

Boston Day and Evening Academy  
Board of Trustees Minutes, Annual Meeting Retreat  
October 26, 2024  
10:00am - 12:30pm

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**Attendance in Person:**

- BDEA Board of Trustees: Jonathan Barry, Maddrey Goode, Charell Hendricks, Alison Hramiec, Salesia Hughes-Hibbert, Alisa Hunter, Akshata Kadagathur, Sonya Page, Amanda Shabowich.
  - Absent: Angela Collins, Jumaane Kendrick, Cris Rothfuss, Dre Woodberry, Evelyn Zayas.
- BDEA Board of Directors: Lili Allen, Jonathan Barry, Alison Hramiec, Jill Kantrowitz, Marcy Ostberg, Emilie Steele.
  - Absent: Alexandra Henderson

**Others in Attendance:** Richelle Villalona, Michelle Allman

**Clerk:** Jill Kantrowitz

**Location:** 20 Kearsarge Avenue Roxbury MA 02119, Room 211

**Documents/Exhibits Used:** September 18, 2024 minutes (for review and approval), October 26 2024 meeting agenda, BoT slides

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**Call to Order**

M. Goode called the meeting of the BDEA Board of Trustees and Board of Directors to order at 10:07 AM.

**Board Minutes and Agenda Review**

M. Goode shared an overview of the Annual Meeting Retreat agenda, emphasizing the opportunity to balance data review with interpersonal connection. Highlights included approval of the audit and a nomination of new BDEA Foundation Directors. M. Goode called for a review of the September 18th meeting minutes:

- Motion: S. Hughes-Hibbert moved to approve the minutes from September 18th.
- Second: S. Page seconded.
- Outcome: All approved, no abstentions.

**Introductions and Connections**

All attendees introduced themselves, sharing their name, role outside of BDEA, board affiliation (school or foundation), and a fun fact from the past year.

**Welcome and Role Clarifications for BDEA Foundation Directors**

A. Hramiec reviewed the difference in responsibilities between BDEA's governing school board and the BDEA's foundation board. Key points:

- **Roles and Responsibilities - BDEA School Board (Board of Trustees) vs. BDEA Foundation Board (Board of Directors)**
  - Trustees: Governance-focused, ensuring financial health, approving major policies, approving ETWA agreement annually, DESE and city compliance, and supporting school sustainability. In the past two years, this has included creating a five-year projected budget for long-term sustainability. Trustees evaluate the Head of School and

- ensure the Board reflects the community. The BOT is divided into subcommittees including the Executive Committee that meets with A. Hramiec monthly. The Head of School sits on the board but has no voting rights.
- Directors: Focus on fundraising and financial stability for the school via the foundation. They are tasked now with diversifying fundraising streams, approving foundation funds to be transferred to the school, and supporting the Director of Advancement in strategy, action and thought partnership. The Head of School and Director of Advancement sit on the Board of Directors but do not have voting rights.
  - Notable distinctions and requirements: One Director must sit on both boards. This person is Jonathan Barry this fiscal year. The Board of Directors is smaller (4-9 people). Trustees and Directors do not vote on daily operations of the school; Directors have no voting rights in Trustee decisions. Trustees must request foundation funding from the Board of Directors for annual budgeting purposes. All Board members must follow a code of ethics and agree to confidentiality and privacy policies.
- **Discussion Highlights:**
    - A. Hramiec reviewed the process by which the annual budget is established and the roles of Directors and Trustees in that process.
    - There is a give/get requirement of \$1,000 to join the Board of Directors. The Director of Advancement and Head of School are currently the only staff representatives. There are no additional staff positions required in the ByLaws, but they are also not excluded.
    - The BDEA Foundation is a 501c3, a Board of Directors is therefore a requirement.
    - Directors and Trustees engaged in a discussion about the history of harm in storytelling for fundraising; shared commitment to avoid deficit-based narratives and emphasize growth and learning from the school's model. All board members need to continue to align messaging to recent brand work for consistency in external messaging.
    - Advocacy for better facilities and more resources from the District needs to be a central focus for both boards.
    - Increasing enrollment is a key focus for the Board of Trustees, while the Board of Directors must understand the larger fundraising landscape.
    - Alumni engagement: Develop a stronger alumni association and incorporate alumni voices into leadership roles.
    - A. Shabowich spoke about resources related to student voice and agency in fundraising, storytelling and community organizing.

### **Nomination and Vote for Board of Directors**

- As required in the BDEA Foundation ByLaws, there was a motion to nominate five individuals to the BOD (Lili Allen, Jonathan Barry, Alexandra Henderson, Marcy Ostberg and Emilie Steele).
  - Motion: M. Goode moved for the nomination.
  - Second: A. Hunter seconded.
  - Outcome: J. Barry abstained due to a conflict of interest. All others approved.
  - Verbal Acceptance: L. Allen, J. Barry, M. Ostberg and E. Steele accepted the nomination. A. Henderson was not present for the meeting (but verbally accepted the nomination in a subsequent Foundation Board meeting on November 6, 2024).

### **Data Dive: Enrollment and Retention**

Presented by Michelle Allman, Data and Accountability Manager:

A. Hramiec shared the importance of disaggregated data review at Board of Trustee meetings. This is required as part of the school's charter, and included in annual reports submitted to DESE each year in August. Annual Reports are reviewed as part of the school's rechartering process every five years, with a focus on equitable access and enrollment practices.

- **Key Metrics:**
  - Enrollment goal from BPS for School Year 2024-25: 333; Internal enrollment goal: 350 students. Currently at 332, with 15 additional students joining in November. In total, summer and early fall recruitment will welcome 150 new students which is a return to pre-COVID recruitment numbers for the first time. Blended Learning current enrollment: 35, BDEA 2.0 is 65. All other students are enrolled in the flagship program.
  - Retention is another key focus to maintain enrollment levels.
  - Attrition: Summer melt was at 13.7%, with efforts to track students post-discharge.
  - Stability rate: 56.6%, an improvement over the prior year (53%).
  - Drop out rate is nearly consistent in the last two years (37.7% in 23-24 vs. 37.4% in 22-23).
  - Reading and Math readiness: Only 16% of students read at high school level; 15% are at a high school level in math.
- **Challenges:**
  - High percentage of students with disabilities (47.8%) and English language learners (12.3%).
  - Fewer students are entering BDEA at high school reading or math levels (based on MAP score).
  - How to meet gap narrowing targets.
- **Discussion Topics:**
  - Alternative education data is always different and difficult to map to district-wide, and state, data.
  - Discussion about how students learn about BDEA (we now track this data), gpa, new student orientation, academic rigor and better clarifying to students how BDEA is different as a value proposition.
  - For the past few years, BDEA enrollment has been lower than student target goals. This may be a result of less restrictive accountability guidelines during the pandemic which led to fewer student discharges from feeder schools.
  - Structural challenges, including resource gaps for students who have higher needs and who are less academically prepared for high school. Serving these students has a significant impact on the need for more prep time and implications for course enrollment capacity as examples.
  - As part of our Accountability Plan we established academic growth and course completion goals. We met course completion goals but not academic growth goals.
  - Structural issues in the city are leading to the change in the demographics of our student population.
  - Which students stay with BDEA and which drop out; how do students move through BPS and allow traditional schools to appear to have no “drop outs;” Our data is comparable to other alt ed schools in our network. While we don’t want to share a deficit-framed story, we also need to tell the reality of who we serve and ask for support to meet their needs.
  - Moving forward, the Board of Trustees would like to learn more about the three formats of learning: Blended Learning, BDEA 2.0 and the Flagship program while also supporting an intake process that identifies which student is best for each program.

### **Committee Break-Out**

[Not conducted due to time constraints.]

### **Board Business**

1. **Vote on SY23-24 Financial Audit**

J. Barry, Board of Trustees Treasurer, spoke about the auditing process and audit outcomes. BDEA hires an independent audit firm which evaluates the legitimacy of the financial statements from the school's third party accountant vendor:

- Key findings: Clean audit with no material weaknesses. Assets and investments grew, while expenditures were under budget.
- Recommendations:
  - Revisit investment strategy for cash balances.
  - Implement dual signature requirements for added regulatory oversight.
- Motion: J. Barry moved to approve the audit as written.
- Second: S. Hughes-Hibbert seconded.
- Outcome: All approved, no abstentions.

## 2. **Vote on Staff Board Representatives**

A. Hramiec shared the staff nominee process and backgrounds of two staff members voted (by all staff) to serve in the Board of Trustee role for a two-year term.

- Nominees: Charell Hendricks and Akshata Kadagathur.
- Motion: S. Hughes-Hibbert moved to approve both nominees.
- Second: J. Barry seconded.
- Outcome: All approved, no abstentions.

## **New Business and Opportunities**

- Upcoming events include a Partners Breakfast on November 7th, and graduation ceremonies. The next graduation is Thursday June 5th.
- Board members were encouraged to attend graduation to show support for families and students.

## **Adjournment**

- Motion: A. Hunter moved to adjourn the meeting.
- Second: A. Shabowich seconded.
- Outcome: All approved, no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35pm by M. Goode.