "Good Job" and explaining why

Annual Contracts

- Revised budget items and name changes - relatively a routine year. Reminder of the call in January.

B. Buckeye Updates

Emily discussed the upcoming literacy summit coming up. They are urging all schools K-3 to attend. All compliance items through November have been received and approved 100%.

Site Visit

- Strong leadership in WH with teachers showing positivity.
- Not all classrooms showed rigor and teachers expressed the need for more support staff.

IX. Executive Session

A. BPS Board Vote to Enter Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Garg - AYE

A. Kopit - AYE

A. Lee - AYE

A. Amefia - AYE
C. Lipscomb - AYE
G. Burrows - AYE
J. Howard - AYE
J. LeMay - AYE
J. Johnson - AYE
L. Mimura - Remote
M. Harris - AYE
M. Hakim - AYE
R. Novak - AYE
S. Steinhouse - AYE
S. Vyas - AYE

B. School Boards Vote to Enter Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Garg - Aye
C. Lipscomb - Aye
G. Burrows - Aye
M. Harris - Aye
R. Novak - Aye

X. 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 7:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Steinhouse

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Garg