

*Great Oaks Bridgeport Monthly Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 21, 2021*

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

GO-BPT Staff Present: Latoya Hubbard, John Scalice, Chris Pellegrino, Angie Cardoso

Foundation Members Present: Ben Chan, Lauren Perkins, Michael Duffy

Guests: Bob Carlson, Ruben Felipe

Called to order at 5:21 pm by Susan Briggs

Review of Minutes from the February and March Board Meeting

- The Board independently reviewed the February Minutes. A motion moved to approve the minutes by Pam, seconded by Brea and passed unanimously.
- The Board independently reviewed the March Meeting minutes and Leticia requested a motion to approve the March Meeting Minutes. Moved by Brea seconded by Corey and passed unanimously.

Community Update (Dexter Upshaw)

Following review of the Board Minutes Pastor Dexter Upshaw opened up the meeting by speaking about the George Floyd Trial and the Derek Chauvin verdict. He noted that the video has been imprinted in the minds of many and noted that while working within our student communities it is important to be aware of emotions that people are processing as some will be happy with the verdict and some feel as if there is still a massive issue of injustice and distrust regarding police officers. He noted the still very complicated feelings of many and the need for a level of compassion for the George Floyd Family, Minnesota, and the Police Officers. He spoke of the need to do our best to give people space to process the world the best that we can, and noted the need to handle those in our sphere of influence with a level of love and compassion. Pastor Dexter spoke of the heaviness of the topic and emphasized finding hope in dark and difficult times and to continue to do the work to make the world a better place.

School Funding Update (Ruben Felipe)

- Ruben Felipe, Executive Director of the CT Charter School Association spoke to the Board regarding the legislative budget and noted a current meeting with the appropriations committee to discuss school funding.
- Legislative priorities - increasing funding for all 21 charter schools in the State , along with Grade Growth for Stamford Excellence and the opening of the Danbury Prospect Charter School.
- Ruben informed the board that a broader funding goal was to get charter schools before getting charters to the foundation amount as established by the ECS formula, currently charter schools receive \$11,250 per pupil which is \$275 below the ECS formula.
- Ruben advised that additionally they were hoping to get anchored into the weights which meant that ELL students WOULD GET 15% MORE, lower income families would get 30% more and schools that are districts that have concentrated poverty would get 30% more.
- He noted that Bridgeport Charter Schools were precluded from these weights despite the fact that areas like Bridgeport and New Haven had some of the largest numbers of low income students.
- Ruben noted a school Leader meeting will take place next Thursday and in May there will be more final information on the final per pupil funding amount as discussed by the appropriations committee and approved by the legislature.

Board Approvals (Latoya Hubbard)

- Latoya requested approval from the board for a new HVAC vendor and noted the school carried out the RFP process by receiving quotes from 3 vendors, Grodsky, Main Enterprise, and R&R. Latoya requested approval from the board to select Grodsky based on cost, services and familiarity with the school equipment.
- Corey requested that diligence be done in terms of ensuring that the 30 day contract termination period be placed on the calendar to ensure that if the school decides to cancel the contract at the end of term the process is managed within that time frame.
- Motion moved to approve Grodsky as the school HVAC vendor Moved by Leticia seconded by Brea Mangrum and passed unanimously.

- Lauren advised the board that the school was awarded a kitchen equipment grant, and noted that NJ Restaurant Equipment was selected and named in the grant following an RFP process carried out by members of the school team and a consultant from the CSDE. Motion moved to approve NJ Restaurant Associates as a sole provider moved by Leticia second by Dexter passed unanimously.
- Michael Duffy introduced Bob Carlson to the board and gave a brief introduction on his work in the Bridgeport Community including multiple civic and philanthropic contributions to the community.
- Bob shared additional information with the Board about his personal and professional background and additional work he has done in the community including being born and raised in Bridgeport and attending Bridgeport Public Schools.
- Susan requested a motion to approve adding Bob Carlson to the Great Oaks Bridgeport Board of Directors. Motion moved by Brea Mangrum and seconded by Leticia. Passed unanimously.

Principal's Report (John Scalice)

- John opened with a reopening update, and informed the Board that beginning April 26th school will be open 4 days per week for HS
- John informed the board that middle school students who opt for in person learning would be returning to the building 4 days a week on May 1st.
- John gave the board an update on ESSER II funding and noted that ESSER planning has been completed with a focus on learning recovery. He noted the following positions have been identified as targets for ESSER funding over the next two years. 6th and 7th grade Social Studies and Science, Reading and Math recovery facilitated by Fellows, Summer and Saturday Enrichment recovery and an additional Social Worker and Guidance Counselor.
- John noted that Fellows who will facilitate Reading and Math recovery would be receiving Orton Gillingham Reading and Singapore Math Delivery training to support students.
- He noted that several of these fellows are also already enrolled in the Relay Program.
- He also informed the board that there will be a Summer and Saturday Enrichment and Recovery program through our distance program beginning in September.
- Angie Cardoso gave the Board an update on Exact Path growth results and began by explaining term identifiers which include student growth, scores, and national percentile rank. She informed the board that the growth has been positive.

- She informed the board that there were 2 diagnostic tests one in October and one in March and there will be one schedule in May following SBAC testing.
- Angie noted overall growth for all students in the National Percentile rank, with the exception of a population of new 6th grade students which is inclusive of a higher EL population.
- Chris Pellegrino gave the board an overview of EOY senior events and began by letting the board know that many of the EOY senior events are being led by a 12th grade senior committee.
- Some of the dates Chris shared are senior decision day on May 1st, Senior picture day on May 21st, Virtual Signing Day event on June 4th, Senior Prom tentative on June 11th, and a tentative graduation ceremony date on June 18th.
- Chris informed the board that there will be a Senior week event the week of June 11th through June 18th, several end of year field trips and on site school events all of which were chosen and voted on by the students.
- Chris noted some of the options for graduation locations are , The Klein, The Bijou Theatre, and Webster Bank.
- Corey made a suggestion to look into the newly renovated Amphitheatre.
- Chris also shared several noted college acceptances which include UCONN, Fordham, Johnson and Wales, and Howard University.
- John closed out the Principal report with a teacher spotlight on Ms. Obuchowski and how she has been able to use technology, specifically the GO Guardian platform to support student learning resulting in higher student performance and diverse learners.

Director of Operations Report (Latoya Hubbard)

- Latoya opened up with an enrollment update and advised the board that Great Oaks ran the annual lottery on April 7th.
- Latoya noted that due to an expected over enrollment in the rising 9th grade school population, only 74 incoming 6th grade students.
- Latoya noted that now that there are less students to recruit, she noted that the school would now focus on the student and new family experience as well as current student retention.
- She noted intent to return surveys was distributed to current families and a collective effort will be made to speak with families that may be considering other schools.
- Latoya also shared a potential partnership with the Southwest Community Health Center to provide health services to Great Oaks Students. She noted it is a service currently provided to other schools in Bridgeport and that a meeting will be scheduled with their CSO to learn more about the program.

- Susan and Corey expressed HIPAA concerns and compliance concerns and noted the need for diligence to ensure the school would be in compliance with Charter expectations if this option would be considered, and requested further discussion with the board as we learn more.
- Latoya advised the board that a new PowerSchool Administrator recently joined the Operations team, and highlighted that he comes to Great Oaks with 17 years of experience.
- Susan also highlighted hearing that the staff jackets that were gifted by the board were well received and John confirmed that staff was very pleased with the gift.

Finance Committee Report (Corey Sneed)

- Ben reviewed the school finance dashboard and noted that the school has been funded through the end of June and noted the school financial position is healthy.
- He also informed the board of a continued effort to build the school reserves and savings, and noted that a lot of the state and federal funding have supported in allowing the school to save.
- Ben also gave the board a brief overview of the federal funding through the ESSER grants and when the funds would be expected.
- Corey noted that for the next board meeting there will be a line included in the dashboard to include grant funding which would further detail any variances.

Governance Committee Report (Susan Briggs)

- Susan advised the board that as the school heads towards renewal in October the same consultants should be considered.
- Susan also advised that further discussion regarding expansion for an elementary school would be explored at the annual board retreat.

Susan asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Corey and 2nd by Dexter The board meeting was adjourned at 7:57 pm.