

Boston Day and Evening Academy
Board of Trustees Retreat Minutes
Wednesday, November 10, 2021

Attendance: Jennie Hallisey, Alisa Hunter, Cris Rothfuss, Spencer Blasdale, Maddrey Goode, Alison Hramiec, Perry Hull, Lisa Laguerre, Spencer Kimball, Evelyn Zayas, Norma Suarez Quiles, Salesia Hughes-Hibbert, David Jones

Others in Attendance: Camella Scott, Janet Platt, Jill Kantrowitz, Adrienne Level, Asberry Lawton, Rawchayl Sahadeo

Clerk: Claire Gracia

Location: Zoom

Call to Order

Cris Rothfuss called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

Welcome from Board Chair, Review Agenda

Rothfuss welcomed the new Board members to the meeting, reviewed the meeting agenda, and explained the process of approving the October Retreat minutes. She reminded Board members to review the minutes prior to meetings to save time. Rothfuss made a motion to approve the October Retreat minutes. Perry Hull seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the October Retreat minutes.

Board Intro

Adrienne Level led a connecting prompt for the Board members. She asked, “if you could be any age for a week, what would it be and why?” Each Board member responded and shared personal information for their answers.

Data Dive: DESE Accountability and MCAS Data

Alison Hramiec introduced the data dive for this board meeting and shared background information about DESE accountability measures for BDEA, how our performance is measured, and how DESE sets targets and evaluates these measures. DESE measures schools’ performance, places them in categories, which drives the support a school receives and how the state allocates resources.

The two measures that put BDEA in the ‘needs assistance’ category are our graduation and attendance

percentages. These are two difficult measures to change, given the student population BDEA serves and the mission of our school.

Camella Scott provided an in depth overview of MCAS data, one of the state accountability measures. She shared MCAS SY21 data (achievement, student growth and progress toward English proficiency on WIDA - the assessment to measure English proficiency for English Language learners).

Scott shared additional nuances with the data:

- Chronic absenteeism: DESE sets a goal for schools to reach 95% percent attendance. Student growth is calculated year after year and compared to students with similar test histories. Our students are coming from other schools and aren't cohorted in a way for them to be compared to their peers.
- Student Growth: Our students aren't compared to students who are similar to them, showing a very low amount of students who have SGP which has us fall behind the threshold
- Progress toward English Proficiency: There was a big shift in testing, how it is done and how it is calculated. When the "Next Gen MCAS" was implemented, it raised the bar for achievement and focused on college readiness. As anticipated, scores across the state declined because the test got harder. In 2018, we earned a lot of points in this category because of the legacy testing system. In 2019, we took the Next Gen MCAS which led to a decline in our points because we switched over to SGP.

The nature of the system puts our school at a disadvantage as we will always be compared comprehensively to all schools in the state. When the scores changed from Legacy to Next Gen, BDEA did not state determined expectations for growth.

Scott shared the spring 2021 MCAS and WIDA ACCESS participation data.

- MCAS participation: We need 20 students to meet the threshold to have our points count. We don't have enough students with SGP data but we partially met expectations, passing needing EPP.
- WIDA ACCESS: We took a hit due to the COVID pandemic and remote testing with a 12% participation rate for spring 2021 compared to 84% the previous year.

Instructional leaders Janet Platt and Rawchayl Sahadeo explained how MCAS scores inform teaching and learning at BDEA. Janet explained how MCAS informs the content competencies. BDEA competencies are aligned to the HS curriculum framework, with a focus on standards assessed on the MCAS.

Rawchayl Sahadeo shared how MCAS informs instructional practice. Departments conduct curriculum reviews, identifying areas of growth to reinforce learning, reassessing academic strategies, and focusing on content to support areas of growth based on MCAS data. Each department tailors instruction to include MCAS retest prep within the context of their teaching.

Another example of using MCAS to drive instruction is the 2018-2019 school year. The Humanities Department

made an overhaul of their MCAS prep materials and instructions, focusing more on open response questions and familiarization of the question format during classroom instruction for practice.

Alisa Hunter asked if the school has been given info about the new testing material so that testing practices and prep can be made. Platt responded saying DESE was sparse with that information.

The data dive led the Board to discuss the equity of these measures and the impact they have on our students. Currently there is no consequence for BDEA to remain in the 'needs intervention' category. However it led to some board members asking the questions:

- What if there are consequences?
- Should we be doing more advocacy?

Finalize Board Goals and Subcommittees for SY21

The Board discussed their goals and subcommittees for the 2021 school year.

The Board goals are as follows:

1. In preparation of our rechartering SY23, the board will review and address past site visit recommendations with a special focus on identifying ways to improve student outcomes or interpret and present new data that better highlights BDEA's successes.
 - a. BDEA's rechartering is approaching making it important that the Board focuses on this achievement. We have feedback from the last DESE site visit and recommendations that BDEA is taking into consideration.
2. The board will develop a strategy on how to use our ESSER funds to identify an equitable facility or additional space that allows BDEA to be a state of the art alternative school, improving student outcomes for all BDEA students.
3. Given the changes in programming/staffing in response to the COVID pandemic, the board will continue to develop long term planning for fiscal stability and sustainability.
 - a. When determining the long term strategy for sustainability, we know the importance of adding additional programming. We've added specific programs to meet the needs of our students: the Blended Learning and 2.0 programs. BDEA needs help with the long term financial support of these programs.
 - b. Board members agreed to add the creation of a Succession Plan for the Head of School to the third goal.

These goals feed into this year's subcommittee work. The board discussed potential revisions to these subcommittees - perhaps combining the data team with the stability team. Also look at overlap between the finance team and facilities team. Hramiec shared that the executive team will rework the committees.

Subcommittee	Goal will be drafted by subcommittee
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Fiscal subcommittee	Strategic planning of BDEA's \$4M ESSER funding over the next 4 years Oversight of SY22 and SY23 budget planning and audit. Develop long term investment strategy
Facilities	Consider how ESSER funds could be leveraged to advance our work to create a state of the art alternative school Continue to generate strategic plan to leverage BDEA partnerships and community to advocate for additional spacing
Other: Data and StaReview	Interpret current data or present new data that better defines BDEA's successes. Denounce poorly contextualized data that perpetuates racism and biases that further marginalize our student body.
Other: Equity Round Table	2-4 board members that serve on BDEA's equity roundtable to discuss school based issues of equity.
Other: Stability Data	Dig into BDEA's stability data to identify potential interventions (programming, partnerships etc) that could potentially support BDEA's

Other items that are not included that need to be addressed this year are developing a leadership succession plan and revising the head of school evaluation process to align to DESE feedback. Both of these items will be worked on in the executive committee and brought to the board for vote.

Hramiec shared a Google document where Board members can choose which subcommittee they would like to participate in. Hunter asked for clarification on the time commitment for each subcommittee. Hramiec answered that there will be 4-6 meetings per subcommittee, the Executive committee will meet more frequently and Board members are encouraged to only join one committee. Lisa Laguerre shared that she would like to join the Equity Roundtable Subcommittee.

Next Steps

Once subcommittees were finalized, Hramiec asked that all subcommittees meet during the month of December to discuss goals for their work this year.

Upcoming Events: Thankful Dinner, 2.0 Celebration of Success and Graduation

Jill Kantrowitz shared the history of BDEA's Thankful Dinner, pre-COVID. Due to the pandemic, BDEA adapted their approach--families can sign up for a turkey and gift card. Danny Rivera, one of our previous Board members, made a solicitation on our behalf to the Boston Foundation for \$5,250 and we are now fundraising for our ultimate goal of \$7,500. The Turkey Giveaway will be at BDEA on 11/16 from 4pm-6pm and all Board members are invited.

Other opportunities for Board involvement is 2.0 program's Celebration of Success. It will be in person for the first time on November 22nd from 10am-6pm. Kantrowitz also added that Board members are welcome to the Graduation Award Ceremony on Zoom and Claire Gracia will share the invitation with them.

New Business Adjourn

Before adjourning the meeting, Hramiec reminded the Board of upcoming events - graduation on December 9th. Rothfuss moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:01pm. Goode seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Gracia