

BOSTON PREP BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
*Hybrid - 885 River Street, Hyde Park, MA and/
Video Conference link: <https://bostonprep-org.zoom.us/j/7171526696>*
June 21st, 2024
8:00 AM- 10:00 AM

Approved

Trustee Present: Amelia Cheers, Kim Borchert, Andrew Kaplan, Bryant Jone, Claire Newton, Priscilla Guerrero, Vanessa Lipschitz, David Berkley, David Wolff, Josh Johnson, Arivee Vargas, Sarah James

School Staff Present: Meekerley Sanon, Lily Jewell, Tyler Martin, Anders Peterson, Vanessa Shiu, Rob Rametti, Jenine Jeffreys, Lauren Bardsley

I. Open Meeting Protocol

- Kim Borchert, board chair, called the meeting to order at 8:04AM and provided an overview of the meeting agenda.
- An ice breaker was conducted to set a positive and engaging tone for the meeting.
Question: What is your favorite appliance to use, purchase, gift?

II. Vote Approval of Minutes

MOTION to approve

- The May 17th meeting minutes- Approved
- Claire motion to approve, David Wolff seconded, all in favor

III. Public Comment

- Kim called for public comment, no comments
- David Russell, Tom Huff present

IV. Board/ School Business

- Celebrate Departing Trustees: Thanked Andrew Kaplan, Priscilla Guerrero, and Arivee Vargas for their support of Boston Prep individually
- Board Survey
- Vote to Elect New Trustees: Sarah discussed potential new board members. John Beck is a connection through Meekerley who briefly worked at Boston Prep and is now a VP at Butcherbox, Mayeti Gametchu is a connection through Kim and is a lawyer she has attended the toast, Tom Huff is a Development committee member, David Russel is a connection through Andrew Kaplan and currently works at Bain Capital. He has been a member of the finance committee.
 - Sarah made a motion to Vote Jon Beck to The Board- Arivee moved, Kim Seconded, all in favor. Jon approved to be a Trustee.
 - Sarah made a motion to vote Mayeti to the board- Claire moved, Amelia seconded, all in favor. Mayeti was approved to be a trustee.
 - Sarah made a motion to vote Tom to the board. Andrew moved, Kim seconded, all in favor

- Sarah made a motion to vote David to the board. Claire to move, Andrew seconded, all in favor. David Russel approved to be a Trustee.
 - Governance is also working on adding a new one team trustee. In the process
- V. **Committee Wrap up:** Kim introduced the committee wrap ups for SY24. We will dive deeper into the data and details further in the meeting.
 - **Governance Committee Update**
 - Sarah: governance committee this work was starting and formalizing systems based on feedback from DESE, such as a formalized succession planning, revamping the executive review process, supporting the charter renewal. We wanted all these systems formally written and not with one person knowing the process
 - **Outcomes Committee Update**
 - DESE requirements: Successful charter renewal application, submitted Annual report, submitted accountability
 - School Board Processes: Introduction of Open Architects
 - **Development Committee Update**
 - 1.27 of the 1.5 million dollar goal, we have a path to 1.3 and possibly a path to 1.4, we are under the fundraising goal, we made significant gains with the Toast fundraising and adding new donors.
 - We voted in our development committee to 1.5 for next year
 - Also received a 15,000 donation in addition from Bain Capital Children's Charity
 - **Finance Committee Update**
 - 100% clean fiscal audit for SY23
 - 350,000 implemented an investment policy across the school and the foundation that is earning an additional, 350k annually
 - Losing ESSER funding, and thinking through how to reflect this in the budget
 - Vote to approve SY25 Budget: Tyler went over the general overview of changes to the budget from last year, finance committee met to approve the draft budget for the SY25 Budget, a few changes- changes to salary positions, we have a new special education director and we were able to adjust the positions we currently have, we were able to reduce some expenses (copiers, supplies, utilities), we added the international trip into the budget for future years, professional development opportunities, adjusting the staff model from 145 to about 138 staff members for next year.
 - Tyler made motion to approve the SY25 Budget, Kim Moved, Sarah seconded, all in favor
 - Kim thanked Tyler, Courtney and finance committee for getting the budget into a really strong place for next year.
- VI. **Trustee Survey:** Sarah introduced the trustee survey and gave Trustees 10 minutes to fill out the end of year survey
- VII. **SY24 Summary**
 - Meekerley gave high level summary of the end of the school year: 8th grade had their annual trip to NYC, coming into this school year there were three specific goals:
 - Becoming one school through strategic systems and structures: we wanted to create systems that are reflective of Boston Prep today, we implemented a school wide feedback system called TeachBoost, we shifted to online interim assessment format via Edulastic, established school- wide diagnostic testing via iReady

- Honoring old traditions: while introducing new ones, deciphering what makes Boston Prep while being responsive to international trips– went to Spain even though old traditions were Rome, we wanted to add student voices.
- Fill Critical SY24 Roles: we had some critical roles that were not filled, hired CAO for SY24, Brenda transitioned and Lauren transitioned into COS position, hired new 6-12 Director Student of Supports
- Critical data points for SY24 will be shared in August/September: we are eager to get into the data, we still need to finalized grades and promotional data
- Strategic Planning
 - Pillars reviewed, our mission, our visions
 - Academics World:
 - a) Standard Aligned Curriculum: 9 curriculums adopted, next year we are adopting an additional 15 curricula, we started adopting in one sphere and we wanted to adopt across classes to make sure they are at the same level across all subjects, the MA standards are changing now 8th grade is taking a civics MCAS which is pushing us to adopt high quality work
 - b) Tracking Teacher Development: adopted teachboost, 1243 observations, which says on average every teacher is getting at least 3 observations a month, the goal is 1500 for SY25. Andrew asked what this would have been a year ago, in the past we went off of exit interviews and people expressed they wanted more development feedback. One of the foundations of Boston Prep, getting quick development was a BP promise and we want to make sure that is part of the foundation of the school. Now we can track is very carefully because the Teachboost will carefully track it. David Wolff, expressed that it is great to have people in their classes. David Berkley, and Sarah James expressed formally and informally there would be observations and it was part of the culture and that has recently has not been as much of the expectation or felt comfortable with. The number of observations this year and documentation was a big shift, and there is still room for improvement with the quality of these observations and leverage they have to drive development of the teacher. Jenine confirmed having that support is something that drives teachers to want to grow. Meekerley mentioned a focus for next year to make sure there is high quality of the feedback.
 - c) Adoption of 6-12 Diagnostic Tool: 148% of growth 7th graders made towards their typical growth on iReady reading. Based on the beginning of the year analytics, there was a prediction of how much kids would grow and this show that the kids surpassed expectations for the growth. Next year we will mimic the structure that worked for 6th and 8th grade, and also in the upper high school grades.
 - d) Culture: culture of ethical growth. Comes up in different ways, Portait of the graduate showcase with our Juniors, the students presented the growth they made towards fulfilling their ethical growth vision, we continued with the college visits, students engage in circle, next year we will have the school engage in circles, we are committed to students engaging in ethical growth outside of the classes and in the world. Parents, students, staff members mentioned in a survey that school culture has improved from last year to this year, our goal is to refine these systems and differentiate the systems for all 6-12, and we understand the systems ae critical

- Persistence: 93 students comprise senior cohort, first harvard acceptance, Franklin Cummings tech have continued to partner with us, they came on site to do acceptance for our students and did a signing day, 88 are categorized within the class of 2024, 2 are class of 2023 with outstanding credits, 3 are classified as “grade 13”, 88% received 4 year acceptances, 12% were accepted to 2-year programs. We are also starting to track data when they transfer, data shows that the transfer that those students are less likely to persist, this is data we are starting to track. Part of this has to do with building grit in our students, that even if they struggle when they fall the first time, they can get back up and continue. We want to make sure they are fully academically prepared for the school that they get into, make sure that our bar is high off that they can persist fully in the schools that they are getting in. Making sure we are never lowering the bar. Arivee added how high the stakes are for Black and Latino students, they don’t always have the social capital some of their peers may have, they don’t have the resources to continue to persist even if they start failing, also the adjustment from being the top of your class to a competitive school and realize they are now in a location where everyone is smart just like them, not just academically but also culturally, and she is wondering all the ways to prepare students for these situations so they can handle. It is really important to understand they don’t have the same social networks that some of their peers will, we must push 4 years kids to do it and make sure to understand the different levels. Meekerley– the financial impact of failing classes is detrimental to students. BP has made it a priority to support our students who need to take summer classes, we are also pushing college seminars into a formal class so that students need to have it in their schedule for all, having it in their schedule taught by counselors to help them not just with hard skills but soft skills needed for college as well. Executive Functioning growth, we can do a better job explicitly explaining to our students how to organize their inboxes, agendas, structures, assignments, and in college they don’t get this support in college. David Wolff agrees that these skills are keys. We want to make sure the executive functioning is taught to schools, and tighten up the systems for grading so kids understand the bar at college. How are we going to train staff to make sure they also have a high level of executive functioning? Meekerley has ideas with professional development opportunities. There are still things in the works about this. David Berkley: We are working on what grading for equity looks like in the most effective way. Grading for Equity is a movement in high schools and middle schools that has a lot of merit and practices that in some ways lower the bar for students in terms of academic process more than academic achievement. It is a practice that gives students a way to implement feedback from teachers and sometimes can cause students to sometimes end up submitting deadlines way past when they are due, which causes students to miss deadlines when they get to college. Some practices that we do are causing challenges for students because these are not practices that are standard in college classes. Meekerley- next year we are recommitting to deadlines, and this will cause temporary shock but what we are hearing from alumni in college now is that this is causing too big of a shock, for example an alumni did not understand that homework supports and prepares you for quizzes and classwork. We are doing a disservice if we are lenient on deadlines.
- Human Capital: Currently hired for SY25, 74% SY25 staff is already licensed and highly qualified. Data to be determined, teacher attrition for SY24, which will be finalized august 1st. We will still have open roles which means that we will be hiring over the summer

VIII. Strategic Planning and SY25 Priorities

- Questions: Wolff, what will the changes be specifically with less staff, Claire, what are the key data points in all the different areas: teams, persistence, academics, and have

regular check ins about the specific data points and what the updates are on the data goals. Meekerley, expressed this is a revamping that outcomes committee will be doing

- Data, Rationale, Connection to the Mission
- End Goal: need to go slow in order to go far, we have been working with Consultants through the Barr foundation.
- Update: Feedback from the board and retreat from Barr Foundation, need to make short term goal settings, merging POG work plan
- Strategic Planning Update: two trains– long term vision goal and short term faster trains, to make sure that they have a strategic vision
- Theory of Change + SY25 Priorities: see the chart in slides, academics, culture of ethical growth, summary of where we want to go in long term and short term
- Meekerley and Sarah asked if anyone had questions: Vanessa mentioned that this feels like a lot and understanding what the short term push is truly, what does data driven mean in HQIM process since typically there can be a data drop, how are we allowing ourselves to prioritize in each year since there is a lot, especially for people who are super invested to understand how to actually do this work. Meekerley agreed, thinking through how we are going to do this in the long term, and thinking in the short term. We do need to map this out so we can have strategic steps stones and can scale back if we see that we have too much. Sarah, cross disciplinary is a very lofty goal, definitely need very experienced content leaders, naming. Wolff emphasized that there are basic norms cross-disciplinary. The main focus will be across literacy matters, narrow for now. We are not talking about projects, we are talking about having normed literacy strategies across disciplines. We are going to be outside sources to make sure that all departments are connected. We want to make sure there are norms for all students and all teachers, because if we do this well we can shift what is cross-disciplinary. Vanessa, being mindful about how much change will be every year to make sure that we are doing it mindfully. Meekerley, every teacher and leader will need different levels of this to make sure they can play out in all of the parts of the board. Berkeley, Rob has been talking a lot about accountability for students and wants to see it show up in the theory of change. And how are we going to make sure this happens? How are we going to make sure that students feel that they have to engage with materials? Rob: We could see this live in intention teacher moves, and moves we are all agreeing to such as a revised policy, late policy, maybe not living in theory of change but in the. Valonda: making sure this is also included in the culture and the academic joy, and actually shifting academic policy. Meekerley, there is a progression element.

IX. Executive Session

- Executive Director Evaluation
 - Document Review
 - SY24 Evaluation

ACTION:

- Board Survey
- Executive Session

Materials

- [May 17th Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes](#)
- Survey
- Slides

Meeting adjourned at {X}
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