

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 14, 2015

54 York Street, Portland, Maine

Directors Present: Kelli Pryor, Allison Crean Davis, Kim Gustafson, Christian Sparling, Ruth Dean

Guests Present: Carl Stasio (Executive Director), Michele LaForge (Head of School), Shanna Guevin (Business & Operations Manager)

Agenda & Minutes

I. Opening items

Kelli Pryor, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

A. Minutes

Allison Crean Davis, Board Vice Chair, made a motion to accept the minutes from the Board of Directors meeting on March 10, 2015.

Ruth Dean seconded, and all board members present unanimously approved the board minutes from March 10, 2015.

II. Governance

A. Compliance, performance indicators, leadership evaluation

The annual Charter Commission review will be on June 11, 2015. Allison distributed and reviewed with the Board and guests a draft of the performance indicators that will be used to measure progress. Maine's Department of Education and the Charter Commission declare the majority of the indicators (i.e. Proficiency on Maine State Assessments, Student Academic Growth, Financial responsibility and Sustainability) that are to be used. This year, the Charter Commission offered Baxter, and other Maine charter schools, the opportunity to revise *how* some of those indicators are measured. In collaboration with Charter Commission representative, Lori Pendleton, Baxter made minor edits, one of which was the adoption of the Common Core version of the NWEA (rather than the standard version of NWEA used last year). This new version of the NWEA assessment is aligned with the Common Core Standards, and therefore serves as a more effective and meaningful measure of student academic growth. This draft of the Performance Indicators has been submitted to the Charter Commission for approval.

Kelli noted that another part of the Charter Commission review is the leadership evaluation, which will be shared with the Commission on June 11th. Kelli and Allison will meet with Baxter's leadership team, comprised of Head of School Michele LaForge and Executive Director Carl Stasio, to conduct this year's evaluations.

III. Finances

A. Quarterly financials

Although absent at the board meeting, Board Treasurer Peter Montano prepared financial statements that were recently submitted to the Charter Commission. Shanna Guevin, Business and Operations Manager, presented these statements to the Board. Baxter Academy is currently out of the Bangor Savings Bank Line of Credit, and has been for over a month. The distributed statements do not

reflect a \$50,000 pledge, nor the special education grant awarded by the State. On May 1st, 2015, the 4th quarter invoices will be sent out for student tuition.

B. Development/Grants/ Partnerships

Kelli has continued to work on outreach and grant opportunities. Much of her recent work has been focused on opportunities that allow Baxter to reach students who want greater access to Baxter's STEM opportunities – both students who are enrolled at Baxter and those not currently attending. Alongside Michele LaForge and a team of teachers, Kelli has begun work to implement a summer learning program, which will operate in collaboration with the Maine State of Learning pilot, which will create digital badges as credit for learning that happens beyond a traditional school day. Other local organizations, such as RippleEffect, Breakwater School, and SailMaine are a few of the other organizations that are also participating in this badging program. This summer learning program serves many purposes, among them extending the School's reach and building relationships with neighbors.

Additionally, new partnerships have been formed with local organizations, such as Biodiversity Research Institute and the Wells Reserve. These, and other, local organizations are providing internships to Baxter students and large-scale Flex Friday projects.

The STEM College Fair is scheduled for June 5 at Baxter Academy. Admissions representatives from STEM colleges will be at Baxter in the afternoon. This College Fair will be open to students from other high schools who are also interested in STEM colleges.

IV. Facilities

A. 2015-16 & beyond

Executive Director Carl Stasio gave an update on facilities. Tomorrow morning, Carl will be meeting with an architect to review a feasibility study and the fit-up costs of new potential auxiliary space. The space that Baxter is considering is approximately 8000 ft² and within walking distance of Baxter's main space at 54 York Street. Michele LaForge and some teaching staff are looking at scheduling possibilities around the additional space. Carl hopes to be able to sign a three-year lease for the auxiliary space within the next month.

V. Transportation

A. Planning

Carl has been in communications recently with Metro, Zoom, and RTP to explore how their respective transportation systems could be used to help transport students to/from Baxter. Utilizing public transportation could drastically cut significant costs out of the budget. It is likely that, for this coming school year, public transportation would be used in conjunction with our current bus provider to help the transportation costs. A meeting with Metro scheduled for today will be rescheduled. A transportation plan for next year will be communicated with parents as soon as preliminary research is in place.

VI. Outreach

A. Charter School coalition

Carl recently met with other Maine charter school representatives at Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. This was the third meeting with the Charter School Coalition in an effort to combine resources, to share services, increase value and essentially cut costs.

B. Head of School Update

Michele provided a Head of School update. She is currently planning for the culmination of the second year, in addition to the opening of the next school year. Anticipated staff openings were recently posted, and Baxter has already received many resumes. She, along with various staff members, have been reflecting on last year's interview process, and are making adjustments for this year's process. For example, there may be half-day visits from teachers being interviewed, rather than full-day. The goal is to make the interview and hiring process more efficient, while still being meaningful.

A date has been determined for new freshman registration, so new and current students will most likely register for next year's classes before the summer. Michele and other staff are thinking of additional ideas- a visit day, for example- to ensure that the excitement and investment in Baxter is maintained throughout the next five months.

The award-winning rookie Robotics Team, composed of Baxter and Greater Portland students, is off to St. Louis the week of April 20th to compete in the World Championships.

VII. Public Discussion

The board meeting was open for public discussion. There were no additional comments.

Board member Christian Sparling proposed that the board conclude the meeting. Allison seconded the motion. All board members present approved that the board conclude the meeting at 7:25 pm.

Next meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 12; 54 York Street