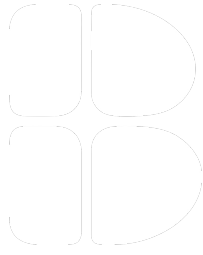


DRAFT



Breakthrough Public Schools

Minutes

BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday May 20, 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 (f/k/a 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. LeMay, L. Mimura, M. Hakim, M. Harris, R. Novak, S. Steinhouse

Directors Absent

J. Johnson, S. Vyas

Guests Present

A. McRae, C. Farmer, H. Perkins, J. Kaye, J. Padlan, S. Ertle

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 May 20, 2026 at 5:00 PM.

A. Garg called a meeting of the school boards to order on May 20, 2026 at 5:00pm.

B. Record Attendance

C. BPS and School Boards Vote to Approve the Minutes of the April 15, 2026 BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting

J. LeMay made a motion to approve the minutes from BPS and School Board of Directors Meeting on 04-15-26.

A. KOPIT 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 04-15-2026.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

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

II. Public Comment

A. School Boards Public Comment

Monica Marcucci, a teacher at Woodland Hills, thanked the board for being receptive to their comments at the last meeting. She discussed the decision for the K-2 looping and asked the board to overturn the decision so teachers can stay in the grade they're currently in where they can do their best work.

Katy Willis, a teacher at Woodland Hills, enjoyed hearing the board's appreciation for teachers attending the last meeting as well as the discussions and questions they raised. She discussed the decision for the K-2 looping feels like it's a change that will break the camel's back. She attended the meeting to share her thoughts and raw feelings because the work means this much to her and other teachers.

Allison Baylor, a teacher at Willard, wanted to voice her opinions on the K-2 looping. She doesn't feel BPS has the same tools as the other districts in the data showing successful looping programs. She asked that if looping is inevitable to please consider trying it with a few classes before making the entire district do it.

Emily Johnson, a teacher at Midtown, wanted to share her thoughts on the K-2 looping decision. She loves Breakthrough, her students, and fellow staff but is concerned with this decision. She feels that the looping will result in the loss of great teachers which in turn will not raise scholar's testing scores. She also feels that students deserve more than two trusted teachers in their corners.

Although the board traditionally does not have dialogue in public comment, Aditi wanted to give a statement on how the board approaches this as they learn to be the best board

members they can be. She thanked the teachers for being here, their commitment, and their respectfulness in speaking up. Feedback is critical and the educator voice is important and the board is committed to using the forum for navigating changes. The School Board has received advice on how to best use public comment which is intended for matters of broad community interest. If concerns are related to personal employment conditions or limited management decisions, there is a formal process in place to ensure those are addressed appropriately, which they have been provided with or can be provided with. This process was established to promote efficiency and individual privacy where broader community interests are limited.

The board remains committed in keeping open communication and working together in our shared goal ensuring the best outcomes for scholars and school community. The board encourages the teachers to continue engaging through the appropriate channels so their voices can have the greatest impact. The teachers were also encouraged to stay to hear the conversations that will take place during the rest of the board meeting.

III. FOB Update

A. FOB Updates

Susan Ertle provided the board with an FOB update

- There is \$153k left to go towards the goal with quite a few grant prospects out.
- The bash goal was 700k and we raised 703k.
- Received book donations and the work on the libraries will start this summer. They are very close on the match and have received enough to start the work.
- Renewed contract with St Martin de Porres. There were three graduates this year who are BPS alums and have graduated as valedictorian or with other honors.

Bill mentioned that there is a very important election coming up in Ohio. Encouraged everyone to understand the issues as we're going in to vote and the impacts of those votes with what we're trying to accomplish.

IV. Network & Schools Update

A. CEO Report

Dr. McRae reminded the board of the annual goals and priorities. The progress monitoring and NLT reports are in the board packet. No questions from the board at this time.

FY27 Readiness

- Staff Modeling unified strategy developed by CAO and Head of Schools
- Recruitment and hiring is ongoing work to fill any vacancies

- 96% signed their offer to return letter
- Created 33 new positions and 100% of those offers were sent and accepted
- We are up from 73% over the last two years

Talent Recruitment

- 9 new Teach for America hires
- double participation in career fairs
- changing how we engage with high quality candidates

New Scholar Enrollment

- Slightly outpacing last year
- Feel confident in projections and family interest in BPS
- In re-enrollment, 90% returning
- Strongest in the city and state

Student Population Racial & Ethnic Balance 2025-2026

- Juliet Kaye walked the board through some annual reporting requirements
- Each year we look at our Racial and Ethnic balance makeup against our peers
- Midtown and Willard we have notable anomalies. Midtown has a higher number of Asian students and Willard has a higher number of multiracial students compared to national averages
- Glenville, Southeast, and Woodland Hills are on par with national averages

Health and Safety Review

- Matt Sattler walked the board through extensive updates on safety and security in March (changes in our building, additional screening, parking lots, etc)
- In terms of Health, PSI solutions is our sole provider after piloting a second provider who could not provide the services we require
- PSI has improved our data reporting, screening, and enhanced staff training
- In turn, this has strengthened our partnership with PSI
- Partnered with Vision to Learn which provided vision and hearing screenings and gave out hundreds of glasses. Happens every other year, but we are looking at how we can provide it every year
- Continuing to investigate further investments
- Have updated specific policies in the lane of health and safety this year. Continue to monitor all policies that were reviewed and approved in 2024

Teacher Appreciation

-Dr. McRae thanked the board for participating

8th Grade Graduations

-Invited the board to attend and support our graduates

Lumen Impact Group - Strategic Readiness Process

Cori and Amy from Lumen presented their findings

- Spent the last several months inside of BPS classrooms, with teachers, with families
- Today they are going to provide an honest reflection, data where they were surprised, data they confirmed and then questions they think the board should pay attention to and respond to

The Strategic Opportunity

- Relationships & Mission are strong
- Alumni program, philanthropic partnership, and operational progress are also all very strong
- Defining Opportunities - Completing One Breakthrough, People Data = Action Map, Academic Urgency is Real, Governance Opportunity, and Foundation to Build From
- We need to make sure as families are exploring their options, how does Breakthrough position itself?
- What We Examined: Governance & Finance, Leadership & Operations, Talent & Human Capital, Culture, and Instruction
- 74% of staff trust is really high for an organization going through changes
- The gap between the school level trust and the network trust. 59% of staff say network priorities don't reflect their daily reality
- Special Education came up as a critical gap along staff, families, and leaders

Governance & Finance

- BPS-FOB Alignment - both orgs are at a transition point and are asking the same questions
- The strategic plan coming up is the right time to design that together

What Data Tells Us

- 73% staff named student behavior support as a #1 most urgent need - seems like a systems problem
- 45-55% of staff disagree that decision making is clear, feedback is used, or staff have meaningful input
- 38% of staff don't understand how PD connects to BPS strategy - this could just be a communication gap

Five Conditions for Strategic Readiness

- Stabilize Leadership and Rebuild Trust
 - strong foundation
- Clarify and Unify the BPS Identity

- Invest in Talent Systems
- Accelerate Academic Progress & Instructional Coherence
- Strengthen BPS-FOB Alignment & Strategic Resource Development
 - this is where the board has the most influence

What This Means for Breakthrough

- You don't have disengaged staff, you have invested staff
- The organization is continuing to be lead well and making the investment to improve and grow
- School-level foundation is real. High trust in school leaders, value alignment, and clear role expectations
- Student Behavior and time capacity are the most urgent conditions for progress
- The network-to-school gap is measurable
- Leaders and Staff see the same problems at different intensities
- The questions that Lumen feels connect to the data:
 - How do we not fall into a talent cliff that many organizations are falling into?
 - How do we make sure BPS finds the right coherence between the school and network identity?
 - How do we formalize the relationship between the BPS and FOB boards for defined priorities?
- Network vs School and communication getting to schools. Is that related to the culture? Some of the information that came through seems they are related.
 - Is it a matter of scale, communication strategy? We think no. We think its more behavior, communication, and trust based. What was so surprising is that while structurally the things exist, the feeling persisted despite that. We're acknowledging there's something there that requires more investigation. The trust gap isn't just communication, and we're not sure if its just the translation of us through leaders. We plan on exploring this more this summer.
- Alignment between the home office and school priorities - 59% said we were not aligned, but teachers are still engaged, is this part of the same question where you are trying to investigate and unravel what's going on?
 - One is structural and one is value assessment. Related, but two different things. Network to school gap is a long standing issue in how the schools identify as part of the broader network. We have methodically moved towards the vision of BPS. We've moved slowly and deliberately to one Breakthrough. The transition has been intensified this year and will continue as such into this next school year. We are experiencing the named tensions when you put these elements in place, some of the mistakes we've made along the way, and how we translate the moves we make based on feedback.
- Lumen discussed that the way they do this work is by asking everyone a set of standardized questions. They are doing this to find themes across all stakeholder

groups. Across the groups, everyone was committed that BPS needs to stay focused on strong academic outcomes. Stakeholders remain committed to this.

- Sam stamped that this is the starting work that we will be doing on the Strategic Plan. We will be coming back and anchoring in this work. Andrew Lee also mentioned that we'll centralize a lot of this work in the Strategic Plan task force.

B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Michelle wanted to discuss some highlights from their AEC meeting.

- Preparing for next year has to start early in the current year. It's a lot of baggage for teachers to carry. Part of what's happening is the new Academic Vision and we have been hearing about this work for months now.
 - One of the most important elements is matching people and talent. We have a great deal of talent in admin and teachers. Do we have the talent to match the expectations? We can see that is happening.
 - Over the summer, more professional development training will happen. Not all schools train faculty in the same way, but all faculty got this training last year which was great to see.
 - We also saw data from Dr. McRae and Dr. Day. Reminder to the board that it takes a lot of time for faculty to gather that data, analyze, assess, and compare it to the vision. It's coming but it takes time, and it will be coming school by school.
 - Leadership is being retained which is not a small thing. That kind of continuity is helpful and important to have historical information.
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- Question from the board - Are there certain data points where we can see changes month to month or would that be asking too much?
 - The short answer is yes. There are two things that are happening. We want to make sure we get the most accurate picture of student learning. One of the things we're doing this year is standardizing tools, so we can provide that on a more predictable way in the future. There are some that are not as readily available, like iReady, as frequently. Our commitment is to bring indicators that we feel are useful, but this is a conversation we want to continue.
 - The new vision referenced, is that really new?
 - No, but it has evolved. The practices and expansion on what we know works is what's happening. We've also had transitions internally that have excelled or set it back. Curriculum hasn't changed in years, but we've added new tools/resources to fill gaps. What's different is the expectation we are asking, and we are continuing to standardize practices and this is what feels new because of our increase focus and alignment. There is a desire for clarity and consistency, and that desire has to come with a change in behaviors.

While we're in the 'change in behaviors' section, there is some tension that we are working through.

C. CFO/Treasurer Report

Celeste gave an update to the board

- Received second half levy funds from CMSD, coupled with cost reductions at the home office, we are very close to the budget.
 - The actual levy that passed exceeded what we anticipated and then the pie of funds available to all sponsored schools helped since we have the most students and benefitted the most from that fund
- All schools meeting sponsor fiscal benchmarks
- Next month we will review the long term financial goals for us to submit in August

D. Finance Committee Updates & Vote

L. Mimura made a motion to approve the BPS March and April Financial Reports.

M. Hakim seconded the motion.

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

C. Lipscomb made a motion to approve the Schools March and April Financial Reports.

A. Garg seconded the motion.

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

E. NLT Reports

NLT reports were in the board packet - no questions from the board at this time

V. Board Updates

A. Governance Committee

Cecil discussed Khafre solutions as a board development firm that we will be engaging. Secured this agency to help us be prepared for the board retreat. Interviews of board members will take place before the retreat so we can elevate how we engage in the process. This is Phase 1. The board retreat will be on 6/17 as an all day event.

On board appointments, Cecil feels very strongly that the resolutions are for top notch candidates that will add value to the board. Certain people are rolling off and we feel this is a great group to be brought in. Three people will be joining the full board and two will be committee members for a pipeline for them to join the full board eventually. We attempted to bring a diverse group, but because of schedules, not everyone could commit this year.

B. CEO Support & Evaluation

Sam discussed this section with Sanjay traveling.

- They are working on Andrew's contract.
- The bones are put together and the work will continue.
- Discussing with SGS and Jennifer on compensation. They want to make sure its structured right for a long term focus.

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

J. LeMay made a motion to approve the BPS Consent Agenda.

A. KOPIT seconded the motion.

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

VII. School Board Resolutions

A. Gifted Identification Plan

R. Novak made a motion to approve the Gifted Identification Plan.

C. Lipscomb seconded the motion.

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

B. Adoption of NIST Cybersecurity Framework (CSF) Version 2.0 Resolution

Robert Moore, IT Manager, discussed the NIST CFS

- HB 96 requires government and government entities to have cybersecurity framework.
- The plan describes what is considered an incident, if there is one, what's the plan.
- We've been working with partners to make sure all of our controls and policies are in place.
- Asking the board to approve the policy to keep BPS safe from cyber threats.

Musa has worked with NIST before, so he can also help. We may need to further review this to ensure it aligns with future AI changes

R. Novak made a motion to approve the NIST Cybersecurity Framework.

M. Harris seconded the motion.

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

C. Principal Appointment Breakthrough Woodland Hills

M. Harris made a motion to approve the Principal Appointment at Breakthrough Woodland Hills.

G. Burrows seconded the motion.

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

VIII. Board Appointments

A. Board Appointments

The board acknowledged the May 2026 Governance Resolutions Overview for appointments, renewals, and terms ending.

G. Burrows made a motion to approve the Appointment of Network Directors of Breakthrough Public Schools.

R. Novak seconded the motion.

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

J. Howard made a motion to vote on the Confirmation of Appointment of Official Capacity and Network Directors.

L. Mimura seconded the motion.

Andrew Lee recused himself from voting on this matter.

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

M. Hakim made a motion to vote on the Resolution to Appoint Committee Members.

A. Lee seconded the motion.

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

B. HR and Strategic Planning Task Force Formation

- HR task force - the board is excited to have this task force in motion after Jennifer's work
- Strategic Planning task force - The intention is for this task force to dissolve when the strategic planning process is finished.

J. LeMay made a motion to vote on the Confirmation to Form the HR and Strategic Planning Task Forces.

L. Mimura seconded the motion.

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

IX. Sponsor Updates

A. CMSD Updates

Matt Rado doesn't have a traditional update for the board today

- Sponsors are being evaluated by the state. There's a lot of paperwork involved, but it is somewhat easier than last time. Showed appreciation for Hannah and BPS and the work we are doing to help with this process.

- In June, they have compliance for the sponsors and spreadsheets we have to turn in.
- In August, there will a visit. Southeast is one of the campuses that will be reviewed on site.
- This is a high stakes review. Determines quality funding, whether sponsors can continue to sponsor or sponsor new schools.

Jennifer Howard asked if there is an opportunity for our board to interact with CMSD when the CMSD board has questions on partnering with sponsors.

- Matt is waiting to see what the answer is, but he will be helping to facilitate those conversations.

B. Buckeye Updates

Emily Puterbaugh didn't have too much of an update this time

- Showed appreciation to Hannah and BPS for our compliance and making it easy for them
- Had the final site visit with Woodland Hills and everything looked great
- June 8-9 is their leadership summit

X. Executive Session

A. BPS Board Vote to Enter Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session to discuss personal matters to consider the employment of one or more public employees

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 - Absent

L. Mimura - AYE

M. Harris - AYE

M. Hakim - AYE

R. Novak - AYE

S. Steinhouse - AYE

S. Vyas - Absent

B. School Boards Vote to Enter Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session to discuss personal matters to consider the employment of one or more public employees

Roll Call

A. Garg - AYE

C. Lipscomb - AYE

G. Burrows - AYE

M. Harris - AYE

R. Novak - AYE

XI. 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 7:20 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 7:20 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

A. Garg