

Boston Day and Evening Academy
Board of Trustees Minutes
October 22, 2022

Attendance: Jennie Hallisey, Alison Hramiec, Sonya Page, Maddrey Goode, Norma Suarez Quiles, Alisa Hunter, Spencer Blasdale, Tyron Boswell, Lisa Laguerre

Others in Attendance: Jill Kantrowitz, Leslie Singleton-Hill, Kayla Quinlan-Nickerson (student voice)

Clerk: Jill Kantrowitz

Location: In Person

Call to Order, review agenda and vote on new membership

New Board Chair Maddrey Goode welcomed everyone and all attendees introduced themselves.

A. Hramiec explained the change in officers: E. Zayas will remain Treasurer. M. Goode is Chair and A. Hunter is the new Vice Chair. Tyron Boswell was nominated as a new staff representative requiring a formal vote. M. Goode called for a vote of approval to add T. Boswell to the board. S. Blasdale seconded the motion, there were no opposing votes and T. Boswell was unanimously approved to join the board.

M. Goode reviewed the retreat agenda and called for questions.

M. Goode provided time for review of July meeting minutes. There were no questions or amendments. M. Goode called for a motion to accept the minutes. S. Blasdale made a motion to accept the minutes. S. Page seconded the motion, there were no opposing votes and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Goals for SY23

Hramiec began with school year 2022-23 highlights:

Enrollment: Enrollment is set by BPS at 411; currently we are at 332. Under-enrolled due to COVID, trend is consistent across the district. Addressing 79 student gap in a variety of ways; rolling enrollment with next cohort of students to begin on November 28; added an admission .50FTE this year to support the Admissions Manager (M. Moise); investing in marketing focused on student recruitment. Lower enrollment will impact our budget for school year 2024. We have not changed our staffing model in response to the decline in enrollment and have been using ESSER funds to maintain staffing and needed support services.

Discussion: S. Blasdale noted the significant implications of enrollment: primarily facilities and finances and emphasized the importance of finding more students. A. Hunter asked for more information about the marketing firm and process. J. Kantrowitz gave a short description of the process to date and noted that this would be a larger focus at the November meeting.

Staffing: Hramiec noted that BDEA is uniquely in a positive position with staffing. Many schools are still without teachers and BDEA is fully staffed save for two roles: Family Liaison and the position formerly held by Cam Scott (who is now working on contract).

Facilities: A. Hramiec explained that we expanded our footprint at the Timilty building and now have programming carried out on the full first floor.

Food Services: Food services remain a challenge. MyWay Cafe had to close last spring due to staffing changes. This continues to be a challenge with the slow hiring efforts from BPS as cooking from scratch requires another staff member in the kitchen but this position must be filled by BPS.

Board engaged in a discussion initiated by S. Page and S. Blasdale about the importance of meals to our students. The board engaged in a discussion and gave the okay to hire a temp to fill this role given the critical importance of feeding our students.

Whittier Street Health Center (WSHC): Waiting on final approval from Dept. of Public Health to approve the set up, but we will introduce a health center at the 20 Kearsarge (Wheatley) building this school year. This effort is part of a grant funded by DPH submitted by WSHC. The grant includes staffing the health center with a Nurse Practitioner, Caseworker and a Social Worker. All BDEA students will have access to these services.

PD Calendar: At the end of the 2021-22 school staff highlighted a lack of coherence between the Professional Development (PD) offered and BDEA's anti-racist work. The PD calendar is revised with Fridays dedicated to department time, everyone working on the same equitable literacy initiative. Wednesday afternoons are focused on anti-racist work and whole staff work on instructional focus so there is coherence across PD.

GLEAM Grant: We are now in year two of our DESE-funded literacy grant. All work is coming from the teachers led by our literacy specialist Weddee Neufville-Henry. The District has adopted Equitable Literacy as a goal and we are creating culturally responsive literacy communities (CRLCs) supported by the work of Dr. Kimberly Parker, an expert in the field of culturally-responsive literacy. This process is giving every student meaningful opportunities to speak, talk, listen and read with rigor and engagement.

GLEAM Whole School Equitable Literacy Goal:

J. Hallisey, who is a member of the BDEA GLEAM TEAM, provided the board with an update of our whole school instructional goal focused on equitable literacy. J. Hallisey explained the process working with TNTP last year and over the summer creating a Theory of Action, defining a school-wide vision for literacy and then creating a framework for skillbuilding and action this year across departments. J. Hallisey led the board through an activity to Write A Letter To Literacy. Trustees then shared reflections and the impact of engaging in the process.

Data Dive

C. Scott led Trustees through a presentation about disaggregated enrollment data, with a comparison between years.

Key Data:

- In school year 2022-23 there are 109 new students. In 2021-22, we had 79.
- Gender: typically 52% female and 47% male (10% non binary in March 22)
- We are below goal for English Learners
- We are far above goal for Students with Disabilities (increase of nearly 14% since 2018)
- We have increased our Special Education staffing and need to continue to do that while strengthening our programming..
- MAPS testing is carried out with incoming students so Instructional Leaders can place them into the right courses. On average 30% test at or above 9th grade level. A little over $\frac{2}{3}$ of BDEA students come in below HS level. Many

more students in 2021 came in at grade level – now students are coming in much farther behind (COVID complexity). This shows the importance of our investment in literacy.

- 60% of our students test at or below 5th grade on math, 21% test lower than 3rd grade, only 16% test at grade level
- Literacy scores have begun to rebound but math scores have not - this is true statewide and across Boston.
- There is a numeracy class designed for students who are testing below 3rd grade level.
- Attrition has increased from 6.4 to 17.5 our stability rate has also increased.

Discussion: M. Goode commented that BDEA is now serving students with higher needs who are farther from graduation which must impact the school culture. L. Laguerre noted that the math data is troubling. She asked about outside tutoring and support. L. Laguerre suggested a potential collaboration with Northeastern as tutors.

Reflecting on our role as Board Members

A.Hramiec reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the board as well as the committees created last year. A. Hunter then led the board in a reflective exercise to consider their engagement over the last year (what was most enjoyable, what was challenging, how did Trustees use their gifts and talents and how do they want to use them this year). The board then broke into small groups to share reflections and insights. A member from each group then shared highlights from their discussion with the full group Goals for the new year:

- Revisit work in committee equity roundtable
- Create legacy tools
- Create workforce connections
- Support capstone
- Be an “in the moment” resource
- Find/recruit board members with City/BPS knowledge and connections
- Support student voice and parent voice
- Support services sub committee
- Be part of school activities
- Continue to be at graduations with students
- Continue to spread the word about BDEA.

Other discussion points: Trustees are interested to bring in alumni and parents to help outreach and recruitment.. M. Goode referenced the rising violence in the city and how disconnected students are feeling at much younger ages. Need to lean into coalitions like the Office of Black Male Advancement and Workforce and Education (led by Julia Mejia).

Setting our Goals

A.Hramiec noted the subcommittees for school year 2022-23: Facilities, Finance and Marketing/Branding. An email will be sent to sign up for the committee of your choosing. There are other opportunities for involvement. A. Hramiec noted that. N. Suarez helped start the family council.

Board Business

A. Hramiec introduced the audit and the audit process. The finance team reviewed the audit with our accountants and auditors. This year we received a clean audit with no findings. Loss of 115K in our investments (as is the case for everyone) compared to last year where we had a 190K gain. Increased assets by 489K. We need to address ESSER funding and spending in an upcoming meeting. We are meeting all benchmark ratios. Finance team recommends that we move forward to approve the audit. S. Blasdale made a motion to approve the audit. L. Laguerre seconded the motion, there were no opposing votes and the audit was unanimously approved.

New Business

A.Hramiec noted next steps at the conclusion of the meeting She requested that all Trustees sign up for a committee and make recommendations for new board members. Reminder of upcoming events: Partners Breakfast, December Graduation, Symposium.

Board was asked to share one word to conclude the meeting. Words included grateful, connected, questions, encouraged, energized, appreciative , motivated, excited and thankful.

Adjournment

L. Laguerre moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:35. J. Hallisey seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Kantrowitz