

## Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

### Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, October 12, 2021

185 Lancaster Street, Portland, Maine

Present: Patti Oldmixon (chair), Peter Montano (treasurer), Nik Charov (secretary), Thorn Dickinson, Jana Lapoint, Simon McGurk, Kelli Pryor (executive director), Cicy Po (head of school)

Absent: Christian Sparling (vice chair, resigned 10/4/21)

#### Agenda item

##### I. Opening Items

Chair Patti Oldmixon called the meeting to order in-person and on Zoom at 5:34pm.

##### A. Approval of minutes

**Secretary Nik Charov made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 14, 2021, meeting minutes as presented, Jana Lapoint seconded, Peter Montano abstained, all others in favor.**

##### B. Board development

Patti Oldmixon explained that due to increasing professional commitments, vice chair Christian Sparling resigned from the Baxter Academy board, effective October 4, 2021. Patti read his resignation letter and commended him for his years of service to BA, "always the voice of reason." **Thorn Dickinson motioned to accept Christian Sparling's resignation, Jana seconded, all in favor.**

With this new vacancy on the board, Patti reviewed the criteria and considerations for new board members. Ruth Dean, previous board member (2013-2020), founder of the Friends of Baxter Academy in 2012, BA interim registrar, South Portland resident and mother of three (including a BA alum), was presented as a candidate for the vacant seat. **Patti motioned to accept Ruth's nomination to the board to finish Christian Sparling's term through July 2023, Jana seconded, all in favor.**

##### II. Finance

##### A. Financial statements

Treasurer Peter Montano presented the profit & loss through the second month of the fiscal year, August 31. BA has \$280k of cash on hand (approx. 22 days, with a target of 60 days). Accounts receivable included \$397k in Covid Relief Funding and \$64k of other federal grant funds. Accounts payable are currently \$52k, though summer salary for teachers in 2022 is now

accruing. The debt retirement fund currently stands at \$600k. “No surprises in the August numbers,” Peter reports.

#### B. Enrollment

BA Executive Director Kelli Pryor reported on the October 1 school census, the day on which the headcount is taken to determine the funding for the next school year. This year, BA’s headcount was 373 on census day, vs. 390 in 2020 and 412 in 2019. This loss will mean a cut of ~\$440k, based on the pre-pandemic trajectory for enrollment. In real terms, this enrollment drop will mean about a \$191k loss in revenue from what was budgeted in 2020, during the initial impact of the pandemic. (BA’s per-student funding from the state is \$7,988 baseline, with adjustment up to \$11,276 with special education and other weighting factors.) Kelli: “BA will need to start rebuilding the student body. While Maine was 4th in the nation for loss of public school students, with ~5,000 students across the state leaving rolls for homeschooling and other options, BA is sharing in that significant hit. The school started in 2013 with 125 students, so we can do this, but it will need to be incremental, because we are always funded based on the prior year’s census number.”

A question about the reasons for the drop in enrollment was raised. Kelli: “Exit conversations have told us that many are going to homeschool, while others have fears about the coronavirus or concerns about masking. No one is expressing disappointment in the school, just the pandemic.”

A question about adding an option for homeschooling students to tap into a virtual academy was raised. Kelli: “The Maine Department of Education (MDOE) is prioritizing in-person instruction this year; hybrid models serving remote students are possible only in emergency situations.”

### III. School program

#### A. SY 2021 monitoring

Kelli continued with a report on the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) monitoring process and draft report. Commission members performed a three-hour virtual visit in August and issued a draft report on the school on September 29. Baxter has expressed concerns about the draft report because it contains student-assessment data that cannot be normed with data trends because the MDOE received a federal waiver from the US Department of Education. Under that waiver, Maine’s public district schools are not required to report 2020 test scores. Baxter and the other nine charter schools have petitioned the MCSC to include charter schools in the waiver along with the rest of Maine’s public schools.

#### B. Head of School report

Head of School Cicy Po reported on the progress of the Principal’s Table with student representatives addressing issues with Flex Friday, TikTok challenges, and gender equity.

Pooled testing began today, with 193 students and faculty tested. Internships have begun at more than 8 partner locations for upper-grade students, thanks to the efforts of outreach coordinator Jonathan DeLorme. Many students are interested in life medical settings; BA seeks additional internship partners there.

C. COVID-19 update

Dr. Charles DeSieyes gave a briefing on the state of the pandemic.

**IV. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

The next board meeting will be November 9.

**V. Executive Session\***

**Patti Oldmixon motioned to enter executive session\* at 7:04pm, Nik Charov seconded, all in favor.**

**After the executive session, Patti motioned to adjourn the board meeting at 7:43pm, Nik seconded, all in favor.**

**Next regular meeting: November 9, 2021**

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