



School Leadership Team

Minutes - September 15, 2025

(approved at Oct 6 meeting)

5:02pm - 7:00pm

Attendance

-Principal Brian Pew -UFT Chapter Chair: Melanie Pflaum -PTA Co-President: Ursula Schindler ----- CBO Bard College Valeri Thomson ----- UFT Members Kyung Cho Ryan Vera Annie Shields ----- Yr II Parents Primary: Marie Edesess Alternate: Todd Stevens ----- Year I Parents Primary: Miri Navasky ----- 10th Grade Parents Primary: Abhijit Sengupta (not present) Alternate: Tia Wou	Early College Year 2 Students Primary: Zoe Shim Alternate: Ivy Laidlaw-Morris ----- Early College Year 1 Students Primary: Angelique Alonso Alternate: Ellie Cazar (not present) ----- High School 10th grade Primary: Dallas Christiaanse Alternate: Angelina Lam ----- Guest in attendance: -Carol Turitz -Amie Hartman -Tanka Kamenslay -Sara McKay -Brian Morris
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Links to SLT Agenda & Reports

[Agenda](#)

[Principal Report](#)

[Faculty Report](#)

[Parent Report](#)

[Student Report](#)

I. SLT Norms & Roles

- SLT will have a Rotating Notetaker – alternating faculty & parent who will take minutes at each meeting.
- SLT will have a Recording Secretary who will be responsible for ensuring the minutes are completed, approved in the following meeting, and ultimately works with Jose to make them public (and as accessible as possible).
- SLT will have Parent & Faculty Co-Chairs who will collaborate on setting an agenda (in consultation with the group and with the CEP in mind) and running the meeting. This agenda should be set 2 weeks in advance of the SLT meeting and should be posted publicly. The agenda will be sent out to the core members before it goes public.
- SLT will have a Time-Keeper.
- SLT would like consistency in notetaking – will come up with a Model.

Discussion of student involvement last year. Students say that they enjoyed running the meeting but found the agenda writing too much at times. Consensus is to keep student involvement, but make it voluntary. Students can take part in the agenda setting, if they would like, but are not required. The co-chairs will try to set the planning meetings at a time that makes it possible for students to join in. Students can also help facilitate the meetings. Decision to have a student as the point person for these meetings (they can get word out etc...)* Brian points out that Carol made Room 230 into a wonderful meeting room for small groups. Would be a good place for co-chairs to meet (with student).

Volunteers:

- **Recording Secretary: Miri Navasky**
- **Co-Chairs: Ryan Vera & Marie Edesess**
- **Student point person for co-chair meetings: Zoe Shim**
- **Time-keepers: Dallas & Ivy will rotate**

Notes: Last year minutes still have to be posted to the website.

- SLT start time set for 4:45pm. Meeting can be up to 2 hours.
Lots of discussion of SLT timing and the duration of the SLT. There is a total number of hours that people can be paid for 3 hours/month, but you can use some of those hours offline. Marie agrees to research the rules re: hours for the SLT and report back.
Discussion about the impact of having late meetings on students but also the impact of having meetings that start too early on working parents – will it stop parents from volunteering because they can't get there too early? Decided that 4:45 is a good middleground and we will try to push important items later.

II. Scheduling

- A. *Class Selection*. Add/Drop has started. Registrar Aaron Little is working hard - in partnership with counselors. They will be working on an *as possible* basis not a first come first serve basis. They are going to work through that by department so everyone has a fair shot. That work begins in earnest tomorrow. Will be fully complete by Friday September 19th.
- B. *Cohorts*. Principal Pew has heard from 9th and 10th grade parents re: the concerns about cohorts. Understands that this is not ideal but principal pew says the offerings in language created some limitations, as well as small class sizes. (Made several new hires and several transfers from Bard line staff). There is a positive side to these cohorts and there are best practices that can be shared with professors and there's a lot to be discovered there. As we receive feedback, Principal says it is very possible to redo this next semester. But if we were to do it now – it will throw classes into a ton of chaos – particularly for teachers who will have to have another first day of school. It can also have a real negative impact on special ed services. Very open to revisiting in Spring.

Question about electives and kids who didn't get any of their choices. Principal Pew says students that did not receive any of the electives that they chose will definitely get one of their choices. Discussion on how to fix this add/drop process. If you do it too early - before classes begin – it interferes and distracts from Writing and Thinking. If you do it too early at the beginning of school, kids haven't had time to get a sense of the classes. Bard Scheduling is particularly tricky. Principal Pew will go through and get feedback so that when they approach the spring semester they can have institutional memory. Aaron Little highly trained - Principal Pew has great faith in his ability (understatement). He thinks of this as a reset year. Principal Pew explains many problems (including program finalized later than it should have been). Willing to push through a not so ideal situation, but not willing to encounter the same problems twice. Cho points out that kids will have only missed 4 classes so far because the electives run only 4 days a week.

Discussion over why not everybody has their choices. Does everyone have the same choices? Everyone wants to take Joe Gubbay's class and other classes are not as under demand. But this is normal. Should do a run through of how many kids actually didn't get any of their electives. (many times kids think they didn't get their electives, but when they look back – it was in fact on their list). Principal Pew notes that the program was finalized later than it should have been – took Special Ed lots of time to go through IEPs. But did very successfully!

- C. *Y2s / Graduation Requirements*. Y2 students not getting the classes they need to graduate which caused a lot of panic. Add/Drop period for Y2 should be first. They should not have gone through add/drop. Principal Pew says they did go first and were prioritized. If that didn't happen, it should have. Also says there was an additional problem around the ways kids initially classified classes with dual coded classes (history or english). Students responded but nobody did anything with their response. This was due to instability in the institution - is completely unacceptable. This is now being worked out.

SLT parent rep raises equity issue around class selection. Some kids have relationships and go advocate for themselves and get their schedule changed, while others do not (temperament or other reasons). Advisory could be very helpful especially as the school becomes more diverse – need to lean on advisory more to help handle the inequities inherent in the system. *Uneven and underutilized advisory*. Side bar to this parent raises worry about Whats App chat and the way information is being channelled. Lots of information is coming out on the chat and not everybody is on the chat. Discussion of the chat – direct all questions to Carol. Also discussion of how helpful the newsletter is – Principal Pew says he is trying to get as much info in the newsletter as possible. Please refer parents and students back to the newsletter. Tons of information is there. Also discussion of difficulties inherent to this kind of chat. Need regular reminders of where people should go in the chat.

III.  **BHSEC Manhattan Student and Family Handbook 2025 - 2026** summer-long project. Big undertaking. Sourced from multiple documents. Val and Principal Pew did thorough overhaul. It should be considered a living document that is updated and changed. Includes a ton of information that lots of people have questions about for example: (1) 4 column chart that is an overview of the four years at BHSEC (in section called curriculum) including when choice starts and what regents exams kids take, etc...(2) updated policy on page 39 about early dismissal that he's heard some grumbles about. Transportation desert and college model – kids leave buildings for all sorts of reasons – principal ok with creating something that is more liberal than parents having to pick up from building. But parents can't call in – Need an email sent directly from parent (with documentation with some kind of attachment) should include a government issued ID of parent.

IV. Questions Arise about various Policies

- Can Y1 and Y2 that don't have last periods – can they leave? Yes. Principal Pew Ok with any student leaving after their last period of class (not just Y1 and Y2)
- Free periods = study periods. Are students are allowed to leave buildings during frees and during lunch? Yes. But If there starts to be a trend where students who are struggling in classes are leaving and not coming back we will revisit.
- Faculty raises alternating class schedule so not always missing that same last period for sports
- Faculty raises kids who do sports should not have to do gym (beacon does it, other schools do it)
- Parent raises 47 kids in one gym class - this is still being shuffled around.
- Yoga - 9th and 10th graders can now take yoga. Plus Yoga teacher is setting up that if you take yoga 1, 2 and 3 you can get certified to teach in college.

V. More Principal Update

- AP Cay Maria Boswell: We've been able to hire a wonderful new AP. Principal Pew tells background from jamaica – teacher for 11 years, AP for 10 years – was finalized on budget today.
- working to reframe other leadership structures around comp time positions. We have 2 teachers who are working comp time (meaning teach less than colleagues because they have additional responsibilities)
- **Julie Mirwis**, Special Ed Liaison. Fantastic. She is teaching down and doing a lot of the admin work alongside as a special ed AP would do. Went through all middle school IEPs

for 9th graders, working to make sure students in correct sections oversaw all hiring brought in 5 new teachers – getting them up to speed – and supporting the entire team with best practices around co-teaching, writing IEPs etc....being special ed teacher at our school is very different. Collaborating closely with Eva Li and Rachel Cho.

- **Adrien Agredo** – programmed down so he can oversee PD plan for year and did a lot of writing and thinking anthology etc...
- Parent Rep asks for plan for the Special Ed to be highlighted in the upcoming newsletter. Says need to clarify because parents think we lost an AP of special ed and we don't have one now – so need an explanation of how deliberate your restructuring has been.
- Special Ed section of Handbook is there - still needs to be built out more.
- Q. Faculty member raises question about leadership. Wants Institution to think about building capacity within and a pipeline for training for admin. Scaffolding a diverse group of people to grow in the Bard network. Carol notes another Adeodat Ilboudo is also an AP (recently licensed) – all supported by Bard. paid for.
- Map Testing – lots of data came out that has been put to use.
- C30 process for Cay Boswell (posted on sept 2) soon to happen.
- Curriculum Night schedule for Oct 8th. Teachers want to do the in person curriculum night. Plan to have tables around perimeter w/ spot for student union, clubs, fundraising, seats in center – in first hour will quiet crowd, and then from 7pm - 8pm parents will have the opportunity to follow their child's schedule in 10 minute period. Will try to get 9/10th grade parents to meet Y1/Y2 parents wearing name tags.
- Leon Botstein coming – beautiful to hear from him for Y1s. REmind them that they are part of the college process.
- Confusion about remuneration – if you do not want to take the payment for the SLT – can't just decline it because then the school never sees it. You have to be paid and then donate it to the school.

*****Student Questions - Need to add to agenda for next month*****

- (1) Y2 dues! \$350! Can PTA alleviate this somehow?

Principal Pew says they are what they are and they will have to stay where they are if we want to have a prom. There have been many parents who voluntarily made 2 payments rather than one. Principal Pew says he is not ok with any student not going to anything because they can't afford this.

- (2) Electric Scooters or Skateboards – where can we put this. They get stolen out front.

Next time Agenda – a few weeks to

- (3) Y2 Trip – add to agenda.**

Val talks about importance of referring to oneself as Y1 and Y2 rather than junior and senior because you are in fact IN college and doing college work. Students need to own that and Faculty needs to remember that. This is an early college 9th and 10th grade and then we have the college program! Many students are taking a full college program in last two years. Super important to remember that you are in college!

Cell phone policy - report has been great – there have been only 4 to 5 phone violations (One of them was a student coming forward another was a parent). Teachers are seeing a huge difference in engagement from kids (they go to the bathroom and they actually come back). Students are also seeing more engagement from their peers.

College Essay workshop in writing & thinking - Students relate that it was a huge success.