



## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: February 13, 2024

Held via at The Birches Academy

**Present:** Secretary: Alyssa Ross (AR), Treasurer: Michael Gendreau (MG), Becca Allan (BA), Alexis Goldsack (AG), Samantha Moulton (SM), Danielle Richards (DR) Pamela Sarantis (PS);

**Via Phone:** Chair: Christie Storniolo (CES), Vice-Chair: Christine Miele (CM)

**Staff:** Chris Smith (CDS), Jessica Wachsman (JW), Erin Balfe (EB), Aimye Haroutunian (AH), Kayla DiOrio

**Public:** Rebecca Nadilo, Jamie Manso

AR called meeting to order at 5:35pm

### General

Approval of minutes from January 9 meeting. BA motions to approve, PS seconds, no abstains. All in favor. None opposed.

### Correspondence

- Email from an interested party about joining the Board; forwarded to MG

### Next meetings:

- Full Board
  - March 12, 5:30pm
- Finance
  - March 5, 5:30pm

#### Events:

- Kindergarten lottery held January 31
- Immersive in-school theater program, Jack and the Beanstalk: 30 Kids attended
- 100 Day of School
- Black History Month Concert (WMUR/Newspaper- confirm with guests)

#### Public comment:

- RN- Looking for update for the 2 Kindergarten Classes Moving into 1st Grade also hearing concerns about a 1st grade teacher and bringing up K teacher & potential pre-school
- JM- Curious of K situation as well

### **Teacher Highlight: Andrew Jones**

**Focus:** Birches Music Curriculum that he's (& Christsine Mosier) are developing

Big Ideas- Experience joy and music making

News- Donations, Piano died during concert

#### **Upcoming events-**

Black History Month 2/21 1:45 Special Artist coming Gospel organist. Charlie O'Niel guitarist who will be there

Fine Arts Nights 5/16 5:30 Ukulele Only

Battle of the Bands 5/29 at 6:00

End of the Year Concert

Core song Scaffold- Laying the foundation from K-8

**Kindergarten-** Music is fun and everyone can do it

½ **Grade-** Building off K Curriculum- Phillips Exercises

Baseline + Melody = Harmony Beginnings of Music Training

Learn the Instruments

Choral Singing

**3rd Grade-** Scaffold building continues

Musician Training- Latin Singing- Round Singing (Two group singing different at same time)

Orph Instruments + Drum Set Mary Had a Little Lamb

Folk Dancing

Reward is Glue dancing

**4th/5th Grade-** Magic year

45 Minute Ukulele (Musicianship Training)

45 Minute Choir

Sheet Music for the first time & learn dictation.

Choir- 2 Part Choral Singing

**Rock Band Class-** They can learn Traditional Rock Band Instruments

Garageband- Beginners

Studio Band- More advanced everything is fully notated

Battle of the Bands-

### **Field Trips-**

Q Division Studios

Students got to record a track and use synthesizer

House of Blues

Birches Students got to dance right in the front

**Music Matters-** Huge Donation that Students got instruments (Drum Pads, Guitars, Keyboards)

**Choir-** 2 8th graders will be selected for NH Division

**Concert Band-** Donation provides instruments for Instruction

Scaffold comes back with Mary had a Little Lamb

Read Notes off Paper & Play by Ear

**Percussion Ensemble-** Mr. Jones writes the music

**Advanced Music Theory- Middle School General Music**

Melodic & Harmonic Analysis

## **Dean of School update**

### ***Enrollment***

- 235 enrolled
- Wait list at 267
- Kindergarten 25 of 37 have accepted - 22 additional on waitlist
- Tour Questions are becoming more in depth

### ***Personnel***

- Miranda Berube took over as English teacher in middle school
- Mrs. Baldonado is covering middle school math for the rest of the year; will continue with STEM role as she has times

## **No Foundation/Friends update**

## **Committee updates**

### ***Finance***

- Reviewed actuals through January 31st , PS motions to approves, BA seconds. All Agree. No opposed

### ***Governance***

- Still have a few other candidates in the process

### ***Personnel***

- CES and AR to meet for Dean of School review prep with BA and DR

### ***Outreach***

Met with entire committee February 3rd

### **Ongoing Projects**

- Agree on add-on to Bloomerang to take donations - “Kindful”
- Continue to search for intern
- Staff page updated
- AR/AG SEO optimization for website; may involve intern
- CM and AG working on specials Pages: Art, STEM, Music, Spanish, Gym
- Revamp 10-year logo; waiting for final from graphic designer

### **Curriculum**

- Finished Science Curriculum
- Use of ChatGPT to save time to cross check requirements. Generating Prompts.

### **Non Public**

BA motions to move into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) at 6:54pm. PS seconds. All in favor.

AG motions to move out of non-public session and into public at 7:16pm. BA seconds. All in favor.

Vote to seal the minutes of the non-public session *under RSA 91-A:3, II(a):The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.* PS motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.

### **Facilities, Strategic Planning**

- JW presented plan for the future & Sustainability; the plan to be voted on is the 12,000 square feet expansion where Bull Moose is now. Entrance would move to the Bull Moose front.
- This is the first step in a “Path to Ownership” of the building. Other than Bull Moose, will retain existing tenants with leases
- September Implementation is the goal for the first floor space.
- PS & AH & CS have been working with and will continue to work with an architect on what potential space would look like. Looking at multiple options of layout including:
  - Gym would be multipurpose.
  - Secondary entrance would be drop off for all.
  - Nurses office would be in a prevalent area next to outdoor space, Upper Elementary would be upstairs
  - 2nd Art teacher/ 2nd Art Room.
  - Science wing.
  - Back of the building and adding in drop in windows.
  - Indoor Playground (2nd/3rd year process)
  - Add tutor rooms and tech lab STEAM space

- Single Stall bathrooms to be more gender neutral
- Eventually updating upstairs bathrooms
- Communicating Space- Open to below. More natural light.
- Grand Staircase in the back. Prioritizing updates and what will be fundraised for.
- Multi faceted project over the years, will get multiple bids
- Existing lighting will be swapped over to LED. All new spaces will have LED lighting.
- Press release going out to staff, then to parents, then have web page FAQs to be launched February 14 at 10am.

BA motioned to adopt the 5th amendment to the lease. AR Seconds. All in Favor. N.ne  
Opposed.

## **No Policy Reviews**

BA motions to adjourn. PS seconds. All agree. 7:45pm meeting adjourned. Opposed