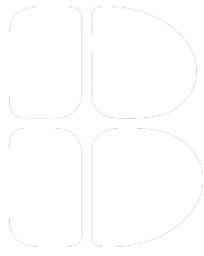


APPROVED



# Breakthrough Public Schools

## Minutes

### BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting

---

#### **Date and Time**

Wednesday March 4, 2026 at 5:00 PM

#### **Location**

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

---

**Meeting of the Boards of Breakthrough Public Schools, Breakthrough Southeast, Breakthrough Midtown, and Breakthrough Woodland Hills.**

---

#### **Directors Present**

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

#### **Directors Absent**

A. KOPIT, A. Lee, C. Lipscomb

#### **Guests Present**

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

---

### **I. Opening Items**

#### **A. Call the Meeting to Order**

A. Garg called a meeting of the school boards to order on March 4, 2026 at 5:02 PM.

S. Steinhouse called a meeting of the board of directors of Breakthrough Public Schools to order on Wednesday Mar 4, 2026 at 5:05 PM.

## **B. Record Attendance**

## **C. BPS and School Boards Vote to Approve the Minutes of the January 28, 2026 BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting**

L. Mimura made a motion to approve the minutes from BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting on 01-28-26.

G. Burrows seconded the motion.

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

G. Burrows made a motion to approve the minutes from BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting 01-28-2026.

R. Novak 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 discussed that they are continuing to work on the bash - at 80% of goal
- FOB is in a really good position to finish out the year strong - almost 88% at goal
- Recommended looking at the report in the packet for a lot of good information

## **IV. Network & Schools Update**

### **A. CEO Report**

- Sam opened up noting that as we make plans for next year, this year still remains top of mind. Tonight we will be talking about the future but our focus is still very much on this year as well.
- Andrew opened with anchoring our annual goals and priorities which continue to drive our schools and decisions
- In the packet there are a number of resources and Andrew opened the floor for any questions on the those reports/resources
- Looking at the current enrollment, is that the same time snapshot?
  - Full year compared to where we are now

- Anything systemic with ISS and OSS?
  - We see OSS going down which is due to standardized practices which in turn makes ISS go up. OSS's are being replaced with in school consequences. This is a good thing to watch, and what we are specifically looking at are the students who are receiving the OSS discipline. When looking at this, we see they are our ESE students which tells us that we need to look into this even more. Overall, the data is trending in the direction we'd like. The biggest drivers in lowering the numbers is norming the next tier of leadership who reviewing suspensions and also norming what's suspension worthy and applying this vigorously at all campuses.
- Daily Absenteeism is up - is this tied to weather?
  - We were ahead of the rate going into the recent snow storms. It's been tough coming out of that weather, but what we know works are first touches with our families. So, we are working on this and other incentives.
- What is the status on the other opportunities that were mentioned at the Southeast tour?
  - We are still looking for special education leaders there. Southeast doesn't stand out as overall needing much in staffing, but we are seeing different kind of challenges with young people, so we are working to make sure everyone has access to the help they need. We are also strengthening leaders and management there to move the needle.

#### FY27 Readiness - Planning for a Strong Start

- Annual planning has evolved significantly as Andrew's time as CEO.
- Previously - the process ran from Dec-April with final inputs by March 30th. This lead to challenges.
- Now - the process begins earlier to enable deeper collaboration. School and network planning occur concurrently. This allows schools to have input in the decisions being made. Also creates a single coherent timeline so there are no gaps.

#### Guiding Principals for FY27

- Student centered - every decision is connected to student learning and well-being
- Aligned and shared across all departments - one band one sound
- Predictable - everyone knows the timeline
- Transparent - clear roles
- Iterative - we want to create space for reflection

#### FY27 Readiness - What We Mean

- Academic, operational, staffing, compliance, systems, family facing readiness, etc, will all line up for a seamless transition into next year

#### Readiness Workstreams

- Starting with calendar followed by decisions that directly align with the calendar such as principal actions, S3 planning, attendance, etc

#### Academic Programing

- Dr. Day is going to talk to the board on changes based on feedback that was received
- Equity as an organization is our responsibility - we believe very deeply in this
- Acknowledge where practices produce unequal outcomes and commit to changing them
- We also want to use data to guide decisions
- We want to hold ourselves accountable for examining bias
- Align resources to student need - not convenience

#### Guiding Principals: Year 1

- Protect time for strong preparation - we received feedback from teachers and leaders about not having enough time
- Designing schedules for how students work best - when is the best time for core instruction to take place?
- Creating systems that prioritize systems over compliance - build environments that foster responsibility and engagement
- Design for product student discourse - we want to honor the opportunities for students to talk to each other, have time for recess, etc.
- Build one cohesive BPS model - we are committed to a unified approach rooted in shared organizational values
- The system changes taking place in Year 1 are the changes that are currently happening under the SGS umbrella taking full effect

#### Enduring Beliefs

- Strategic centralization of our outcomes
- Data informs our actions
- Accountability drives execution
- Coaching is our primary lever for instructional improvement
- Principals are our most critical instructional leaders
- Teaching quality matters profoundly
- We have really tried to hinge on these this year, so are going to continue building on them

#### How Change Occurs: The Stair Model

- Change takes place. We are doing the work overtime to make sure everyone understands the data and the impact of the changes.

- We are at the Transforming Idea section and moving into the Practice and Integration section

#### FY27 School Calendar & Instructional Hours

- First day for scholars - Kindergarten: 8/17 (so families can really have a day to integrate into the school as well)
- Grades 1-8: 8/18
- Last Day: 5/26
- Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 8-3
- Wednesdays: 8-1
- This allows PD on Wednesdays but also gives opportunity for IEP meetings, attendance meetings, 504 meetings. This allows a dedicated space for these important meetings.
- After receiving the network pulse data, we had very specific questions that went to teachers and leaders. We received a lot of responses, so we looked at trends and applied those to our philosophies. This calendar takes families, students, and staff into account and fits really nicely into the mission and strategic goals.
- How is taking two hours of instruction still student centered?
  - We are well over the instructional hours with the number of days planned
  - Teachers will also receive the development they need which directly feeds into students

#### Security Strategy + Investments

- Matt introduced Dennis Hill to the board as our Director of Safety and Security
- Discussing what we are planning to do over the next 24 months
- We are focused on professionalizing security apparatus at BPS. Expanded org chart, engage with consultants, made workflow improvements, and investing in technology
- We have engaged with experts such as Lincoln Center, SACS Consulting, and NEONET to come up with the plan
- Dennis walked the board through improvements made this year in People, Process, Infrastructure and Tech
- We want a security ladder for career growth to make sure we are hiring the right people to attain and attract the best
- Maintaining a mobile patrol presence across all campuses. We started with one, but we will have two next year.
- We quoted automated gates and are making sure secure areas in the building have the best equipment to ensure security
- Standardized operating procedures, establish damage/deductible fund, establish safety & security team
- Comprehensive training program for Summer 2026 implementation
- IT has done a great job in ensuring building safety with badges and cameras
- We are going to initiate dashboard automation to watch incidents and trends

- Andrew reminded the board that safety is a top priority from staff and students/families in surveys. This means that we are using our resources to address these matters. What we see here is a pattern - disciplined, expert, evidence based implementation. We are seeing this in Academics, Safety, and Human Capital.
- The board said that the work is phenomenal and want to know when it will be completed.
  - We have accomplished a lot. Where we are not capital bound, the changes are happening now, and we are making sure to include items in the capital plan. We are planning on the rest of the changes and improvements to be done by the first day of school.

## FY27

- Transition from contract guards to full time BPS guards, maintain mobile patrols.
- Rehearse EMPs and complete tabletop exercises at schools
- Installation of the gates, lockdown mechanisms, etc
- We are wrapping up items and finalizing them for next year
- The board was wondering about surveys from families and when/if they feel secure?
  - Families already do, but as a public school, these changes are necessary. Sometimes kids make bad choices, and we are lucky to have well trained staff. We want an alternative to metal detectors, and we have found a way. In the same way we are investing in other areas of the organization, we are showing that we are taking safety and security seriously. We can't control crime, but we can make it harder to commit it to keep our families and staff safe.
- What are we doing to strengthen our links with organizations like the CPD?
  - Dennis has contacts with them where he can pick up the phone and call any time. We also want to attend meetings of theirs and have them partake in ours.
- Are there any thoughts on isolating devices?
  - In theory, we have been for two years already, but it comes more from standardizing practices. BPS was ahead of that curve.

## B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

- Michelle discussed that when she was in academia, in spring, this is the time when folks talk about the end of the year, but this isn't a thing in schools. The year winds down, but the people don't, so she highlighted that the team is doing an excellent job.
- The energy that staff bring in the beginning of the year is an obligation to continue and keep that energy high all through the year.

- While doing this, we also are thinking about next year. It's a heavy load. Having coherence and a plan with that level of thoughtfulness where there is a connection between the mission and the work is impressive to see in the team's work.
- When Dr. Day showed the stair chart, it reminded Michelle of something Andrew said. This is a relatively new structure in the way in which this work is being done. This is a very thoughtful context for staff to do the work they need to do and the timeline feels really on point.
- Michelle also invited folks to attend the AEC meeting to look under the hood and take a deeper dive into what we do. It's a nice space to go deeper than we are able to talk about here. Musa attended a meeting and encouraged the rest of the board to attend one to ask questions and get more context.

### C. CFO/Treasurer Report

#### Financial Update - January 2026 Summary

- Brief update today but next month will have a bigger update
- Increase in cash this month, deficit improved slightly from previous projections
- Improvement in expenditures projections
- All schools are meeting sponsor fiscal benchmarks
- Bringing a revised budget for Southeast at the next meeting approving the changes that were made in the summer
- We will continue to cut expenses, and hopefully we will see our retention efforts
- School 990s are in the packet
- FOB/BPS audits were completed - we had a great first year with our new auditors
- Susan gave a shoutout to Celeste and Mangen for their diligence to maintain our clean audits

### D. Finance Committee Updates & Vote

G. Burrows made a motion to approve the BPS January 2026 Financial Reports as presented.

A. Amefia seconded the motion.

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

A. Garg made a motion to approve the Schools January 2026 Financial Reports as presented.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

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

### E. NLT Reports

NLT reports were in depth and aligned. There were no further questions on these other than encouraging the team to continue to provide consistency.

## V. Board Updates

### A.

## **Governance Committee**

In Cecil's stead, Aditi is covering discussing Governance Committee items

- The GC reviewed the recommendations and came up with a plan to get from here to voting in the board members
- GC has split up soft touch outreach which will be done by the March GC meeting so they can discuss who they should be having more serious conversations with. GC will update the board at the April meeting.
- From there, the serious conversations will be had with the nominees, and we will come to the May board meeting with the slate to vote.
- Feedback from the most recent set of nominees is to have the onboarding before the retreat so folks are acclimated before attending.
- Andrew Lee is not here today, but he is our incoming BPS board chair who will be leading the Strategic Planning committee. More outreach to come.
- Aditi also named we have a guest present to help evaluate us as a board to help us improve our board practices

## **B. CEO Support & Evaluation**

Sam gave a quick update.

- Focused on Andrew's contract renewal which runs through the end of the school year.
- The biggest challenge is aligning the timing, and right now we are not completely aligned on that, so they are working on that.
- They are reaching out to CEOs in the charter space to share feedback on the contract renewal process.

## **VI. School and BPS Boards Approve Consent Agenda**

### **A. School Board Vote to Approve Consent Agenda**

M. Harris 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. Amefia made a motion to approve the BPS Consent Agenda.

M. Hakim seconded the motion.

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

## **VII. School Board Resolution**

### **A. Establishing School Calendar and School Hours for SY26-27**

M. Harris made a motion to approve the resolution establishing the school calendar and school hours for SY26-27.

G. Burrows seconded the motion.

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

## **B. BCHF Sponsor Contract**

G. Burrows made a motion to to approve the Buckeye Community Hope Foundation contract modifications with Breakthrough Woodland Hills.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

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

## **VIII. Sponsor Updates**

### **A. CMSD Updates**

- Contract updates will be at the April board meeting
- Spring site visits March 24th and 26th - will debrief at the April meeting
  - Small conversations with teachers will take place through focus groups
  - Looking at what trends they can identify
- Woodland Hills won't be able to be in the partnership agreement due to not meeting the academic milestones
- In 2018, a team came together and looked at the criteria for charter school partners. At that time, CMSD approved a structure of schools being in the top third and 80% of students are in CMSD residency. The thought is that the they don't want to put money into schools where their students wouldn't be attending. This has impacted who is able to be a partner in the future.
- CMSD is doing a partner cycle right now - it's not as simple as what we are getting this year compared to next year. It's not a 1:1 thing regarding that reduction.
  
- Andrew chimed in to say that BPS will let the board know what financial implications there may be at the next meeting.

### **B. Buckeye Updates**

- Usual materials are in the packet. Visited the school on the 12th which was lovely and the new gym looked great.
- Visit Report will be in the packet at the next month's meeting.
- Other than that, there is an Open Meetings training on 4/11 if the board would like to attend.

## **IX. Executive Session**

### **A.**

### **BPS Board Vote to Enter Executive Session**

Motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters to consider the appointment or compensation of one or more public employees.

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

Roll Call

A. Garg - AYE

A. Kopit - Absent

A. Lee - Absent

A. Amefia - AYE

C. Lipscomb - Absent

G. Burrows - AYE

J. Howard - Remote

J. LeMay - Remote

J. Johnson - Remote

L. Mimura - AYE

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 to consider the appointment or compensation of one or more public employees.

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

Roll Call

A. Garg - Aye

C. Lipscomb - Absent

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 7:06 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 7:06 PM

Respectfully Submitted,  
A. Garg