

*Great Oaks Bridgeport Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 9, 2020*

Board Members Present: Susan Briggs, Pamela Fraser-Abder, Corey Sneed, Brea Mangrum, Dexter Upshaw, Leticia Sepulveda

Board Members Absent: Denise Carey,

GO-BPT Staff Present: Latoya Hubbard, John Scalice, Ayanna Brown

Foundation Members Present: Ben Chan, Michael Duffy, Tony Shaw, Josh Thomases, Lauren Perkins

Guests: Adam Weinstein (President of the Great Oaks Foundation)

Called to order at 5:21 pm by Susan Briggs

Review of Minutes from the July and August Board Meetings (Leticia Sepulveda)

- Leticia asked the board to review the July 29th, 2020 annual board retreat meeting minutes.
- Motion to approve the July Board retreat meeting minutes moved by Corey second by Pam and passed unanimously.
- Leticia asked the board to review the August 17th, 2020 Special Board meeting minutes.
- Motion to approve the August Special Board Meeting minutes moved by Dexter, second by Corey, and passed unanimously.

Principal's Report (John Scalice)

- John shared highlights from the first day of school with the Board and advised the board that the first day of school was a full virtual day with no students in the building. This gave students an opportunity to participate in a town hall to ask any questions about systems and processes given the impact of COVID protocols and to prepare students for what school would look like.
- John also noted the town hall also gave students an opportunity to meet their new teachers via zoom.
- John shared a welcome back video with the Board that he recorded to show students what the new daily routines would look like. The video included arrival and dismissal routines and what students should bring and not bring to school.
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- John also advised the board that the bus company has been extremely cooperative and is currently working with the school to give additional time for dismissal from the busses.
- John noted that Fellows supported teachers with classroom routines and it was great to see a collaborative effort between teachers and fellows.

- John shared data around Class Sizes vs Expected Attendance showing that the majority of the students expected were in attendance.
- John shared that a self screening health survey is taken by each student each morning and they are reviewed by the school nurse who is working very closely with the department of health.
- Tony asked about student technology in the classroom and John explained that Great Oaks Bridgeport, and stated he was impressed by the technology the school has been able to provide to students at a lower cost.

Director of Operations Report (Latoya Hubbard)

- Latoya gave the board an overview of enrollment and noted that GOBPT is currently over enrolled by about 18 students.
- She also noted there has been a spike in the number of students on the 6th grade waitlist.
- Latoya advised the board that she does not anticipate being over enrolled for long as traditionally the school has seen the highest attrition rate in September
- Tony Shaw asked if the school was surprised to hit their enrollment target, and Latoya said yes given the fact that the school was not able to use traditional recruitment efforts such as canvassing and hosting recruitment events.
- Latoya also advised the board that the school is very pleased with the service they received from ACS and their support in preparing school technology for reopening.
- Latoya noted that there were only two teachers that reported minor tech issues, and those were quickly addressed.

Presentation from the Great Oaks Foundation (Michael Duffy)

- Michael noted last school year the Great Oaks Foundation engaged in a process to discuss and plan the direction of the GOF and the service they are delivering moving forward.
- Michael noted that the services needed by schools change over time as schools mature; and so part of the Foundation's planning involved thinking about how the GOF can continue to support schools through these changes, and discussed the following three levels of support:
 - Comprehensive: Services provided to a school when it is just opening
 - Focus: Services provided to more established schools, focused on mastery, leadership, and community.
 - Partnership: Services provided limited to the tutor program.
- Adam addressed the board and noted that during the process of thinking about how to support schools using the Focus support strategy, the Foundation team collectively thought it should align with a lower cost.
- Tony shared that this year the Foundation would increase professional development for Foundation directors and that there would be additional training for fellow leads.
- Tony also noted they are beginning to prepare and develop the teacher residency program and giving thought to ways in which they can enhance the program.

- Ben described how the finance team would continue to support the school by providing monthly budget reviews, managing TRB payments, and improving cash collection processes.
- Lauren stated that additional support would include fundraising, and working with the school Operations team to secure private and public grants
- Lauren noted the Foundation's support of fellow housing would continue to include support in the grievance process, direct communication with the landlord on any issue, and supporting the move in and move out process.
- Lauren also noted that the Foundation would continue to support the selection of new vendors through the RFP process.
- Lauren spoke about support in student recruitment, and noted that the Foundation has shifted its focus to strategic planning, using a recruitment playbook, and focusing on marketing materials.
- Michael noted that Vanessa Ceas was unable to attend to speak to HR support but noted that the Foundation would continue to provide comprehensive services in this area.
- Josh spoke about the support that the Foundation has been giving around building the data platforms and managing the G-Suite platform.
- Josh noted there has also been very specific work done around leadership support.
- Josh noted Mike Broshard is the current Director of teacher residency and has been working to build the program including identifying strong fellows who will be great candidates for the program.
- Josh stated that Aisha Williams and her team at the Foundation have been meeting weekly with Jess Lewis and Albertha Brown to continue to improve the School's culture program given the shift to distance learning.
- Josh also noted that the school has done a majority of the curriculum work and that the Foundation would be focused on the implementation of curriculum by fellows.
- Michael closed by stating that he has been extremely pleased with the Foundation team, and in each position they have extremely strong staff.
- Michael Duffy noted that shifting from a Comprehensive model to a Focus model would reduce the School's cost from 8% to 5%, and that he spoke with Rob Kelly at the state, who advised that they could schedule time to discuss adjustments to the contract in March.
- Corey thanked the Foundation team for directly addressing the needs of the school that were discussed early last year.

Finance Committee Report (Corey Sneed)

- Corey informed the board that the school is off to a great start and asked Ben to share the August Dashboard.
- In his review of the dashboard, Ben noted that at this time, the school has received per pupil funding allotted through December, and noted that the school is roughly on a budget of about \$700k per month.

- Ben noted that the finance team is focusing on setting up a reserve fund where 1% of the per pupil funding will be saved.
- Ben noted the school is off to a healthy start with a slight surplus.
- Ben noted for FY21 the finance team had a goal of raising \$150k, and he noted several grants will support in meeting that goal.
- Corey provided a follow up on PPP funding and noted the note for PPP was signed on June 12th and has a 24 week draw down.
- Corey noted the purpose of applying for PPP was to protect jobs and at the time the school applied for PPP, the school and the board collectively were uncertain if certain monies due to the school would be delayed.
- Corey noted that the Foundation has offered to bring in their auditors to provide more information on PPP.
- Corey noted that the school would need to apply for loan forgiveness, should the board vote to keep the money.
- He noted that the school is now in possession of additional funding from the state and that it is his recommendation to return the PPP funds.
- Michael shared that he spoke with the school's auditors and they can also be present at the October board meeting to answer any questions regarding PPP.
- Michael noted that the amount of money in PPP would be a huge help to the school, and that the school should reconsider giving it back until they know for sure that things are going back to normal and urged the board to wait to speak with the auditors before making a decision to return the money.
- Corey closed by saying that if we felt we needed the money the school would be able to reapply for the funds at a later time.
- Dexter noted he believed it would be helpful to hear from the auditors to get more information about it before going to a vote about keeping the funds.
- Leticia noted she would feel comfortable voting given the clarity around being able to reapply.
- Pam noted she would also like to get additional information from the auditors before making the decision to return the money.
- Corey noted that interest is still accruing on the loan and emphasized the importance of making a decision so that the school does not continue to accrue interest.
- Susan noted that since there are currently two board members requesting additional information the board would vote on the PPP at the October meeting.
- Corey gave an update on the Operating Deficit Account (ODR). He noted that Ben has done a great job in providing requested information to Geoff, and if the school is able to recoup the \$400k from the ODR it would immediately be applied to the Blue Hub loan.

Academic Committee Report

- The Academic Committee had no additional information to report.

Governance Committee Report (Susan Briggs)

- The Governance Committee had no additional information to report.

The board went into executive session to discuss a personnel matter at 6:52pm and returned from the executive session at 7:24pm.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 pm moved by Pam and second by Corey, and passed unanimously.