

**Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport
Monthly Board Meeting
October, 12, 2022**

Board Members Present: Bob Carlson (Chair), Corey Sneed (Treasurer), Christopher McMillan (Teacher Representative), Tenssie Ramsay (Member), Diane Gordon (Parent Representative)

Board Members Absent: Eva Vega

GO-BPT Staff Present: John Scalice (Executive Director), Dr. Karen Francis-Barnes, Kay-Ann Hewell-Walker, Latoya Hubbard (Director of Operations), Janay Garrett (Executive Assistant)

Foundation Members Present: Michael Duffy (President), Lauren Perkins (COO), Benjamin Chan (CFO)

Called to Order at 5:20 p.m. by Bob Carlson

Review of Minutes from the September Meeting

The board said they were able to review the minutes from September. B. Carlson noted that a board member who was absent from the September meeting be added to the minutes (Eva Vega), and on the 2nd page B. Carlson was curious about Chris' using the word "norming" and he wanted to clarify if that's what was said. T. Ramsay also noted a correction for the spelling of her name.

B. Carlson pointed out finance notes (page 7) for C. Sneed review.

C. Sneed made the motion to approve September minutes as amended. C. McMillan seconded. Unanimous approval of September minutes as amended. July meeting minutes will be acted on next month after posted.

B. Carlson noted the next item on the agenda is the election of the secretary to the board. B. Carlson asked if we have a motion to elect E. Vega as Secretary of the Board. C. Sneed moved the motion to approve. T. Ramsay seconded the motion. Board unanimously approved the motion.

B. Carlson thanked E. Vega though she could not make tonight's meeting, noting he communicated with her and she accepted the nomination.

School Leadership Report

J. Scalice welcomed everyone to the board meeting and provided a brief overview of the presentation: The executive director's report is to include: a calendar update, monthly data update, SBAC Growth Data overview, and some State Walkthrough Information; then J. Scalice will be turning it over to Karen and Kay-ann, for a baseline data overview from the EdMentum assessment that we gave towards the end of September and the curriculum implementation overview, and then we will be turning it over to Latoya Hubbard, Director of operations to discuss enrollment, facilities and compliance updates.

Executive Director School Report- John Scalice

Calendar Update

J. Scalice first reviewed the calendar updates reflecting adjusted days due to the school needing to close for a total of five days so far, due to first, an HVAC issue, and the other due to a building structural issues that's been remedied at this point that involved safety hazard for students. J. Scalice shared that we were initially scheduled for 182 days, we usually build in two extra for snow day emergencies; with the adjusted for closings, that brought us to 177 which is 3 days short of our mandate of 180 days. John shared in an effort to recoup these days, they were originally scheduled to be closed on October 18th for professional development, we notified parents that we will be open on October 18th so we will be able to recover that day. We normally close entirely for Thanksgiving, that Wednesday, November 23rd, we will have a half day, which is in alignment with Bridgeport Public Schools. And then we will be open for January 6th, which we were originally closed for a professional development day. J. Scalice shared that those 3 days they were able to recover fairly easily.

J. Scalice shared that what we've done for our adjusted snow day recovery, since we don't have those two days built in, is we will be able to add to our June calendar so our last day of school is officially June 16th, keeping in mind the Juneteenth holiday on June 19th this year. We will begin adding days to the calendar this year beginning with June 20th through June 29th, which is the absolute last day of school. Then anything over nine snowdays, let's hope we don't get into 9 snowday territory this year, we will start going backwards with spring break. That would bring us up to potentially 15-16 days of school. If we were to have more than 15 snow days, we would at that point more than likely be eligible to miss the 180 day cut off point as we did for Hurricane Sandy and things of that nature. Normally when there are major emergencies or huge disruptions to the school calendar, they do allow for that application to be filed.

B. Carlson asked if the loss of 2 PD days cost the school monday. J. Scalice indicated that no, the two days actually allow us to make up the time and it doesn't cost money because the school would have been open, we won't have to pay for busing for that day because it's a typically open Bridgeport public school day, so that's why it was added in. Normally the only

time it costs money, outside of salary, is if we have to pay for busing on days that Bridgeport public school is closed. So if we were to get to 9-10 snow day recovery days, we would likely have to pay for busing, but I do also know that this is in alignment with Bridgeport public schools snow recovery plan, so if we are up that high, chances are they are going to be open also.

Monthly Data Update

J. Scalice reviewed the traditional monthly data, which begins with average daily attendance. J. Scalice shared that currently the middle school is currently at 94% and the high school is at 93% so we are ending September and beginning October with very strong attendance. We have just started our first attendance contest for the year. We thought it would be a good idea to bring the students back into the building after being closed for almost a week, making sure our students are coming. What also helped with the high school is there was a field trip today, so we had very high attendance numbers for that as well. So everyone is fully aware that school is back in session, all the students are coming in, we aren't seeing the dip we were fearful of seeing being closed for almost a week and students communicating to parents that I think we aren't open yet, so it was very good to see students return on Monday.

Chronic absenteeism rate doesn't normally start being calculated until the end of October. That's because Chronic absenteeism is calculated against days missed versus days enrolled. For example, if you were absent the 2nd day of school, you would be chronically absent because you had a 50% attendance rate. So normally to get a nice set of data, we don't calculate that until the end of October. We monitor attendance through our attendance teams to target students who are starting to display absences, but in terms of calculating the percentage for the school, that usually comes a little bit later.

Our suspension rate is currently at 5%; we have been having ongoing conversations about suspension rates for the middle school and high school. We are probably 8-9 pts. Below where we were last year, but last year we saw a big influx of behavior at the beginning of the year. What we have seen is a lot more teacher managed behavior, a lot more parent contact, and a lot more parents engaging with the school, based on the phone calls from the liaison position that we created last year. So there's a lot less strain on communication in terms of the parents in the schools, so parents are more informed also about academic performance, so when they're getting calls about behavior, it isn't leading into a conversation about "why am I only being called for x, y and z," because they are getting a much larger and broader picture of their student's overall performance.

J. Scalice noted that the CSDE informed us that they would not be producing growth data, as we talked about in July, so they produced growth data for SBAC. It was released on the ed site public page a couple of weeks ago and we were able to dissect that data a little bit and

compare it to our '18-'19 data. One of the things CSDE did inform us is that the SBAC data is a combination of the '18-'19 growth, and 20-21 based on that cohorted model approach that they took for students who either elected to take the assessment; there is still some confusion about how that was calculated. What we were able to see however is that our pre-pandemic and post-pandemic growth numbers are relatively within striking distance of each other.

J. Scalice shared that our high water mark for ELA was 58% that was the one year 18-19 we were excited about because it was our highest growth number at that point and it outpaced CT state growth; what we saw last year, so our first full year back post pandemic, we set a high water mark for our MATH growth at 56%, 3pts show of math growth in CT state, that closed the gap by 19% so a huge increase in performance in our math. A lot of that is attributed to our 6th grade who started to engage in that Midschool math curriculum. Their growth number actually outpaced the state when it was a standalone. Our ELA grades as well, so at least ½ our students are growing significantly over their target number. Then when we piece it out a bit more, and unpack the impact the pandemic had- the biggest impact we are seeing is that our our 6th students who are now 8th grade students, starting the school with us in a virtual setting; students who never came in the building, didn't have an opportunity to build relationships with our teachers and staff, and didn't really engage with our approach, which is educating the whole child. Once we teased those out, we noticed that students who started in person or who went hybrid after already starting in person, is that our ELA measure again, outpaced the state and we closed down to a 2% gap with our math score.

J. Scalice shared some key takeaways from the data. Students who began in person typically showed higher growth (grades 6 and 8) than our 7th grade students who began remotely. We demonstrated a 19% growth in the math gap, with GO greatest so far, the school's baseline data reflects that we are on track for the 10-15% proficiency growth on the SBAC and most grades have already outperformed their SBAC data from the last year, and lastly, cohorts that started in person outperformed state growth in ELA and were within 2% in math. So that in person instruction and connection that has been talked about here and nationally, had a huge impact on our students.

J. Scalice gave an overview of the state visit on the 28th with Jennifer Webb, with the CSDE turnaround office, Jennifer Michalek, a CSDE math consultant, and Josh Thomases, a consultant from IP^2. Jennifer Webb is one of the people we speak to about our corrective action plans, a person who gives us guidance on the ELA structure. Jenn Michalek is one of the most senior Math consultants at CSDE, and Josh Tomases who was our former Executive Vice President, was also invited on the walkthrough, provided a fantastic write up as well, and the focus of that walkthrough was the curriculum implementation.

J. Scalice noted that at the September and July board meetings, we talked a lot about our new curriculum and the impact we expected to have on our students. We were able to get an overview of both programs from Karen and Kay-Ann; we had two groups, one visited four math classrooms, the other visited four ELA classrooms, they were split up between high school and middle school, not cherry picking, and they were 15 minutes per observations. On a state walkthrough, you tend to see 5-6 minutes of a walkthrough, with 5 minutes tending to be on the longer side of a state walkthrough, but 15 minutes allowed us to talk to students, observe students, learn best teaching practices, and observe more than one section of the lesson, which in turn, allowed for rich group debrief, and share findings with Karen and Kay-Ann.

When it comes to student engagement, there are two terms you will hear, one is compliance and one is strategic compliance. There are 5 levels, one i

Our takeaways were that the majority of students were engaged in learning between compliance and strategic compliance, rigor of work was appropriate for grade level, no “teaching down,” the “glows” of the visit, included the instructional framework being evident across all classes, the program was evident, teachers were aware of their classes and the vocabulary focus was evident in all classes. The next Steps, included developing questioning methods for teachers, transfer of ownership to students, instructional connection and group intentionality.

J. Scalice then led us into the EdMentum Assessment, which Dr. Karen Francis-Barnes presented. Dr. Francis-Barnes shared that the EdMentum Assessment was based on three separate assessments for math, and several separate assessments for ELA. She noted that we took the assessment between Sept 12th and September 20th, including makeup days, in an effort to include as many students as possible; this year we had 100 students more than the previous year take the assessment. We noticed that overall, our assessment data was stronger this year than previous years, including less students at below which means they are not meeting standards at all, and much more of our students at meeting or exceeding standards. Dr. Karen shared the highlights of the data, included 6th-7th graders outpacing themselves, counter to the narrative of the “summer slide,” the 7th graders didn’t demonstrate that at all in their assessments. All of our kids are right where they need to be at this point for us to move forward;

Based on this data, we use it to do a lot of our planning for the rest of the year. Dr. Francis Barnes shared that the next assessment is in January, with IABs in between then to know how we are moving our kids.

We use this data to ask why teachers are pulling students to the table. So we are moving towards pulling kids according to their data. We are using our data to inform ELA and math

stations and teacher-led groups during 90 min blocks, 30 min Flex groups with practice intervention and extension and 30 min exact path groups. We have also identified priority areas in ELA vocabulary and math fluency.

T. Ramsay asked a question about classroom management and how to support students who have IEPs. Dr. Karen Francis-Barnes discussed how flex groups on the ELA side for example, allow them to have 5 groups based on the baseline data and interventions, including students in special ed; a mixture of kids who are general ed and diverse learners, for example; they are working closely with new coordinator Ms. Tuzzio to support students by placing in them in the specific groups they need the most, to get what they need.

C. Sneed asked about students who are below level at the baseline, in an effort to understand how students set realistic goals, so their confidence is not harmed, but/and also, if they have lofty goals, they are able to develop concrete steps to get there. He asked about 360 feedback for the student themselves to express their own challenges. Dr. Karen Francis Barnes discussed ways they are aiming to be more student centered, including a goal setting process including 1:1 conferences with teachers, once the students themselves looked at their own data and worked with teachers to process and understand the numbers in an effort to improve. He continued to ask more about student needs and resources and how they're taking these things into account. Dr. Karen Francis-Barnes shared that they gave teachers scripts to review with students to create action plans with their students. She also shared that before and after school support is also added to the array of choices.

J. Scalice said they avoid extra homework as a part of their action plan; fellows and teachers are learning to identify what they need from fellows and teachers to get there. T. Ramsay also asked about parent involvement in moving children beyond their data. Dr. Francis-Barnes shared they're working on parent reports and delivering parent information to make it an easier turnaround for parents to have similar conversations with their children. T. Ramsay shared she knows a student who is struggling, so she was asking specifically about how to help said student with improving in math and ELA.

Kay Ann joined the conversation to discuss the humanities team focus goals, including intellectual prep, which engages students throughout the lesson and is inclusive of different types of questions, a monthly professional learning session on engagement strategies and question techniques, setting monthly goals to improve instruction, weekly coaching meeting to embed strategies within lesson prep, employ video coaching to analyze changes in the classroom, and peer collaboration to improve instructional practices. She also shared next steps which included in STEM, a focus on Mathematical language routines and questioning strategies.

Director of Operations Report - Latoya Hubbard

L. Hubbard shared a quick update on enrollment, starting at 671, with only 4 concurrent enrollments and landing with a final enrollment of 667! L. Hubbard also shared a facilities update, including an update on the school closure for a professional assessment of due falling brick, unremoved from a former wall. The phases for resolving the building issues will take place/took place in 4 phases starting with a full assessment, to be completed by or during Christmas break.

L. Hubbard also gave an update on teacher certification, with 19% pending certification, 61% certified, and 20% pending review.

B. Carlson asked about any approvals and C. Sneed reminded B. Carlson these would be covered during the finance section of the board meeting.

Finance Committee Updates - Corey Sneed

B. Chan reviewed the financial dashboard, including \$2M in the operating account to take us through the end of December (per pupil funded through oct/nov/dec and what was left in our account); food account was \$28,000, we are required to have a separate account for all food purchases and then all the incoming revenue from USDA for school lunch program. The board has approved the reserve account at 3% every month pending a good, healthy month. We are currently at \$2.3 M dollars which is remarkable.

B. Chan reviewed the loan(s)- there are none other than the one left for the foundation; at the end of september it was \$43,000; there were 2 payments left, the last payment will be in November, October payment has already been made, so there is \$19,000 left then the school will be debt-free completely. Bluehub was paid off at the end of the last fiscal year. In terms of fundraising, thanks to the ops team and L. Perkins and M. Duffy, the Barr came in at \$166,000 and as we discussed in the finance committee which we met earlier on Tuesday, we talked about the either \$100,000 as a goal, since fundraising is a continuous process; there are a couple of grants the school has applied for, as a heads up - Rotary Grant and Near & Far Aid is something we should hear about soon, and it was a very favorable meeting John had with the grantors, the foundation.

B. Carlson jumped in to ask about the potential amounts for the deficit- L. Perkins noted we applied for \$25,000 for the rotary and we anticipate about that amount will also come from Near & Far aid, which would chip the deficient in about half, but we discussed that target of \$266,000 is a grant we had in the pipeline back in May for \$100,000 we thought we'd receive but didn't, but we pulled the associated expenses off the operating budget when we did not

receive the grant, so that deficit is more of a shortfall in fundraising, rather than a deficit in the operating budget. B. Chan noted then, we are seeing it as a goal and continuous effort to look at it as a fundraising goal, through either restricted or unrestricted funds.

B. Chan noted that the actual expenses so far, first 3 months, 661 as the driver for the enrollment for per pupil; that's great, that's what L. Hubbard was talking about, our charter says 661, we come in a little higher. So we will be fully funded against the charter and that drives the budget and gives us confidence that the hiring and spending can go accordingly.

B. Carlson asked about the 661 enrollment number budget, and whether it is to be amended in terms of dollars, but B. Chan and C. Sneed reminded B. Carlson that the number of 661 of state funding per pupil is locked in.

B. Chan reviewed all sources of funding, including state funding, title funding, federal funding and other funding sources. B. Chan SPED funding had not yet been added into the budget, as B. Chan noted that SPED enrollment would come through by the Middle of October, to invoice BPT school district for those funds; missing September meal claim, due to a lag at the end of each month, and for ESSER, just needing to be sure of what we are spending FY22 number to draw down against.

B. Chan reviewed all expenses, noting salaries should be less than budget since teachers are paid through the summer, including two payrolls to catch up to for actual; everything else was in line with spending, and we've discussed how in facilities there was a bit more up front spending in terms of cleaning and repairs that had to be made; tutorNP, non personnel expenses there were costs for utilities, etc. \$14,000 extra, the numbers are coming in right on track, with expenses; the school has put in place a payment process to channel all the invoices so they can be approved before the payment, so there are systems and safeguards in place. Lastly, B. Chan noted that the finance committee discussed tightening credit card spending to be sure we stay within the \$5,000 limit per card and then as a quick update on the audit, the financials have been in for a while and they're going through the last bit of selections; the school has employee records and rosters, etc but nothing including financials at this point, so we should be on the tail end of the audit and be in a very good place to have the financial report by the auditors at the next board meeting.

C. Sneed referenced the credit card conversation asking if the balance would be brought down and the limit adjusted to reflect the \$5,000 to be uniform. C. Sneed also wants to follow up with J. Scalice about a second credit card to be used for operations purposes.

C. Sneed overall said the health of the school is in great shape, they've been successful at achieving our objectives of paying down debt and still remaining healthy; at the end of the day,

without sacrificing resources; also able to put more resources towards the school for programming and leadership to continue to support students of great oaks. From a finance side, C. Sneed thanked the foundation and finance team at the school for their work.

C. Sneed noted that next up was the slate for votes, with two additions to be considered. As a refresher to the board, C. Sneed reminded the board that this part of the meeting is one where approvals from the finance committee meeting are shared with the board for a vote/approval. C. Sneed noted that the finance committee is in support of the following requests and is recommending an approval for what was presented for us:

C. Sneed asked for a brief description of the trips from L. Hubbard or J. Scalice in case he misses anything. C. Sneed presented a HS field trip to Soundwaters, at a cost of \$450.00, because they've significantly underwritten the majority of the costs of the trip.

L. Hubbard reviewed how Soundwaters is a different experience for the H.S. students, and exposes them to activities like canoeing, it's a beach studies program, exposure to different types of work they could potentially do in the future if they were interested in marine biology, and topics like that –we will give the board a full overview of the trip at the next board meeting. C. Sneed emphasized the outside career opportunities we would not naturally think about, so the trip is expanding students' horizons and opportunities for the future.

C. Sneed requested a motion from the board to approve Soundwaters as a sole source vendor for the school; T. Ramsay moved the vote, C. McMillan seconded. Unanimously approved by the board.

The other vendor is Panorama, a student success platform and data aggregation tool; sole source vendor for the school based on its systems integration capabilities. C. Sneed noted that it is necessary for the school, presenting the way it'll provide real time information, data goals, next steps, etc. when it comes to students and how they're progressing all delivered in real time. C. Sneed feels it's a necessary tool for the school's development. No long term contract, the quote of \$11,512.50 is for the first year, with the cost of years afterwards, if the school decides to stay with Panorama, set at close to half the first year pricing. C. Sneed asked for a motion to approve Panorama, an existing vendor, for the cost of the program since it is over the \$5,000 threshold.

C. Sneed asked for a motion to approve the costs associated with the first year of utilizing Panorama; B. Carlson moved to approve, C. McMillan seconded. Unanimously approved by the board.

C. Sneed reviewed next, any pending operations approvals. C. Sneed first reviewed New Haven Glass & Mirror, for building windows that need immediate repair for safety reasons; L.

Hubbard moved forward with New Haven Glass & Mirror, Co. so C. Sneed was asking for a motion to ratify the New Haven Glass & Mirror Company Invoice. B. Carlson moved to approve, C. McMillan seconded. Unanimous approval to ratify the invoice for New Haven Glass & Mirror Company.

C. Sneed then reviewed BLM Refrigeration Heating & Air Conditioning; this was an RFP, there were two other vendors also included in the RFP, this was for the refrigerator units in the dining hall and cafeteria; C. Sneed called for a motion to approve BLM Refrigeration, Heating & Air Conditioning as a new vendor for the school. T. Ramsay moved to approve the vote, C. McMillan seconded. Unanimously approved by the board.

C. Sneed reviewed Grotsky for replacement of the air compressor and boiler unit; falls under policies and procedures to move forward with the work because it is a matter of safety; C. Sneed called for a motion to ratify the invoices from Grotsky. B. Carlson moved to approve, C. McMillan seconded. Unanimous approval to ratify by the board.

C. Sneed reviewed BoardOnTrack as a renewed vendor, with a vote to approve the annual membership for the services being offered, for the purpose of the board and other services that can be leveraged from this resource; C. McMillan moved the vote to approve, T. Ramsay seconded the motion. Unanimous approval by the board for the annual membership costs of BoardOnTrack.

Governance Committee Updates - Bob Carlson

B. Carlson called a motion to approve T. Ramsay as a member of the governance committee. C. Sneed moved to approve the motion and C. McMillan seconded the motion. Unanimous approval by the board to approve T. Ramsay as a member of the governance committee.

B. Carlson noted that next month the governance committee would review John's year end evaluation and make a recommendation to the board accordingly.

C. Sneed made a motion to authorize B. Carlson to sign the annual report for CSDE. C. McMillan moved the motion. No discussion or abstentions; unanimously approved for B. Carlson to sign the annual report.

GO Foundation Updates

L. Perkins said there are no updates from the foundation.

Other Business

J. Scalice added that yesterday they received word of two additional grants received, a \$5,000 grant for kicking off a FAFSA program for our students; with that we will be able to do PD for parents, host student events, and engage with CSDE to plan involvement with students and parents for FAFSA completion. Last year, our completion rate was 23%. This year, our goal is 80% and we are hopeful that as students begin to engage more with the FAFSA process, based on the literature around the school.

Yesterday, we received a \$5,000 grant from the college board to begin a computer science AP course; foundations of computer science AP course to pay for teaching training to administer AP course and AP and financially support students in paying for the AP exam for next school year.

B. Carlson asked about data reporting and how that can be shared with parents, and J. Scalice noted that Panorama has a clear s

B. Carlson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. C. Sneed made a motion to adjourn. T. Ramsay seconded the motion. Unanimous approval to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned by B. Carlson at 6:37 pm