

## Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

### Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 10, 2020

185 Lancaster Street, Portland, Maine

Present: Board Chair Patti Oldmixon, Vice Chair Christian Sparling, Treasurer Peter Montano, Secretary Ruth Dean, Thorn Dickinson, Nik Charov

Guests: Executive Director Kelli Pryor, School Physician Dr. Charles de Sieyes, Head of School Chad Strout, Director of Special Education Laura Parks, Operations Manager Tyler Beaulieu, Accounting Manager Kerry Bush, Engineering Teacher Jon Amory, Attorney Dan Amory, Attorney Dan Stockford

Agenda item
<p><b>I. Opening Items</b></p> <p>A. Minutes</p> <p>Secretary Ruth Dean moves to accept the minutes. Thorn Dickinson seconded. All voted in favor.</p>
<p><b>II. Finance</b></p> <p>A. Financial reports</p> <p>Treasurer Peter Montano noted there was no vote today as the next financial report would be March 31st. By the end of February, the school was looking at a \$227,000 net surplus. This is expected to be spent by the end of the year as there is traditionally more spending towards the end of the school year. Donations are under budget by \$30,000 from projections. Personnel costs are under budget by \$260,000 as some positions are unfilled while we look at how pathways will work and other positions haven't been able to be filled. Facilities were under budget as maintenance work is normally done later in the year. Operating expenses were currently under budget by \$18,000. Several of these line items are expected to grow. The budget is expected to break even by the end of the year.</p>
<p><b>III. School</b></p> <p>A. MCSC monitoring</p> <p>Executive Director Kelli Pryor presented the highlights of the Maine Charter School Commission's monitoring report for SY 2018-19.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Commendations<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) High re-enrollment rate</li><li>b) Little turnover in board</li></ol></li><li>2. Considerations moving forward<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Turnover in Administration</li><li>b) ELA is strong, school needs plan for mathematics</li></ol></li></ol> <p>Board Chair Patti Oldmixon asked if there were any questions, there were none.</p>

## B. COVID-19 response

Executive Director Kelli Pryor introduced School physician Dr. Charles de Sieyes, who presented on the current status of the COVID-19 response. Dr. Chuck started by letting everyone know that this is a rapidly evolving situation and all schools are struggling to respond to this. He got a show of hands from the audience confirming that everyone has been reading the Daily COVID-19 email updates sent out by the school. He went on to explain that the big issue is that Maine is way behind on getting test kits. For now our major goal is prevention, if the virus spreads here the goal would be mitigation.

Most important step in prevention is washing your hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds. Another important goal is to not overwhelm our medical facilities. If you or your child is sick, you should call the doctor's office before you go. The school will need to be flexible with absenteeism with both students and staff to prevent the spread. For now business will carry on as usual in the building, but any events that involve inviting the public or field trips will be cancelled. If absenteeism were to reach 15% the school will look into closing for a minimum of two weeks. Bottom line is he is proud of the school's prevention measures thus far and recommends going to the CDC and DOE pages on the virus for more information.

Treasurer Peter Montano followed up with a comment that all employee sick time will be covered during this situation. If you are sick you should stay home and get better.

## C. Certification Policy

Head of School Chad Strout presented the second reading of the teacher certification policy. Thorn Dickinson motioned to pass. Secretary Ruth Dean seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

## D. Mission update

Executive Director Kelli Pryor opened a presentation by sharing again the school's mission statement. She noted that alumni frequently point out that their ability to handle open ended problems sets them apart from their peers after Baxter. Maine's need for STEM careers is growing with the state losing 231 engineers a year. Meanwhile we have identified strong outcomes from our engineering pathway. For instance, across the nation, on average 60% of first year engineering majors switch to another major. Meanwhile, to date, every Baxter graduate of the engineering pathway has stuck with their major. Now the school will be moving towards providing more concentrations like the engineering pathway to meeting the education needs of southern Maine.

Engineering teacher Jon Amory went up to speak further on the new pathways. He noted this process will not be a drastic shift that will happen overnight, but more of a steady transition. The idea is to empower teachers to drive the curriculum they want. One goal is finding a balance in the curriculum structured curriculum and open ended ability to sample courses. Current schedule is driven by seniors and faculty availability and doesn't allow cross-curricular work. He demonstrated multiple examples of how the pathway may look.

The board discussed the plan and asked questions.

#### **IV. Parent Engagement**

##### **A. BPO**

BPO Representative Karen Fream said thank you to advisors who asked parents to join the email list. As a result, one parent made it possible for BPO meetings to happen at the new Two Fat Cats location in the future. The next BPO meeting will happen after this board meeting. She then went over projects the BPO is working:

- Food for staff, chocolate on Valentine's Day, lunch another day.
- Organizing an informal parent get together.
- Parents helping out with the legislature.

#### **V. Public Comment**

Teacher Breanne Lucy brought a group of teachers up to the front of the room and read a letter from the Baxter Education Association. Board Chair Patti Oldmixon stated that personnel matters were not appropriate for discussion in a public forum.

#### **VI. Closing**

##### **A. Executive session\***

Board Chair Patti Oldmixon motions we go into executive session, seconded by Peter Montano. All were in favor.

**Next regular meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 14, 2020**

185 Lancaster Street, Portland, Maine

*\* Executive session to discuss collective bargaining pursuant to Section 405(6)(D) of Title 1 of the Maine Revised Statutes.*