

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 9, 2021

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

Absent:

Guests: Executive Director Kelli Pryor, Head of School Cicy Po, Assistant Principal Mary King, School Physician Dr. Charles DeSieves

Agenda item

I. Opening Items

Chair Patti Oldmixon called the meeting to order at 5:32pm via Zoom.

A. Approval of minutes

Secretary Nik Charov motioned to approve the previous board meeting's minutes, as presented. Peter Montano seconded, all approved 5-0. The minutes will be posted to the BA website.

B. Celebrations

Executive Director Kelli Pryor shared slides on school celebrations, a women-in-STEM alumnae panel that presented to Baxter students, and the list of recent college acceptances.

II. Finance

A. Financial update

Treasurer Peter Montano presented budget profit and loss performance for the current fiscal year through January 31, 2021. The ratio of assets to liabilities continues to stay above 2.5 (the Maine Charter School Commission likes to see a ratio above 1.5). Cash on hand exceeds one month of operations. There is a \$430k account receivable reimbursement coming from the Covid Relief Fund. BA is ahead of budget this year due to planning for a 10% cut that never materialized from the State, and the balance sheet remains strong. Consequently, the school now has more than \$700k accumulated to help retire debt. Assets have increased since June 2019 by \$1.2m. In February, faculty received raises. While the financial picture is healthy, cuts from the State may still happen in the coming year.

III. School program

A. Enrollment report

Executive Director Kelli Pryor presented the latest enrollment data. The incoming class of 2025 stands at 109; the classes of '24 and '23 will each also increase by 9. All applications for the class of

2025 were accepted this winter; there was no lottery necessary because of a pandemic-year decrease in enrollment; applications matched the target number to backfill all classes. A wait list is accumulating, and the school expects to run rolling admissions through the summer. The enrollment target for the 2021-2022 school year is 410 students. PowerSchool was used successfully to take applications. Kudos to IT manager Amos Cooper for overseeing the transition to this new software platform.

B. Head of School report

Head of School Cicy Po shared information on continued efforts to increase accountability, family engagement, engaging instruction, and visible work. Habits of Work and Learning at BA continue to stress choice, innovation, perseverance, and solutions to serve the community.

C. COVID response

Dr. Charles DeSieves and Kelli Pryor gave an update on the school's Covid response and plans. Feedback is being collected from the BA community about safe return to school, with a parent meeting held on 3/8 and online surveys under way. The school is currently in Stage 2, and that programming will expand slightly this spring with more in-person one-on-one programs and Flex Friday presentations. However, Maine CDC has six requirements to return to school: symptom screening, physical distancing, masking, hand hygiene, PPE for staff, and home isolation for any cases. These requirements require thought and preparation, but BA is also constrained by a school building with fewer windows than other schools and an HVAC that is in the midst of a Covid Relief Funds-supported upgrade. Not all staff have been fully vaccinated yet either. All of this makes a full return to school before the end of this school year unfeasible. Cicy and Kelli met with parents and understand that seniors need connection, 9th graders need introduction, and that everyone wants to be together. Parents are willing to help. Dr. DeSieves cautioned that teens are, in the opinion of the CDC and the virus, adults, and adults are the spreaders of COVID-19. Masking and distancing must continue for the healthy and safety of all.

IV. Public Comment

Meeting attendees queued up to ask and receive answers to questions about more federal relief funding, the addition of more instruction time per day and more virtual classes, the school building's ventilation system, the possibility of individual grades returning to in-person instruction, and the result of the admissions "lottery."

V. Executive Session*

Chair Patti Oldmixon motioned to go into Executive Session at 7:02pm, Thorn Dickinson seconded, all approved.

The board came out of Executive Session and the board meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

Next regular meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 13, 2021 CANCELLED

**Executive session for the purpose of consulting with legal counsel pursuant to Section 405(6)(E) of Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes.*