

Breakthrough Board Minutes - Open  
12/8/2022

Attendance:

X	Michael Bing, Board Chair
X	Vivek Swaminathan, Parent rep Secretary
X	Juliette Berg, Parent rep Academic Committee
X	Maggie Kash, Parent rep
X	Kendra Harpster, Parent rep SHA President, Finance Committee
X	Emily Hedin, Executive Director
X	Ino Okoawo, Director of Ops
X	Sarah Suchman, Board member
x	Elizabeth Meers, Compass
x	Patrice Feinstein, Compass
x	Anne Aaron, Compass
x	Jack Katz, Compass
x	Gary Friend, Compass
	Katie Brown, Treasurer

Community members: Gabriel Movsesyan, Adam Thomas, Jenny Rodriguez

**Thursday, December 8, 2022 5:00-6:39pm**

- I. 5:00pm: Call to order & Welcome
- II. 5:05-5:12pm: Approval of the Minutes from October 13, 2022
- III. 5:12-5:25pm: Presentation from the Compass Team on Strategic planning
- IV. 5:25-6:00pm: Executive Director's Report
- V. 6:00pm-6:20pm: Committee Update - Finance
  1. Financial projections for FY24
  2. Review Financial Policies
- VI. 6:20pm-6:38pm: Committee Update - Governance
  1. Recruitment of new board members
- VII. 6:39pm: Adjourn
  - I. **5:00pm: Call to order & Welcome**

II. 5:05-5:10pm: Approval of the Minutes from October 13, 2022

Vote to approve minutes from October 13, 2022 - APPROVED

Motion: Kendra

Second: Keith

A	Kendra Harpster	a	Maggie Kash
A	Keith Whitescarver	a	Michael Bing
a	Vivek Swaminathan	a	Juliette Berg
		abstain	Sara Suchman

A=aye; N=nay

III. 5:12-5:25pm: Compass presentation

### Introducing your Compass Team

Patrice Feinstein Project Leader	Anne Aaron Deputy Project Leader	Gary Friend Team Member
Jack Katz Team Member	Elizabeth Meers Team Member	Alecia Ortiz Team Member
Francesca Pisano Team Member	Jane Slatter Team Member	Emma White Team Member

Compass Proprietary & Confidential

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- Compass founded by business graduates, in DC, expanded to Philadelphia
- Nonprofit clients span many different organizations in Greater Washington area
- Compass strategic planning process overview
  - Help org develop mission, vision and high-level strategic goals
  - Interview stakeholders, compare with other organizations and benchmarking
  - Developed engagement letter and Emily and Michael have signed off on it
- Compass will test mission and help generate a vision statement for Breakthrough
- Compass will perform a gap analysis and benchmark action plans against peer group
- Compass will conduct 360 degree interview of stakeholders, focus groups as strategic goals emerge, best practices and benchmark gap analysis
- Compass will NOT develop Breakthrough's strategic plan, including implementation or offer recommendations/offer analysis on effectiveness
- Emily mentioned the Insight Survey (teachers and support staff) run by TNTP, run twice yearly of school culture. Winter and Spring results available in January and May, respectively. Breakthrough also collected data on special education program

IV. 5:25-6pm: Executive Director's Report

## **Finances**

Days of cash at 90 at the end of October. DSCR at 1.29. Finance committee met on December 6 to begin looking ahead to FY24. In August 2023, CityFirst Bank will review a 10-year pro forma as our loan moves from a 5 to 30 year amortization schedule.

## **Enrollment**

The lottery for SY23-24 opens on Saturday, Dec. 10.

Breakthrough's charter application and loan terms assume continued growth in our student body population up to 405 students in PK3 through grade 6. As part of its committee meeting, the finance committee is discussing different growth trajectories that maintain programmatic and financial integrity.

## **Special Education**

Breakthrough is currently partnering with the DC Special Education Cooperative (SpEd Co-Op) to conduct a needs assessment of our SpEd department. We began this process in SY21-22.

## **Facilities**

- Installation of the two-level climber in complete. Safety Audit complete as well. Next step: follow up with the manufacturer about feedback from Safety Audit.
- Breakthrough has received initial pricing for the office renovation. Total budget at \$244k (our budget is \$200k). Emily and Ino will meet with Tom Porter about potential areas for savings.
- Plan to install a rain garden in the front yard (Giving Tuesday fundraiser to support the garden yielded ~\$10k)
- Still pending - review of Christopher Lalik's school facilities safety audit.

## **Staffing**

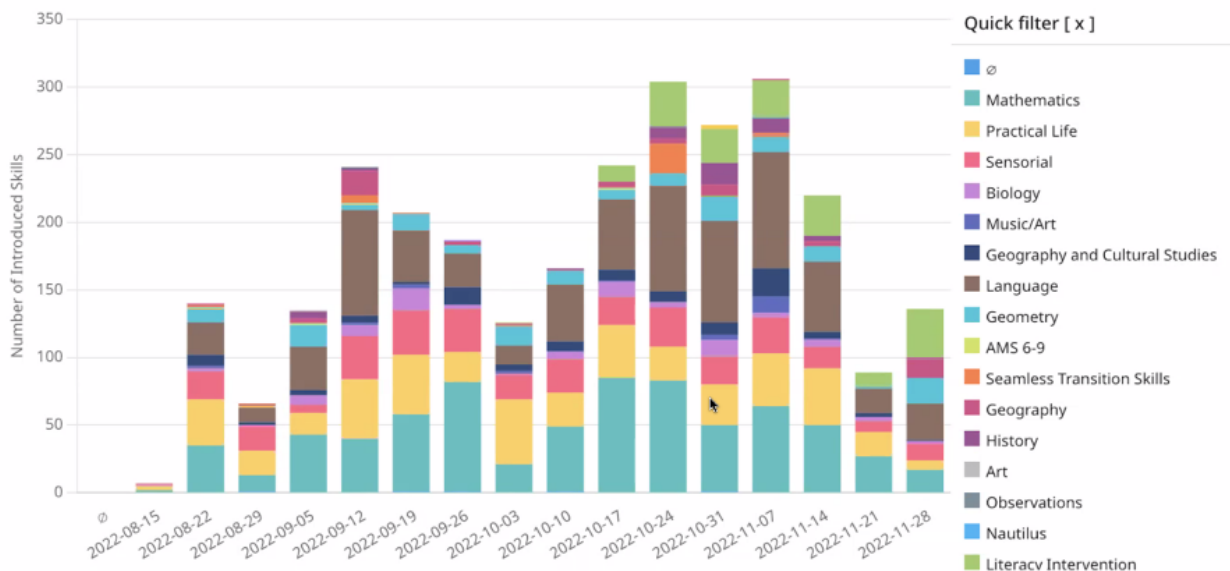
Our FY23 budget assumed 68 FTEs. We currently have 71 FTEs. We hired 2 additional Montessori assistants and 1 additional dedicated aide beyond what we budgeted for.

Breakthrough continues to work on staff mental health, morale, and retention:

- Continuing to offer weekly educator wellness groups, led by a clinical psychologist (above budget)
  - Insight survey conducted in December (78% of teachers responded and 60% of support staff replied). In February, we will do a staff wide review. Board of Trustees encouraged to attend (Friday, February 17)
  - Continuing to look at behavior support and Special Education support
- Keith asked about normalizing students in the classroom after being away and adjusting to in-person learning. Emily shared the following observations:

- Pre-K 3 children are exhibiting a different level of socialization and school readiness, lower speech capabilities or more non-verbal, exploring whether a larger portion of students will need more speech services or time to develop
- Ongoing challenges with conflict resolution skills
- Lost learning presented challenges
- Maggie asked 'Can you talk about any efforts such as small group tutoring the school is using to address learning loss?' Breakthrough uses the Orton Gillingham method for reading literacy in classrooms for additional support. Use Hagerty materials in younger classrooms. Dustin, literacy specialist, does small group tutoring for 15 students and Reading Partners (AmeriCorps) serving over 40 students in-house On math, ongoing dialogue for additional materials. Currently only using Montessori materials.
- Keith mentioned district coordinator meeting and Montessori schools are experiencing Math loss across the board.
- Sara asked about Reading Partners' source materials - confirmed that they follow an evidence-based curriculum, where are students tutored? Emily mentioned students are pulled out of the classroom throughout the day for ESL and IEP learners.
- Emily shared the lessons given by week

## Lessons given by week



- Kendra asked about data in Transparent Classroom, and Emily mentioned that information is ramping up, but Emily wasn't sure if the data is entered accurately based on prioritization challenges for guides
- Michael asked about strategic vision. Emily mentioned rallying around 3 pillars: community, development and prevention. She wants to catapult Montessori learning, methodology and philosophy. Anchored in anti-bias and anti-racist ideals.

- V. 6:00pm-6:20pm: Committee Update - Finance (Kendra)
- Financial projections for FY24

- Facing challenges. Losing COVID support
- Rent increases
- Meeting with lender in early August 2023 to help prepare
- Have not added student population 352 out of 400 planned
- Have not added primary classrooms and guides have been having challenges
- Possibility of adding school size to add a classroom, we are currently passed the deadline to add
- Ask for a rent abatement using advocate, though that would just push debt to later (less favorable option)
- Cuts in budgets would be challenging because we don't know where
- Approach CityFirst (lender) to see if we could identify a grace period to address issues with DSCR - 1.29 strong now, but will likely take a hit for FY2023 when COVID funds are gone.
- Debt moves to 30-year amortization from a 5-year amortization in August of 2023.
- Fundraising goal is currently modest to avoid committing to funds not yet available.
- Adjustments to enrollment have also narrowed the gap.
- Review Financial Policies
  - Audit is due to the school board before the Winter Break. Results of the audit need to be voted on/approved. We can also consider changing financial policies to grant the Finance committee authority.

**Vote to move to reword language in financial policy to read 'Finance committee to review audit.' and strike the language of 'submit to the Board for approval.' - APPROVED 6:18pm**

Motion: Vivek

Second: Keith

A	Vivek Swaminathan	a	Maggie Kash
A	Keith Whitescarver	a	Sara Suchman
a	Kendra Harpster	a	Juliette Berg
a	Michael Bing		

VI. 6:20pm-6:38pm Committee Update - Governance

- Recruitment of new board members

**Vote to move to closed session - APPROVED 6:20pm**

Motion: Vivek

Second: Sara

A	Vivek Swaminathan	a	Maggie Kash
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A	Sara	a	Michael
a	Kendra Harpster	a	Juliette Berg
a	Keith		

Vote to move to open session and adjourn - APPROVED 6:38pm

Motion: Kendra

Second: Sara

A	Kendra Harpster	a	Michael Bing
A	Sara Suchman	a	Juliette Berg
a	Vivek Swaminathan	a	Keith Whitescarver

Meeting adjourned at 6:39pm