

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, October 8, 2019

185 Lancaster Street, Portland, Maine

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

Guests: Executive Director Kelli Pryor, Head of School Chad Strout, Partnerships and Community Outreach Coordinator, Attorney Dan Amory, Attorney Dan Stockford

Agenda item

I. Board

A. Minutes

Board Chair Patti Oldmixon welcomed guests to the meeting and announced that Peter Morrison has resigned from the board. Ruth Dean moved to accept the minutes from the September meeting. Thorn seconded. All were in favor.

II. Finance

A. School finance

Treasurer Peter Montano used the Every Student Succeeds Act dashboards to make a presentation to address differences between Baxter's expenditures, as a charter school, and other districts, such as Westbrook. Peter walked the board through how Baxter's spending compares to both Westbrook's and a virtual charter school, Maine Connections. He highlighted how charter schools must use nonprofit accounting practices and then convert them to governmental accounting before uploading the data into the state reporting system. See the attached presentation.

B. August financials

Peter Montano reviewed the August financial statements with the board. He noted that there is a net surplus coming out of the summer and that spending will normalize as the school year progresses. He noted that current funding is based on the student count from last year. Current ratio: 1:50.

C. Debt service account

Peter Montano recommended that the board establish a debt sinking fund to service the school's long-term debt, incurred to renovate the facility. He proposed that the board set aside \$100,000 each year in a separate savings fund toward a balloon payment in 2024. At that point, the school would then refinance \$1.6 million. This will also help Baxter meet ratio targets in its performance contract with the Maine Charter School Commission.

Peter made a motion to set up up debt sinking fund of \$100,000 over the next five years. Patti Oldmixon seconded. All were in favor.

D. Draft audit report dated June 30, 2019

Baxter has received the draft audit report on its annual financial audit. Peter Montano reviewed the report with the board, noting that the auditors gave the school a clean opinion. The audit is based on an analysis of the organization's transactional practices as well as its board oversight and how money is spent. At Baxter, 91 percent of dollars are going toward students. There was a positive change in net assets and a positive cash flow.

Peter motioned to accept the draft audit report, Thorn seconded. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion.

E. Enrollment

Executive Director Kelli Pryor reported that the October 1 student count is being reconciled across districts. Baxter is increasing its student count with a target of 412.

III. Instructional Program

A. Performance Framework

Executive Director Kelli Pryor shared the new performance framework adopted by the Maine Charter School Commission. It is standardized across Maine's charter schools.

B. Board priorities

Head of School Chad Strout gave an update on progress made on the board's priorities for the instructional team: Work continues to make attendance monitoring efficient. As part of professionalism, teachers have been asked to consistently provide sub plans for absences. Teachers are also charged with supporting students with progress reports using a variety of means pending the completion of maintenance on the Slate grading platform. Advisors are responsible for communicating with families consistently. On the scheduling front, work continues to audit what seniors need for graduation and to provide classes in the spring semester to address those needs.

IV. Parent Engagement

A. Baxter Parent Organization

Nicki Cormier represented the work of the new Baxter Parent Organization (BPO). The parents met and established four main goals: Community activities to bring all members of the community together. Support for the school's advocacy with the legislature. Attendance at board meetings with information sharing. Fundraising to support the school. They have designed the organization to have one point person per group with the intention of not overwhelming the administration or board with requests from multiple sources.

V. Public Comment

Board Chair Patti Oldmixon invited public comments. The board discussed class size and scheduling goals with guests before moving into an executive session.

VI. Board

A. Executive session*

The board took no action following executive session. Patti Oldmixon moved to adjourn the meeting. Ruth Dean seconded. All were in favor.

Next regular meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 12, 2019 (subsequently canceled due to weather)

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.*