

**RHODE ISLAND MAYORAL ACADEMYSM
BLACKSTONE VALLEY**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES

5:30 p.m., October 17, 2011

Blackstone Valley Prep Middle, URI Classroom

7 Fatima Drive, Cumberland

1. Call to Order by Mayor McKee at 5:34PM

Present were:

Mayor Daniel J. McKee (Chair)
Kenneth Vaudreuil
Joe Almond
Angelo Garcia
Dr. John Morton

Also present were Executive Director Jeremy Chiappetta, Deputy Executive Director Drew Allsopp, Secretary Daniel C. Waugh, Treasurer, Jen LoPiccolo, Assistant Secretary and Director of External Affairs for the organization. Additional guests present from the included Shannon McCoy (BVP), Michael Rodriguez (BVP), Courtney Paulding (BVP), Drew Madden (BVP), Kate Crowe (BVP), Colleen Colarusso (BVP), Mike Magee, Kim Noble, Mike DeMatteo (BVP), and David Lauck.

2. Approval of June 20 Meeting Minutes

**Motion to approve minutes: John Morton (seconded by Ken Vaudreuil).
The motion passed on the following vote:**

AYE: McKee, Vaudreuil, Almond, Morton, Garcia. NAY: None.

3. Executive Director's Report

A. Start of the 2011-12 Academy Year

a. **Attendance**

i. # of Days in School: 28

ii. # of scholars: 524

iii. Average Attendance: ES1: 98.4%; Es2: 98.7%; MS: 98.3%; Total:
98.4%

iv. Scholars Perfect Attendance: 405 (417 have no tardies); 9
Scholars with 5+ Absences that we are monitoring closely

b. Demographic Breakdown: Free and Reduced Lunch (Low Socioeconomic Status):

- i. ES1: 61.4% Free/Reduced (148), 38.6% Not Eligible (93)
- ii. ES2: 64.6% Free/Reduced (51), 35.4% Not Eligible (28)
- iii. MS: 58.8% Free/Reduced (120) , 41.2% Not Eligible (84)
- iv. Total: 60.9% Free/Reduced (259), 39.1% Not Eligible (205)

c. Demographic Breakdown: Ethnicity

- i. ES1: 41.9% Hispanic, 14.1% Black, 46.1% non-Hispanic White
- ii. ES2: 58.2% Hispanic, 8.9% Black, 42.6% non-Hispanic White
- iii. MS: 46.6% Hispanic, 14.2% Black, 36.7% non-Hispanic White
- iv. Total: 46.2% Hispanic, 13% Black, 43.3% non-Hispanic White

d. English Language Learners

- i. ES1: 8.3% ELL
- ii. ES2: 19.0% ELL
- iii. MS: 12.8% ELL
- iv. Total: 11.6% ELL

e. NECAP in progress: Testing is 1/2 way through in 5th and mostly through 6th. Released publicly in January and at this time, we're happy to celebrate and compare "apples to apples" with other schools how BVP is going.

f. Facilities Update: Chose to meet in our new modular building. They're new buildings functional but with their challenges.

B. Teacher Recognition: Shannon McCoy is mentor teacher for Mike Rodriguez, RIC MAT student. They have been recognized for a model co-teaching situation. Shannon has been invited by RIC to join as part of their national review November 6.

Shannon was invited to address the board. She spoke to her experience with Michael. 1st student teacher; scholars are benefiting; excited to develop relationship with RIC. Jeremy asked Mike to add a comment. Mike reiterated that this has been a positive experience. He enjoys content masters at BVP, every day work seems effortless. Students following protocols and they know what they need to do. Look forward to working with Dan offered congratulatory remarks on behalf of the board. He also reiterated the higher education connections are also fantastic. As we get to high school, important to build connections to college and important to our long-term strategy of getting kids to college

C. Individual School Highlights

- a. Kate Crowe: Head of School – Middle
 - i. Start of the school year facilities were less than ideal [modular not ready until 2 weeks in], but the level of learning was incredibly high and is a testament to the incredible teaching staff.
- b. Colleen Colarusso: Head of School – Elementary 2
 - i. Remarks spoke to a solid start to the school year. Classrooms are really joyful. Challenges we will continue to face are scholars with really high needs in special education. We are constantly focused on how we can better serve our high need special education students.
- c. Jeremy Chiappetta: Head of School – Elementary 1
 - i. Echoed the solid start and adding 2nd grade and 6th grade. Hats off to teachers taking on the challenge of teaching a grade we have not offered before.
 - ii. In light of Jeremy transitioning to ED full-time, we will begin the search for a new School Leader for ES 1 very soon.

D. Partnerships

- a. RIC: Continuing to work with student teachers in our co-teaching model; Jeremy has also been invited to serve on the Feinstein School of Education Advisory Board.
- b. Providence College: Great partnerships happening here too. Currently, there are students completing a literacy practicum —10 sophomores, K and 1; additionally, there is also a graduate coursework on site at night for our teachers to work on a master's in literacy.
- c. Brown University: Formal partnership with Brown's Urban Education Program and Karisha Ewell is our intern for this year.
- d. Informal partnerships with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) on their alternative certification and with Teach for America, working with 1st and 2nd year corps members
- e. Central Falls Compact work with Central Falls School District and charters also serving Central Falls students continues to move along.
- f. Informal university partnerships with Salve Regine and URI, to a lesser degree.
- g. League of Charter Schools: The Board had tabled action regarding the League of Charter Schools this summer. When no action was taken, the League sent an email stating we were no longer members of the League. Jeremy recommended re-joining the League when they come back with a new fee schedule.

Dr. Morton asked whether we formally communicated with the League about this departure to which Jeremy reiterated that he sent an email. The section of the email communication quoted by Jeremy is below:

“The BVP board voted in May to approve a budget that did NOT include the league dues; in July, the BVP board TABLED the vote on revisiting this until the September meeting. Provided we have a quorum, we will have a vote on this on Monday. As I expressed to the group at the retreat and to you personally, there are multiple areas where BVP really struggles with being able to participate in the league this year. Quite frankly, finances are the biggest driver in a tough climate, especially with unexpectedly high transportation and facility bills. I'm sure everyone understands this concern. Moreover, the issues I hoped to be resolved at the retreat that either remain unresolved or are consensus in a direction that is difficult from our perspective: Representation (board seats/votes) based on one per charter rather than number of students or the number of schools; A fee structure based on the number of students (BVP paying nearly \$18K); League budget allocating about 25% of the budget or \$50,000 towards advocacy. It is my hope that the League re-visits the proposed Associate Membership role.”

Angelo Garcia commented that BVP's questions in regards to the League are not unique. Jeremy's conversation opened the door to other charter schools to consider their participation. The League is reviewing and reflecting on their practices as a result.

Dan McKee reiterated that it was nice to know that we continue to do great work

4. BVP Financial Overview & Update by Support Services for Education

Jeremy introduced Ralph Salvatore who offered a monthly report to which the vote concurred. The report customized for the board and does not mirror with the required RIDE format. Their format is very RIDE specific. Going across the top, through September 30. There is not much projected yet. Top 1/3 is our revenue. There were some changes; specifically, \$250k budgeted for Walton grant, \$250k but came in at \$500k, Charter School Start up grant was budgeted for \$450k Increased revenue could mean shifting line items mid-year, if so deemed by the board.

Angelo asked about the UCOA accounts and whether this was aligned, to which Ralph responded he does do so, but for the purpose of the board, he wanted it to be more user friendly

Dan McKee asked the question about depreciation line item, currently budgeted at \$40k. Dan asked that given that we are not part of a municipality, should this number

be larger or smaller? The number is based on equipment based on a 7 year depreciation period. As we get to facilities, lease and property, that should be considered as well. . Dan McKee mentioned 291 Broad depreciation and a strategy to budget improvements there. Jeremy reiterated that there have been minor lease improvements at 291 and Fatima. The capital is still owned by RIMA and lease improvements minimal for now. Mayor McKee wanted to be mindful of a surplus that may otherwise be frowned upon in a traditional municipality.

5. Approval of 5 Year Strategic Plan

A draft 5 year strategic plan presented to the board. This document is designed to be a resource for how we work to grow out our schools. It charts the course about who we are, our approach and how we plan to get there, in terms of our model, our culture, staffing, family engagement. Highlights shared from page 8 of the strategic plan as shown here:

| Improving Educational Outcomes...A Theory of Change | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Focus | Goals | Outcomes | Strategies | Performance Measures |
| Educational Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Children in sending districts, and RI are prepared for college and life success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •% BVP scholars proficient or better exceeds sending districts, state, in NECAP assessments •ELL students demonstrate English language mastery—their academic achievement is on par with native speakers and ELL classification is no longer needed. •Attendance exceeds average of sending districts •BVP family survey reports satisfaction and engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Highly effective teachers •Core PRIDE Values for staff and scholars •Literacy focus K-8 •Standards based assessments •Robust Music, Art, Phys. Ed, Language, Technology Curricula •Lead/Fellow teaching model for early grades •Alignment of high expectations culture horizontally and vertically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •80% BVP scholars proficient or better on NECAP •80%BVP scholars at or above grade level in school administered standards based tests •95% or better attendance •90% families/scholars report satisfaction and engagement in regular surveys |
| Community Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Enrollment growth achieves a diverse school community (staff, scholars) •Increase awareness of highly effective education practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •High demand for BVP seats •Low attrition of students continuing to live in district. •Family Leadership Council is diverse and positive •ELL and FRPL families choose, engage, support the school enthusiastically—it is the school of choice •BVP active member of professional learning communities promoting highly effective education practices including Charter/District Compacts and others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Enrollment outreach targets diverse communities including ELL families •School and Network leadership have intentional plan for how FLC will benefit the school. •Family engagement strategies targeting ELL families to ensure inclusion and cultural benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 applications per open seat available for lottery •90% of family and scholar survey results indicating level of engagement and satisfaction •90% of external partners gauge partnership as effective or highly effective. |
| Organizational Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Robust Talent Pipeline •Full Enrollment •Sustainable financial model •Safe, attractive, desirable affordable facilities for all BVP schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Enrollment growth as planned •Retention of most effective staff •High demand from highly qualified candidates for all staff positions •Financial operating surplus •Facilities are a positive factor in school choice •Facilities cost is reasonable •School meets RIDE annual report criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Relationships with key higher ed (Brown, Salve, PC, RIC) •Relationships with TFA & TNTP •Budget controls •MOU with RIMA provides framework for facilities planning and subsidy during growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10 qualified candidates for every open position •90% retention of teachers receiving proficient or better on the Educator Evaluation Rubric •5% annual negative student attrition •4% Operating surplus |

Jeremy offered a period for questions and opportunity. Those posed by the board our below.

- A. John Morton offered comments about BVP’s core design. Do we want to be more descriptive about our assessments, informal and formal? John reiterated that we know what they are. Mr. Madden, BVP Math teacher, can speak to the rigor of our internal assessments. We do outline further on pages 15-16—an opportunity to reference here. We don’t flesh out in detail what Achievement Network (ANet). ANet provides BVP Grades 2, 5 and 6 interim assessment in literacy and math; review results by student, teacher, grade level and allows us to look at how we’re doing with a peer group within the charter world. Definitely worth expanding.
- B. Angelo offered a question about what stakeholders participated. Jeremy reiterated that it has largely been drive by staff. Jeremy invited Kim Noble to speak to the board about her process. Kim shared that she spoke with stakeholders over the summer, teacher survey and parent survey as well that culminated in a staff retreat in late July. We convened again in September and using documents that we already have. Iterations reviewed by the leadership. Angelo commented that the “flavor” of the community is not present in this plan. To this point, Jeremy affirmed that that is an appropriate critique. Dan asked whether there was a vote needed, even as a preliminary document, given that it’s important that we have. Jeremy deferred to the board. Dr. Morton confirmed Angelo’s comment and supports the idea of getting community feedback.
- C. Mayor McKee asked about whether facilities section needed more work to which Jeremy directed the board to page 30 (as it reads here): *“Facilities expense is modeled based on the current MOU agreed with RIMA. We used 8% of per student revenues—a level we believe is conservative. The constant % of revenues is consistent with the spirit of the planned RIMA subsidy. We tested the impact of reducing the facilities payment to 6% instead of 8% of revenues, obviously, additional operating flexibility is gained to the extent fixed expenses can be minimized.”*
- D. While there is no capital plan at this time, we could and need to have a document in place which we can amend as we continue to build out our strategy, particularly around facilities.
- E. Daniel Waugh noted that on page 8, “resident” should read “representative”
- F. Joe also shared that thinking ahead to 2017 school year; there is a lack of promotion articulated in this plan. We need to educate the community on what we do, both those we serve and those we don’t. We need to tout our own horn a little bit. Dan offered further insight that a marketing strategy is needed, in support of the work that is happening with RIMA.

The Board agreed to table this document until we get feedback on the Family Leadership Council (FLC). Invite them to respond to the document

and provide feedback. Angelo volunteered his help to facilitate work with the forum. The board will take a vote when it's ready to be brought back with a review by FLC.

The board acknowledged the work of Kim Noble and Jen LoPiccolo and their efforts to get the strategic plan thus far.

6. Vote: RIMA and RIMA-BVP Memorandum of Understanding

Jeremy drew the Board's attention to the work of both organization. Part 3 is defining what RIMA is offering and what they do and Part 4 defines with Blackstone Valley Prep. Trying to formalize and define the relationship between the two separate 501(c)3's and how they support and work together.

Page 2 and 3 bullets RIMA's responsibilities while BVP and the Board's responsibilities are bulleted on page 6. Jeremy reiterated that to Joe's point, 3.1 do offer a marketing plan with regard to RIMA's responsibility with regard to marketing. Jeremy offered a "pitch" to the board to help grow this board to include more community representation. Offer nominations to Mayor McKee and himself as the board identifies individuals.

Mike asked to quickly add that by limiting the roles of RIMA Vis a vis BVP will also enhance RIMA's effectiveness to do this for the whole network of mayoral academies. Clarity will allow both organizations to do their jobs better.

Mayor McKee asked for the specific term date and it was clarified that the end of the charter = June 30, 2014. At this time this MOU would

Dan asked Mike and Jeremy whether there was anything RIMA was not prepared to deliver on. Similarly, he asked Jeremy whether there was anything BVP feels unprepared to deliver on, to which Jeremy brought to the Board's attention the language under 3.3. (See below).

Facilities, in terms of what RIMA is providing, the staff of BVP is not as robust or exciting as either organization would like it to be. Plan by 2012 to have a more robust plan in place by both organizations. Mike has also addressed that in addition to the MOU, there is also a facilities conversation happening that extends beyond the life of the charter. In turn, it will inform an amendment to this MOU around facilities.

A question offered from Dan McKee to Daniel Waugh as to whether 3.3 has strong enough language. The language below is the new language proposed by Waugh.

"3.3 Facilities

Section 3.3 will be redrafted following the conclusion of ongoing discussions related to RIMA's facilities support for Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academies. It is understood that support

for the 2011-2012 academic year will remain substantially as previously agreed, including RIMA's coverage of annual cost exceeding 5% of the state and local funding for students served at the respective locations."

Dan McKee commented whether it was signed by the Executive Director's of the board to which there was an understanding that the agreement should be signed at the ED level.

In regard to the facilities plan, Jeremy offered further clarification as it relates to the facilities plan (mirrored in the strategic plan under enrollment). He confirmed the intention is to have the 3 homeroom model, decreased from 4. Intention is to allow current 5th and 6th to maintain but every year moving forward, but 5th grade enrollment moving forward would be budgeted according to the 3 homerooms.

Mayor Mckee asked Jeremy to share with the board why the need move to this new enrollment model. Ties nicely with what is anticipated when 4th grade is transitioning to 5th grade. Serving more students in 5th than we have coming up from 4th, will prove to have a large gap for the one homeroom enrolling at 5th. Jeremy's recommendation to the board to approve the MOU. The board can then expect by January 2012 further amendments to

Motion to move the MOU forward to which Daniel Waugh mentioned that the few revisions noted in pencil on the current draft including date, 6.2 explicit language. Will be typed up and included with the addition of the date. Recommendation from Jeremy to the board is to approve the MOU.

The organizations understand that this memorandum is a work in progress and will be revised, particularly with regard to 6.3 and the insurance requirements.

Mr. Almond (seconded by Dr. Morton) moved to amend the document (1) to insert in Section 2.1 “, expiring June 30, 2014” immediately before the period, (2) to insert in Section 3.3 “by January 1, 2012” immediately after the word “redrafted” and (3) to insert the following sentence at the end of Section 6.2: “The organizations understand that this memorandum is a work in progress that will be revised, particularly in regard to Section 3.3 and insurance requirements.” The motion passed on the following vote:

AYE: McKee, Vaudreuil, Almond, Morton, Garcia. NAY: None.

Mr. Almond (seconded by Dr. Morton) moved to approve the MOU as amended and presented in tonight's meeting:. The motion passed on the following vote:

AYE: McKee, Vaudreuil, Almond, Morton, Garcia. NAY: None.

Noted here that Joe Almond is leaving in order to recuse himself from Executive Session.

7. Public Forum: Mayor McKee asked for any members of the public to speak at which time no one responded.

Motion to go into Executive Session based on a) Status around litigation – R.I. Gen. L. § 42-46-5(a)(2): Status around litigation and b) – R.I. Gen. L. § 42-46-5(a)(5): Acquisition or lease of real estate: Angelo Garcia (seconded by John Morton).

AYE: Vaudreuil, Morton, McKee, Garcia. NAY: None.

*** * * EXECUTIVE SESSION * * ***

At 6:47 p.m., Dr. Morton (seconded by Ken Vaudreuil) moved to reconvene in open session. The motion passed on the following vote:

AYE: Vaudreuil, Morton, McKee, Garcia. NAY: None.

Upon return from executive session at 6:50 p.m., **Angelo Garcia (seconded by John Morton) moved to seal the minutes** of the executive session. **The motion passed on the following vote:**

AYE: Vaudreuil, Morton, McKee, Garcia. NAY: None.

Angelo Garcia (seconded by Ken Vaudreuil) moved to return to public session. The motion passed on the following vote:

AYE: Vaudreuil, Morton, McKee, Garcia. NAY: None.

Angelo Garcia (seconded by Ken Vaudreuil) moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed on the following vote:

AYE: Vaudreuil, Morton, McKee, Garcia. NAY: None.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen LoPiccolo.

Assistant Secretary