

## Broome Street Academy Charter High School

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees held by video conference and phone

Date: Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Notice of the meeting was duly given to members of the board and the public.

Trustees in attendance: David Zurndorfer, Noah Leff, Catherine Aquila, Stephanie Durden Barfield, Benjamin Felt, Jeffrey Katzin, Gail Schargel, Vanda Belusic-Vollor, and Katie Jaxheimer Agarwal joined by video conference. Herb Elish and Marlene Nadel joined by phone.

Also present: Melissa Silberman, Eric Weingartner, Courtney Fox (minutes)

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. with a quorum

### Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2020 and March 17, 2020 Board Meetings

The minutes for the February 11<sup>th</sup> and March 17<sup>th</sup> meetings, which had been previously circulated, were approved.

### Status of School Closure Issue

David Zurndorfer reviewed the decision by New York State to close schools until May 15<sup>th</sup>. He noted that Broome Street Academy would continue to follow guidance from the Governor with regard to closure.

Mr. Zurndorfer also reviewed that BSA teachers and staff were asked to work through the spring break, which was cancelled. Melissa Silberman reported that the staff did so willingly and with enthusiasm. Ms. Silberman noted that communications about closure with the staff have been concise and emphasized that the school will follow guidance from the Governor and from SUNY as the school's authorizer.

Mr. Zurndorfer stated that he recently attended a BSA Leadership Team meeting and that Eric Weingartner attends on a weekly basis.

### Head of School Report

Ms. Silberman reported on BSA's remote operations. She emphasized that continuity of education is a top priority. She described the systems and structures that have been developed to allow the school to continue to offer a rigorous academic experience for students:

a. Staff Supervision

She noted that the Leadership Team meets daily in the morning and afternoon. The school holds a weekly staff meeting on Fridays via Zoom.

b. Outreach to Students & Families

Ms. Silberman described dedicated outreach efforts to students and families. She highlighted that the school has distributed 100 technology devices (e.g., laptops, hotspots) to students since the school shifted to remote learning. She noted that every

staff member who does not have an academic caseload has a list of students they connect with weekly by phone or email.

c. Mental Health Services

Ms. Silberman reported that the Social Work Team is currently counseling 1/3 of the student population, which she noted is slightly higher than when students are in the building. Mandated counseling is continuing, and services are being offered to students experiencing additional stress and/or bereavement.

d. Attendance

Ms. Silberman reported that 95% of students have signed onto Edgenuity, BSA's remote learning platform. The average daily attendance online is around 70%. The 5% of students who have not logged in at all had attendance challenges prior to the shift to remote learning. Outreach is still being made on an ongoing basis to these students.

e. The Student Experience

She summarized that students are expected to log into Edgenuity daily, and that students have conversations with teachers and counselors throughout the week. Communication is done through Edgenuity, email, and the Remind app. Teachers also offer tutoring through Zoom and Google Classroom. Ms. Silberman noted that IEP requirements are being satisfied through features in Edgenuity such as the "read aloud" option, and the ability for students to complete the work at their own pace.

f. Regents Exams

Mr. Zurndorfer noted that June Regents Exams have been cancelled by the state. Ms. Silberman explained that students who were scheduled to take a Regents Exam in June would receive credit for the exam as long as they pass the aligned academic course.

g. Admissions & Enrollment

Ms. Silberman stated that the admissions lottery was run on April 1<sup>st</sup>. She reported that 400 applications were received for freshmen seats. Fifty-two students have accepted offers for 9<sup>th</sup> grade seats, which is more than this time last year. The Director of Admissions is holding virtual information sessions for prospective families, as well as virtual enrollment sessions for accepted students. Ms. Silberman also described strategic efforts at retaining students for the upcoming school year in light of the COVID crisis.

h. Class of 2020

She reported that the school is making preparations to hold a virtual graduation. Seniors are being closely monitored to ensure they are passing their classes, and they are still required to complete 60 hours of community service. Ms. Silberman stated that the Guidance Department has shared a list of safe, home-based projects for students to complete remotely.

i. Teacher Appreciation Week

Ms. Silberman noted that Teacher Appreciation Week is May 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, and expressed admiration for the hard work of the teaching staff in this strenuous time.

j. Future Planning

Ms. Silberman summarized that the Leadership Team is exploring options for returning to in-person learning, including the date of the return and options for operations that follow social distancing guidelines. She noted that the school is also exploring different budget scenarios depending on final enrollment numbers and per pupil funding decisions. For the summer, Ms. Silberman stated that BSA would still be holding summer school, likely on the Edgenuity platform. She reported that the SYEP program has been cancelled by the city and that The Door and BSA are working together to try to organize an alternative summer employment experience for students.

k. APPR

Ms. Silberman announced that BSA's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), the state accountability report, was completed. Board members were emailed a list of highlights from the document.

Preparation of Budget for 2020-21 School Year

Mr. Weingartner indicated that a budget would be sent to Noah Leff and Mr. Zurndorfer for review by the end of April. Mr. Zurndorfer noted that the Board needs to approve a budget by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

CEO Report

Mr. Weingartner discussed staffing and budgeting decisions related to The Door and summarized the discussions the Door Leadership Team is having around returning to programming. He noted that all Door programming has shifted to a virtual environment except for the supportive housing program, which is still being staffed on-site.

Mr. Weingartner invited the Board to attend The Door's virtual Town Hall on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Weingartner indicated he would be co-hosting the event with The Door's Director of Programming. The event is geared towards giving funders an update on The Door's operations. In addition, Mr. Weingartner described the weekly communications that are being sent to the community and funders regarding the work of BSA and The Door.

Mr. Weingartner reported that The Door and BSA have raised approximately \$1 million in the past six weeks through a combination of foundation and individual gifts. He announced that The Door and BSA have been invited to apply to renew their Arabella grant for the 2020-21 school year.

He also noted that Irma Gonzalez, the Chief Financial Officer for The Door and BSA, is retiring at the end of the fiscal year. She will stay on as a consultant through December 2020.

At 7:05 p.m., the board then adjourned.