



Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport

Minutes

GOBPT June Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday June 14, 2023 at 5:15 PM

Location

Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport
375 Howard Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Directors Present

Bea Bagley (remote), Bob Carlson, Christopher Mcmillan (remote), Corey Sneed (remote), David Zieff (remote), Eva Vega (remote)

Directors Absent

Diane Gordon, Selena Morgan, Tenssie Ramsay

Guests Present

Benjamin Chan, Janay Garrett, Jean Lombardi (remote), John Scalice, Latoya Hubbard

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance & Begin Recording Meeting (if remote participants are present)

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Bob Carlson called a meeting of the board of directors of Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport to order on Wednesday Jun 14, 2023 at 5:25 PM.

C. Approve May Governance minutes

Bea Bagley made a motion to approve the minutes from GOBPT May Monthly Governance Committee Meeting on 05-08-23.

Christopher Mcmillan seconded the motion.

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

D. Approve May Finance Minutes

Corey Sneed made a motion to approve the minutes from GOBPT May Monthly Finance Committee Meeting on 05-08-23.

Bea Bagley seconded the motion.

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

E. Approve May meeting Minutes

Christopher Mcmillan made a motion to approve the minutes from GOBPT May Monthly Board Meeting on 05-10-23.

Eva Vega seconded the motion.

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

II. Business Insurance Vendor Report

A. Double Eagle Agency of CT

Steve Ozyck representing Double Eagle Agency of CT presented his findings from going to market on behalf of the school, aiming to find comparable business insurance coverage, at a reduced price. He expected they had an alternative with Utica National, but was unable to find a solution with Utica national due to a standing open claim that provided too much risk for the underwriting team. Utica would likely be willing to revisit once claim is settled.

D. Zieff asked a question about whether or not the claim was about volunteers working ins schools or the nature of the claim itself. S. Ozyck noted that he things the concern is both, including how the school vets volunteers and/or policies around code of conduct for volunteers.

B. Austin & Co.

Shawn Berger from Austin & Co. presented the insurance renewal offerings for the next year. Austin & Co. is the school's current business insurance broker.

Shawn highlighted why charter schools have chosen Austin & Co. in the past, which included their firm's expertise, services they provide as a part of doing business with the

school, that they are the largest regional provider of business insurance programs to charter schools, and they have a long standing, exclusive charter school program.

B. Carlson had questions about how volunteers/fellows are covered or not covered under the various types of business insurance offerings Austin & Co. has provided. Given the relationship to the GO foundation, some risk rests with the foundation, and some with the school depending on the situation/scenario in question (e.g. workman's comp versus other types of coverages).

S. Berger reviewed some of the school's current liability protections, but for the sake of time, the board asked him to pause and present the rest of the coverages in detail to board finance chair, C. Sneed.

C. Insurance Renewals Vote

David Zieff made a motion to deputize/authorize Corey to make a decision about insurance renewals after the board meeting to allow more time to schedule time and discuss with Shawn & Steve.

Christopher Mcmillan seconded the motion.

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

III. Governance Committee

A. Executive Director's Report

J. Scalice shared a high level snapshot of his report, to include the accountability and support committee meeting with CSDE, as well as the Summer Work required for Commissioner's Network.

Accountability and support committee

- Required meeting as part of our corrective action status
- Report on ELA Math and Suspension Progress
 - Progress monitoring data (no initial SBAC allowed)
 - Internal Data on suspensions to be finalized at the end of June
- Discussion on progress of corrective action
- Additional questions from the committee

HS Graduation & Career and College Preparedness

- Rich discussion around transportation and transportation issues (e.g. Bridgeport providing charter schools bus passes, versus providing yellow bus school transportation for their own students)

- Accountability + finance committees are interested in being in conversation further about transportation

First year we had dual credit courses - and next year we open up our first career and college pathway (earning college credits as early as 10th grade)

- 45% graduating with college credit in 2023 (anywhere from 6-15 college credits)
- 77% of students with IEP graduation rate in 2023
- 91% graduation rate

J. Scalice presented Internal growth and proficiency data with comparisons from 21-22 SY to 22-23 SY.

- Rough Cohort Math SBA/ICA proficiency
 - SY 21-22, we landed at about 7% proficiency in 5th grade - we doubled this in 22-23 SY
 - Growth numbers are 60-70%
 - New curriculum clearly has an impact, but adjusting some of that curriculum to making it more engaging and accessible for all students; students who were further behind than typical, had a lot of trouble engaging
 - Summer work in math department focused on how to get them where they need to be to engage the curriculum
- ELA Proficiency - this is the first year of the ELA curriculum and we saw significant increases
 - Stronger focus on vocabulary building and writing
 - Minimal increase in 6th grade but 7th grade jumped 11% on our interim assessments, and almost 18% in grade 8
 - Significant improvement by grade 8
 - We anticipate seeing some of this play out in our SAT/PSAT scores as well
- Suspension Rate
 - Social emotional learning and restorative practices; 9.8% - significant decrease; overall state suspension rate is between 7-9%, so we are finally getting down to where the state expects us to be
- D. Zieff asked a question about 91% graduation rate and how many students are in the 9%, J. Scalice noted, 6 students are in that number, and they are likely to graduate by August.

Commissioner's Network Summer Institute Training - L. Hubbard, J. Scalice and D. Linares will all be attending the CN Summer Institute Training (mandatory) for any school entering planning year. We will review Organization of CN, level of support and requirement for schools to engage in this process.

Summer planning begins June 21st

- John Scalice
- Latoya Hubbard
- Denise Linares

Document Collection and Organization begins on July 5th

- John Scalice
- Latoya Hubbard
- Denise Linares
- Chris Pellegrino
- Karen Francis- Barnes
- Kay-Ann Hewell-Walker

Audit Completed by Sept. 8th, with results being reviewed and involving the following:

- CSDE
- John Scalice
- Latoya Hubbard

Planning begins by Sept 8th and to include

- John Scalice
- Latoya Hubbard
- Denise Linares
- Chris Pellegrino
- Karen Francis- Barnes
- Kay-Ann Hewell-Walker
- Caitlin Meyer

First charter school to be invited into a planning year - can provide a significant amount of funding and strengthening of partnerships when the planning year (sometime in May) is complete. Unique opportunity based on our results!

- Audit & Visit Expectations (around the week of Sept 8th) - many of this has been in practice the last two years, but this will give us deeper insight as to if we are firing on all cylinders
 - Communications (Parent, Student, Social Media)
 - Staff Feedback
 - Meeting Agendas
 - Staff Handbook
 - Walkthrough Procedures
 - School Improvement Plan
 - Lesson Templates
 - Sample Curriculum Units

- MTSS/SRBI Manual
- Climate Survey
- School Calendar
- School Visit (Fall)
 - Classroom visits
 - Teacher & Student interviews
 - Parent panel
 - Leadership Interview
- School Visits On-going
 - Bi-weekly visits
 - Bi-monthly data reporting
 - Budget planning
- Commissioner's Network Committee
 - 2 Admin
 - 1 District
 - 3 Teachers
 - 1 Parent
 - 1 CSDE

B. Director of Operations Report

Building Update

- Summer Construction Project
 - High School Front Entrance - Installation of New Storefront and double entry point prior to entering the building
 - Boys & Girls Bathroom Entrance Modification
 - 6-8 weeks timeline, work to begin the week of June 26th
 - Estimated Completion by August 18th
- Redesigned Security Plans
 - Proposed new area of rescue for evacuation drills
- Limited Staff Parking
 - Updated Parking Signs
 - Communication to Cherry Street Loft Residents
 - Reinforced Towing
- Enrollment Update
 - SY 22-23
 - October Enrollment: 664
 - June Enrollment: 606
 - YTD Student withdrawals: 58
 - Attraction Percentage: 8.7%
- SY 23/24 - offered seats in all grades, only three open seats in 6th grade; 259 students on the waitlist total across all grades

IV. Finance Committee

A. Finance Committee Updates

Ended May at a cash balance of 626,000 - one of the things we had was receivables against the ESSER III drawdown, which is about \$850,000. This will go back down once the two summer payrolls are run. Total cash position includes food account and cash reserve.

Fundraising target has stayed the same - B. Chan encouraged the school to boost that effort.

B. Chan is working on projecting to the end of the year to ensure there is a balanced year even with higher expenses, they will do so and leave enough for next year.

Expense sides everything is in line, salaries will be a positive number to cover two more payroll for teachers over the summer.

Still reviewing building expenses including facilities, energy, contracts, etc.

B. Chan has a goal to set a 3-5 year budget projection. B. Carlson noted he will change a facilities checklist that's standard and will help the school be sure they have the right contractors, etc. in place.

C. Sneed shared his efforts to connect the school with energy supplies and more information on how to assess the costs of the school as it relates to spending on power, and his concerns for the future of spending as it relates to utilities. The fiscal cliff, as C. Sneed reminded everyone, is near and we need to be careful and thoughtful about the future.

990 was submitted and the audit has been completed.

C. Sneed asked for an update on the ERC - B. Chan noted that it's underway, because we are very much eligible because we had a forced/government shut down, but charter schools in general have been eligible so we are moving forward with it.

B. Vendor Approvals

Bob Carlson made a motion to ratify Lanese Construction as approved contractor in lieu of Bismarck in Error.

David Zieff seconded the motion.

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

Bob Carlson made a motion to postpone vote on 403(b) Admin Partners Proposal.

Eva Vega seconded the motion.

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

Bob Carlson made a motion to Wiles Architects LLC - emergency provisions due to an unexpected circumstantial charge Melinda St. Fleur - emergency provisions C&C Luxury Coach - emergency provisions.

Christopher Mcmillan seconded the motion.

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

Bea Bagley made a motion to approval annual HFC statement for 23-24 School Year - the child nutrition program certification statement (annual request for approval).

Christopher Mcmillan seconded the motion.

C. Sneed noted that this is an annual vote for the board, so is standard

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

The board VOTED unanimously to approve the motion made by Bea Bagley - Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Great Oaks Charter School certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

The board VOTED unanimously to approve the motion made by Bea Bagley - The Great Oaks Charter School will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales. Note: If the BOE votes "no" to participation in the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allo

V. Foundation Updates

A. Foundation Updates

Do not have any updates, the one thing that Ben is bringing up separately both for audit, etc. conflict of interest documents to be signed.

VI. Other Business

A.

New Business

Fundraising - development of a fundraising deck (John)

Building - D. Zieff and B. Carlson are going to start the discussion to purchase the building

State recently approved a 1% increase in funding

Board retreat - Wednesday the 13th (9am-12pm)

3-4 hour meeting, brunch/breakfast

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 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bob Carlson

To be amended per Governance Committee