



## School Leadership Team Minutes

June 2, 2025

### Attendance

#### Core Members:

Principal Brian Pew (present)

UFT Chapter Chair Melanie Pflaum (present)

PTA Co-President: Ursula Schindler (present)

#### **CBO Bard College:**

Valeri Thomson (present)

#### UFT Members:

Kyung Cho (present)

Ryan Vera (present)

Annie Shields (present)

#### Parents:

#### Yr II (Early College)

Primary: Cindy Hsiao (Absent)

Alternate: Rosemarie Bray (Absent)

#### Yr I (Early College)

**Primary:** Marie Edesess (Present)

**Alternate:** Todd Stevens (Present)

#### 10th Grade

**Primary:** Miri Navasky (attended by phone)

**Alternate:** Kay Moffett (absent)

### **9th Grade**

**Primary:** Abhijit Sengupta (present)

**Alternate:** Deborah Levitzky (absent)

### **Students:**

#### **Yr II**

**Primary:** Sahir Subhi (absent)

Alternate: None

#### **Yr I**

Primary: Ivy Laidlaw-Morris (present)

Alternate: Wyatt Shone (absent)

### **10th Grade:**

Primary: Clarke Greene (present)

Alternate: Manni Chen (absent)

### **9th Grade:**

Primary: Dallas Chrisiaanse (absent)

Alternate: Sumaiya Mobarak (absent)

### **Guests:**

Parent Coordinator Carol Turitz (present)

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## **Agenda**

### **1. Reports ( [at this link](#) )**

- a. Student Report
- b. Principal Report
- c. Faculty Report
- d. Parent Report
- e. Administrative Report

### **2. BHSEC compliance with [DOE phone policy](#)**

### **3. Check in on SLT minutes, CEP, and by-laws to the website?**

### **4. Check in on CEP goals**

### **5. Unfinished business/New business**

- Clubs, still frustration among families - is there a way to start more strongly next year.
- Advisory - discuss better use.
- What do we do to get paid for SLT work and donate \$\$ to bard, if we would like to do that.
- Open House question – received communication from 2 parents of 7th graders at different schools starting to think about high schools and that said they were given a link to Bard Queens open houses but not Manhattan and wanted to visit. <https://bhsec.bard.edu/queens/admission/open-house-and-information-sessions/> Does Bard Manhattan have similar - trying to promote but couldn't find anything on website. [https://bhsec.bard.edu/manhattan/admission/open-house-and-information-sessions/#:~:text=The%20dates%20for%20our%20Spring,%3A30%20p.m.\)%20Register%20here.](https://bhsec.bard.edu/manhattan/admission/open-house-and-information-sessions/#:~:text=The%20dates%20for%20our%20Spring,%3A30%20p.m.)%20Register%20here.)

**Administrative Note:** Issue with minutes. (1) minutes from the May meeting were not reviewed or approved, (2) SLT needs to review status of website regarding public facing agendas and minutes from the 2024-25 school year before adjourning for the summer, (3) the current draft of the May minutes does not reflect that 4 parents communicated in writing concerns about moving forward with certifying new by-laws without a review of the changes made to the previously approved by-laws. Despite these objections the by-laws were signed, (4) attendance sheets are required to confirm attendance for April, May and June meetings. Attendance is not complete for these minutes and should be verified before they are posted.

### **Minutes Taken by Marie Edesess**

**Student Report:** Students are experiencing stress related to the workload at the end of the year. Student Union collaborated with Dr. Pew to create a successful community building event. This event involved a series of raffles of movie tickets and gift cards in the gym with a DJ. Students reported that this was comparatively a well-attended community event and really enjoyed collaborating with Dr. Pew. Student Union plans to build on this model to address concerns about student apathy and build school spirit in the coming year.

**Principal Report:** Principal confirms success of the community event and reports that the planning process was inspired by the student report from the May SLT meeting which expressed concerns about how to create events that kids will attend. He added that the step team performed at the event and he plans to meet with the Student Union for the end of the year to pregame for community events in the 2025-26 school year.

Principal reviewed aspects of the end of the year calendar including changes in the schedule for the MAP exams. Staff is in the process of receiving updated training regarding proctoring regent exams. Stacy Millman is leading the project of end of year testing very effectively (thank you!)

Principal reviewed staffing for the upcoming school year. He reports his commitment to the longstanding Bard process of empowering individual academic departments to lead the hiring process for their own team. Currently the Social Studies department is deep in the process of making selections for new faculty. And the Special Education Department is gearing up for hiring as well as screening resumes and scheduling interviews. In addition, there are 2 AP vacancies but without an official budget from the DOE, the school cannot post the positions.

Principal explained that his plan is to slightly reconfigure the titles of the APs to maximize their flexibility. This specifically impacts the previous position of the AP for special Education. Dr. Pew would like to make sure that the candidates are highly skilled in the area of special education but plans to shift both titles to AP of Administration to allow for a broader definition of their roles in the school.

Principal expresses gratitude for the level of collaboration and engagement regarding the writing of the CEP (the Comprehensive Educational Plan). He reports that this is a very welcome and unique work process in his experience.

**Teacher Report:** Chapter Chair reports that the faculty are gearing up for the administration of Regents Exams and working on hiring. As a result of the success of the grant to reduce class sizes, Bard is able to increase its DOE faculty by 5 and this means that faculty who have been working on the Bard College Budget can be moved over to the DOE budget. This increases their benefits and job security and offers membership in a strong labor union.

Faculty is working on department awards for the Y2 students.

Student Evaluations of courses have been completed and are being reviewed in consultation. The process needs some revisions and modifications. Consultation has included fruitful discussions about how decisions are being made esp. regarding hiring in which faculty take the lead. Departments reviewing which faculty will teach which course next year.

The Steering Committee (collaboration between faculty and administration) is looking to offer an adjusted schedule to faculty who do not teach either first or eight period so that they have more flexibility in managing their workday to respond to things like childcare responsibilities etc. Also-return to an in person Curriculum Night has been approved for next year with the hope of building more connection with parents and families and increasing the presence of families in the building.

**Parent Report:** PTA president gives financial updates. Over \$80K has been raised this year. June PTA meeting will include a vote on the budget for the next school year and elections for the coming year.

A parent representative reports that parents have expressed concerns about the communications received from the CTO. Parents are requesting more frequent communication and that education about the college application process is provided earlier in the students' early college experience. Specifically, parents would like guidance as early as 9th grade about the financial aid process, the components of the CTO program at Bard, Naviance, the process of course section in the Early College program and its impact on the college process. Concern was expressed about how to increase this kind of information (workshops, emails etc. without over burdening the already very busy CTO team.

Another parent representative raises the possibility of borrowing from the model at Bard Queens in which during the September Writing and Thinking Program, Y2 students are pulled out of the multigrade groupings and are given support to work on personal writing for the college application process. Principal is very much in favor of implementing this model to make sure all Y2 students go into the fall college process with strong personal writing. It was noted that academics at Bard skew towards analytical and scientific writing and do not offer many opportunities to develop personal writing skills which are an essential component of the college application process.

Another parent representative asked that the update regarding the hiring of administration for Special Education be communicated asap to the larger community. A growing number of

families have students with IEPs and it is essential that they understand the school plan for strengthening this essential program.

**Cell Phone Policy for 2025-26 School Year:** The SLT discussed the new plan to implement the bell to bell NYS mandate regarding removing cell phones from the school day. Principal is dedicated to the process of community listening sessions to explore and address questions and concerns and reports 3 sessions have already occurred. Parents are largely supportive of the elimination of phones in school but shared concerns about safety especially when students are out to lunch. During out to lunch, students will need to adapt to a new way of paying for food they purchase and for keeping track of the time. Students raised concerns about how they can listen to music on the field (currently from a phone to a portable speaker) which is a much beloved practice. Teachers will need to make changes in the way tech is used in the classroom (currently phones are used in many ways including to take photos of math problems etc). Concerns were raised by parents regarding the transition to this new policy, specifically the need to acknowledge the many ways that some students use phones to regulate attention, mood and affect during the day including the ability to connect with parents. Also, since students will be allowed to bring and use laptops from home- concerns about equity were raised. Principal reports that the school is committed to making sure that there is a laptop/chrome book for every student.

**Comprehensive Education Plan Working Groups:** The CEP has 5 priorities, and the team is divided into subgroups to develop goals, data markers and action plans to respond to these priorities. The remaining portion of the meeting was spent in these work groups.

The SLT has not had the time to review the work of these subcommittees which is essential given the mandate to make decisions through a process of consensus. A decision was made to schedule an additional meeting this year to complete work on the CEP on Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:45.

Meeting Adjourned.