

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting

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

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

Guests: Executive Director Kelli Pryor, Head of School Cicy Po, School Physician Charles DeSieves

Agenda item

I. Opening Items

Chair Patti Oldmixon called the meeting to order on Zoom at 5:31pm. [Jeremy Jones](#), the new executive director of the Maine Charter School Commission, introduced himself to the Baxter board and community. He started as a Teach for America teacher in New Orleans before being displaced by Hurricane Katrina, and has since worked as a teacher, principal, and education nonprofit leader in Texas and Tennessee.

A. Approval of minutes

Secretary Nik Charov motioned for the draft minutes from the December 8, 2020, board meeting to be approved. Peter Montano seconded. No changes discussed, motion passed by a roll call vote of 5-0.

B. Celebrations

Executive Director Kelli Pryor shared information on post-secondary readiness opportunities in the school, as well as the first batch of early college acceptances for BA seniors. The dashboard of college logos will continue to be updated through the spring.

C. COVID-19 Response

School consulting physician Dr. Charles DeSieves offered his monthly pandemic update. The rollout of vaccinations is bumpy but progressing. Educators will be in Phase 1b2, which will likely not be reached before the end of February at the earliest. Two doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines continue to be recommended; the state has plenty of refrigeration for these shots, because universities have stepped in to donate equipment. At BA, Northern Light may be consulted on an inoculation program for staff. Dr. DeSieves gives a 50/50 prognosis on a September in-school start, but also cautions that mask wearing and distancing may continue through 2022.

II. Finance

A. Financial statements/audit

Treasurer Peter Montano gave a financial update. The FY20 audit deadline has been extended with the Maine Department of Education and the Maine Charter School Commission due to the pandemic.

The budgeted-to-actual through November 30 had no surprises. As the State has still made no cuts in education funding, BA will adjust teacher salaries in February, per agreement with the Baxter Educators Association. The school continues to spend conservatively because of economic uncertainty and its potential impact on funding in upcoming years. A funding projection for the coming year is expected by late January from the State.

B. Coronavirus Relief Funds

Kelli Pryor gave an update on Coronavirus Relief Funding allocations. New legislation at the close of 2020 granted increased flexibility and offers hope that these granted funds will be freed up to be spent on a longer time frame. These funds require an extraordinary amount of staff time to track and control but “have been an incredible life raft during this time.” Patti Oldmixon commended the team, especially Chief Financial Officer Kerry Bush and Operations Manager Tyler Beaulieu, on their work on the CRF.

III. Board

A. Policy updates

BA counsel Dan Stockford presented updates to the Nondiscrimination and Harassment policies. Recently promulgated federal regulations mandated an update to maintain Title IX conformity. Patti Oldmixon motioned to give notice of a first reading by the board of updated policies AC, ACAA, ACAA-R, ACAB, and ACAB-R. Nik seconded. Motion passed by a roll call vote of 5-0.

IV. School program

A. Enrollment report

Kelli Pryor presented an enrollment update. The effort to extend the application window to February 26 was successful; the lottery will now be held March 3. A self-service virtual tour for prospective families is under development for the BA website and will include a VR tour and videos and presentations by faculty and students. There will also be some live events and an updated FAQ posted. Applications will be taken through Powerschool.

B. Interim Head of School report

Interim Head of School Cicy Po gave an update on the review of academic programs currently under way. Planning has begun for the 2021-22 school year. Input has been sought on the math and Flex Friday programs in particular. The school leadership team is also keeping tabs on special ed, AP progress, student care, the Powerschool migration, and professional evaluation and growth targets for faculty.

C. Head of School hiring process

The hiring committee was delayed by the early December snow storm but has met once to review the results of the community survey. The committee will also interview Cicy Po this week. Further updates to come in February.

V. Public Comment

Community members asked questions about vaccination requirements for returning students (unknown), advertising BA's enrollment season (social media posts have been shared, but word-of-mouth seems to be working well), and physical distancing plans for next year (TBD).

There was no executive session necessary.

Patti Oldmixon motioned to adjourn the board meeting at 6:35pm. Nik seconded. Motion passed by a roll call vote of 5-0.

Next regular meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 9, 2021