

Breakthrough Board Minutes
10/15/2020

Attendance:

Keith Whitescarver, Chair
Katie Brown, Secretary
Emily Hedin
Emily Raskin, SHA President
Vivek Swaminathan
David Bagnoli
Chris Lohse
Rachel Kimboko
Drew Archer, EdOps
Allison Jones
Kat Park

1. Call to Order/Welcome
 - a. 5:05 Call to order
2. Housekeeping needs
 - a. Approval of August 6th minutes
 - i. Keith moves to approve the minutes as written.
 - ii. Emily R. seconds.
 - iii. Votes:
 1. Chris--Yes
 2. Emily R.--Yes
 3. Rachel--Yes
 4. Keith--Yes
 5. Katie--Yes
 6. Vivek--Yes
 7. Dave--Yes
3. 5:15-5:30: Executive Director's Report
 - a. Virtual learning
 - i. Challenges:
 1. Technology continues to be a challenge for families
 2. Individualization--guides and parents express desire for students to have more 1:1 time with guides
 3. Guides struggling with competing demands and limited time
 4. Feedback--families want help understanding how their students are doing
 5. Attendance is lower than we'd like
 - ii. In-person learning

1. 2 cohorts of 4 students have been coming to the Takoma campus since September 14th for support with their virtual learning.
 2. This has been a tremendous learning experience for Breakthrough in terms of both health protocols and support for students.
- b. Enrollment: 272 students enrolled, so we've met our enrollment target and are overenrolled by 2
 - i. All supporting documentation uploaded today.
 - ii. We anticipate full enrollment and full funding.
 - iii. High turnover--40 students withdrew by October 5th. Some went to other charters, some moved out of state, some went to other OSSE-funded programs.
 - c. MAP testing
 - i. Students taking the tests from home.
 - ii. Utility of this data remains to be seen.
 - d. Qualitative Site Review (QSR) just completed--part of five-year charter review, report expected in a couple of weeks.
 - e. Five year charter renewal vote scheduled for December 14th.
 - f. ABAR work: Retreat held, forming Anti-racism Team (ART), composed of family members, staff, and board members.
 - g. Phase 2 construction at Takoma campus
 - i. CityFirst Bank's terms require a 15% equity injection, which is over \$1 million.
 - ii. Loan to value is calculated on basis of PMF, so we're only eligible to borrow 60%
 1. Drafting letter to CityFirst--perhaps Michael could help with this.
 - iii. Expanded contract with EdOps to include services for facilities fundraising
4. New Business
- a. Discussion of Breakthrough's timeline for decision-making for 2nd quarter (ends January 18th)
 - i. There are concerns about opening in November, given holiday travel, etc.
 - ii. DCPS plans to open in November with 7,000 PK3-5th grade students for in-person learning and 12,000 students to do distance learning on site, with the remaining 14,000 staying full virtual.
 - iii. Our learning: even being the in-person support for distance learning, absent responsibility for instruction, is very challenging and requires skill.
 - iv. Survey results so far indicate that 75% of families are satisfied or very satisfied with distance learning program; only 8% somewhat dissatisfied; Allison reports from her observations that quality of instruction is high.
 - b. Takoma Campus Buildout: Consideration of bids submitted for architectural services and project management services
 - i. Vivek moves to move to closed session for discussion of contracts.
 - ii. Dave seconds.
 - iii. Votes:
 1. Chris--Yes

2. Emily R.--Yes
 3. Rachel--Yes
 4. Keith--Yes
 5. Katie--Yes
 6. Vivek--Yes
 7. Dave--Yes
5. 6:32pm return to general session
- a. Keith moves to adjourn.
 - b. Rachel seconds.
 - c. Votes:
 - i. Chris--Yes
 - ii. Emily R.--Yes
 - iii. Rachel--Yes
 - iv. Keith--Yes
 - v. Katie--Yes
 - vi. Vivek--Yes
 - vii. Dave--Yes

Meeting adjourned at: 6:33pm

Breakthrough Board Minutes
Closed Session
10/15/2020

Attendance:

Keith Whitescarver, Chair
Katie Brown, Secretary
Emily Hedin
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David Bagnoli
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Allison Jones
Kat Park

- a. Takoma Campus Buildout: Consideration of bids submitted for architectural services and project management services
 - i. Vivek moves to moves to closed session or discussion of contracts
 - ii. Dave seconds
 - iii. Votes:
 1. Chris--Yes
 2. Emily R.--Yes
 3. Rachel--Yes
 4. Keith--Yes
 5. Katie--Yes
 6. Vivek--Yes
 7. Dave--Yes
 - iv. Closed session
 1. Bids for architectural services submitted by Studio 27 and R McGhee. Studio 27 seems preferable.
 - a. Dave recuses himself from discussion and vote due to his contractual relationship with Studio 27
 - b. They designed first floor, so any potential cost savings from other forms are outweighed by a need for a cohesive design for the building
 - c. RMC seems generic--because of COVID, we couldn't do a lot of the site visits and things that would normally go into the development of a thoughtful proposal
 - d. Difference in price between 2 proposals is 33%--why so large?

Breakthrough Board Minutes
10/22/2020

Attendance:

Keith Whitescarver, Chair
Katie Brown, Secretary
Emily Hedin
Emily Raskin
Vivek Swaminathan
Rachel Kimboko
Drew Archer, EdOps
Chris Lohse
Dave Bagnoli

1. Call to Order/Welcome
 - a. 5:05pm Call to order
2. Housekeeping needs
 - a. Approval of October 15th minutes
 - i. Vivek moves to accept minutes for open and closed sessions.
 - ii. Rachel seconds.
 - iii. Votes:
 1. Vivek--Yes
 2. Keith--Yes
 3. Katie--Yes
 4. Rachel--Yes
 5. Emily R.--Yes
3. New Business
 - a. Takoma Campus Buildout: Consideration of bids submitted for project management services.
 - i. As this conversation will entail discussing aspects of the school's finances that impact our negotiating power and position with bidders, the Board will move to closed session.
 1. Keith moves to move into closed session.
 2. Rachel seconds.
 3. Votes:
 - a. Vivek--Yes
 - b. Keith--Yes
 - c. Katie--Yes
 - d. Rachel--Yes
 - e. Emily R.--Yes
 - ii. 5:10pm move to closed session

Return to open session at 6:26pm.

4. Katie moves to adjourn the meeting.
5. Vivek seconds.
6. Votes:
 - a. Vivek--Yes
 - b. Keith--Yes
 - c. Katie--Yes
 - d. Rachel--Yes
 - e. Emily R.--Yes
 - f. Dave--Yes
 - g. Chris--Yes

Meeting adjourned at 6:28pm.

Breakthrough Board Minutes
10/22/2020

Attendance:

Keith Whitescarver, Chair
Katie Brown, Secretary
Emily Hedin
Emily Raskin
Vivek Swaminathan
Rachel Kimboko
Drew Archer, EdOps
Chris Lohse
Dave Bagnoli

1. Call to Order/Welcome
 - a. 5:05pm Call to order
2. Housekeeping needs
 - a. Approval of October 15th minutes
 - i. Vivek moves to accept minutes for open and closed sessions.
 - ii. Rachel seconds.
 - iii. Votes:
 1. Vivek--Yes
 2. Keith--Yes
 3. Katie--Yes
 4. Rachel--Yes
 5. Emily R.--Yes
3. New Business
 - a. Takoma Campus Buildout: Consideration of bids submitted for project management services.
 - i. As this conversation will entail discussing aspects of the school's finances that impact our negotiating power and position with bidders, the Board will move to closed session.
 1. Keith moves to move into closed session.
 2. Rachel seconds
 3. Votes:
 - a. Vivek--Yes
 - b. Keith--Yes
 - c. Katie--Yes
 - d. Rachel--Yes
 - e. Emily R.--Yes
 - ii. 5:10pm move to closed session

Closed session

- b. Takoma Campus Buildout: Consideration of bids submitted for project management services.
 - i. Bids from Collier, Building Hope, and MGAC
 - ii. Update on A&E negotiations
 - 1. Studio 27: lowered their fee from 7% to 6.34%
 - 2. MCM vs Forrester:
 - a. MCM is coming in at \$234/square foot; DCPS is building schools in the \$600/square foot range
 - b. Forrester: \$149/sq foot, which is not realistic
 - c. The finance committee has been exploring the feasibility of a phased approach; all classrooms on the 2nd floor not needed until 2024.
 - iii. Project management
 - 1. Building Hope: \$210,000, calculated a percentage of the overall project cost (3%)
 - 2. MGAC's proposal comes with a lower fee, but the advantages of working with Building Hope as an entity known to all parties may outweigh the cost savings
 - 3. Cost savings opportunities/ideas:
 - a. Cut out bathrooms and kitchens in second floor classrooms, move to communal--this is the biggest opportunity to cut
 - b. Decrease MCM's costs
 - c. Adjust enrollment strategy or class size
 - d. Adopt a more modest design for the stairwell
 - e. Ask Studio 27 for additional ideas to bring costs down
 - 4. Chris moves to accept Building Hope's proposal on the technical merits, but negotiate on the price^[P]_[SEP].
 - 5. Dave seconds
 - a. Votes:
 - i. Vivek--Yes
 - ii. Keith--Yes
 - iii. Katie--Yes
 - iv. Rachel--Yes
 - v. Emily R.--Yes
 - vi. Dave--Yes
 - vii. Chris--Yes
- c. Dave moves to return to open session.
- d. Chris seconds.
 - i. Votes:
 - 1. Vivek--Yes
 - 2. Keith--Yes

3. Katie--Yes
4. Rachel--Yes
5. Emily R.--Yes
6. Dave--Yes
7. Chris--Yes

Return to open session at 6:26pm.

4. Katie moves to adjourn the meeting.
5. Vivek seconds.
6. Votes:
 - a. Vivek--Yes
 - b. Keith--Yes
 - c. Katie--Yes
 - d. Rachel--Yes
 - e. Emily R.--Yes
 - f. Dave--Yes
 - g. Chris--Yes

Meeting adjourned at 6:28pm.

Breakthrough Board Minutes
12/17/2020

Attendance:

Keith Whitescarver, Chair
Katie Brown, Secretary
Emily Hedin
Emily Raskin
Vivek Swaminathan
Rachel Kimboko
Drew Archer, EdOps
Chris Lohse
Michael Bing
Hannah Richardson
Allison Jones
Kat Park

1. 5:00: Call to Order/Welcome
 - a. 5:05pm Call to order
2. 5:00-5:05pm: Housekeeping needs
 - a. Approval of October 22nd minutes
 - i. Rachel moved to approve
 - ii. Chris seconded
 - iii. Ayes: Vivek, Emily R., Rachel, Chris, Keith, Michael, Katie
3. 5:05-5:25pm: Executive director's report
 - a. On Monday, PCSB voted to conditionally approve our charter with 2 conditions:
 - i. "Breakthrough shall identify an externally validated assessment it will use to measure student growth in reading and math for SY21-22 and SY22-23. The SY22-23 growth rates must meet or exceed national performance on the assessment in both areas, or the school must show improvement in both subject areas from SY21-22 to SY22-23. If Breakthrough does not meet at least one of these targets, DC PCSB will conduct a high-stakes review of Breakthrough Montessori."
 - ii. " Breakthrough shall submit a draft plan for improving leadership retention for DC PCSB's review. At a minimum, the plan must include 1) specific strategies to retain and develop current leadership, and 2) a description of how the school will measure the plan's success."
 - b. Enrollment finalized at 271 students
 - c. Finances looking strong--forecasted to end school year with 99 days of cash on hand
4. 5:25-5:40pm: Public comment

- a. Miguelina Zapata: Kudos to the school for doing a wonderful job in impossible conditions
- 5. 5:40-6:30pm: New business
 - a. Review conditions on PCSB's charter renewal
 - i. Assessment selection due to PCSB by March--Hannah has a list of pre-approved tests
 - ii. Leadership retention plan: Committees will take this up in the new year
 - b. Review timeline for next reopening decision
 - i. Task force convened in November: Rachel, staff members, and 6 families
 - ii. By mid-January 15, we will have a communication out to families about Q3
 - c. Takoma Campus Buildout: Consideration of scope, timeline, and financing
 - i. Katie moves that we move to closed session, Keith seconds
 - 1. Ayes: Chris, Keith, Vivek, Rachel, Michael, Emily R., Katie

Closed session, 5:51pm

- 1. Takoma campus buildout: Consideration of scope, timeline, and financing
 - a. \$5.75 million is our all-in budget for renovations of the second floor. To achieve this, we must reduce the scope of the project.
 - i. As of 4/1, we'll be paying rent on 22,000 square feet, but we can't build out and occupy all of it at this time
 - ii. We'll still be able to build out to 9 fully prepared classrooms; additional square footage can be developed at a later date
 - b. To do this, we will prioritize classrooms, SpEd space, and office space
 - c. Leaves us with an \$800,000 gap for multipurpose rooms
 - i. Could be funded by SOAR facilities grant if/when they are reinstated
 - ii. And/or aggressive capital campaign for multipurpose space and playground
 - d. Should we choose to forego some offices to build out a health suite (\$95,000)? Emily will revisit this idea with Allison, Kat, and Hannah
 - e. Next steps: Admin team will finalize the scope, Emily will sign contracts with Building Hope and Studio27; in the new year, start thinking about the communication strategy
- 2. Financing: Get taxable bridge loan (which we can do quickly), and then refinance taxable bridge loan into tax-exempt bank-held bond
 - a. Slightly more expensive due to higher transaction costs, but not enough to really move the needle, and the timeline is really important
 - b. Finance committee will discuss this more in the new year
- 3. Rachel Moves to return to open session; Michael seconds
 - a. Ayes: Chris, Emily R., Katie, Rachel, Vivek, Chris, Michael

Return to open session 6:36pm

Rachel moves to adjourn, Katie seconds

Ayes: Rachel, Katie, Michael, Emily R., Chris, Vivek, Keith

Meeting adjourned at: 6:37