

BARD

HIGH SCHOOL • EARLY COLLEGE

School Leadership Team School Leadership Team

SLT Minutes - January 5, 2026

(approved at Feb 2 meeting)

4:50 - 6:50

Attendance

-Principal Brian Pew -UFT Chapter Chair: Melanie Pflaum -PTA President: Ursula Schindler ----- CBO Bard College Val Thomson ----- UFT Members Kyung Cho Ryan Vera Annie Shields ----- Yr II Parents Primary: Marie Edesess Alternate: Todd Stevens ----- Year I Parents Primary: Miri Navasky (note taker) Alternate: Sara McKay ----- 10th Grade Parents Primary: Abhijit Sengupta Alternate: Tia Wou ----- 9th Grade Parents Martha Andrews (abs) Tania Kamensky	Early College Year 2 Students Primary: Zoe Shim (not present) Alternate: Ivy Morris ----- Early College Year 1 Students Primary: Angelique Alonso Alternate: Ellie Cazar ----- High School 10th grade Primary: Dallas Chrisaanse Alternate: Angelina Lam (not present) ----- High School: 9th grade Primary: Lulu Yeung Alternate: Nickolas Cielo ----- Guest in attendance: -Parent Coordinator: Carol Turitz -Julie Mirwis (presenting) -Wyatt Shone (standing in for Y2's) -----
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Meeting called to order at 4:50pm

Reviewed and approve December Minutes
Noting that Marie and Todd were in attendance.

Student Reports

10th Grade — There are lots of complaints about the bathroom policy. Lots of complaining every day.

Y2 Report (1) Agrees re bathroom. Says while there is understanding that something needed to be done to combat the hateful graffiti, many students feel that it is punishment rather than just a response. Says there are also logistical problems – students are often unable to find someone to unlock the bathroom from them. Understand and agree that hate crimes have no place at bard but feel there should be a better, more appropriate way to address things. Kids feel they are being punished in a way that feels unproductive and

unrelated to the problem itself. (2) Rejection Board - also want to raise the idea of a rejection board. (3) 6 or 7 students witnessed verbal disagreement between teachers. (4) Need clarity on Cut policy — needs to be communicated more clearly.

Pew says he will address this in Student Union meeting with on Friday.

9th Grade - Other than bathroom situation (swastika and racist graffiti found), some nervousness about Finals and there is a lot of confusion about how finals work. Sending another email about how finals work. And the policy around attendance.

Y1 Report – Want clarity and more info on possible year 1 trip in May to tour colleges. Same complaints re: bathrooms. Some are locked and can't get in. And no toilet paper.

Discussion around using advisories again to impart this information.

Also Students propose maybe more conversations around racism and anti-semitism. People don't feel the locking of the bathrooms is really addressing the core problem. Just saying we don't want things written in the bathroom. Locking the bathrooms doesn't really communicate that hate speech is not acceptable. We are a great school for discourse and we should have it. Those conversations would be a better way to move forward rather than a purely punitive way.

They propose having discussions rather than locking off bathrooms.

Marie raised bringing an outside organization in to help with discussions (ie. Morningside Center for Justice). A good way to bring in outside organisation maybe to model conversations with schools about incident.

Brian Pew has lots of responses — agrees locking the bathroom is not a great way to punish or reprimand. But punishment was not his intention rather it was a response to an egregious incident. When something happens publicly, have to do something public - a sizable group of people will say/feel that nothing is being done. But he does agree we do discourse well. He is having and planning to have many discussions around what could be done. He had a 10th grade town hall focused particularly on the bathrooms. He has added slides to Y2 town Hall here: [January Town Hall Slides](#) He will be repeating town hall throughout the week. And really encourages people to think about what could be done at the school. Plan for now is in the Last slide: Will keep the bathroom policy in place — then will start to open the bathrooms at the start of next semester. If there is a repeat incident he plans to lock the bathroom for the remainder of the semester. Also says one activity at Writing and Thinking will be around this kind of incident. Will address the situation around no staff being there to open the doors. Will make sure that doesn't happen. Just reiterating I don't like this. But not sure what else I can do – only logical thing.

As for the rejection board. There has been lots of discussion about having a rejection board. Pew said before he made any decisions he wanted to speak with other members of the community. He found that both the faculty, staff and students of color all said "please no. This is not healthy for us." And then some white staff and students said they wanted it. Then he went a little deeper and spoke with some alumni and the term emotional regulation came up, lots of conversation about the differing levels of at home support vis a vis rejection which is variant across community. It really stood out to him that there were strong identity differences in the students and staff that said yes this is a good idea and no this is not a good idea. He says very rare that something is so clear cut. Still thinking about healthy ways to process rejection, but doesn't know how to do that in ways that are healthy for everyone.

Plans Student Union meeting to talk more about this.

Discussion of ways to discuss failure and rejection in healthy ways (failure resumes, faculty stories of rejection). Pew talked to a group of students who were all for the rejection board when it happened but said it very quickly became not funny and harmful for them emotionally.

Also its in a particular location on the 4th floor – purposefully a very low monitored space – so maybe that factored into it as well. Maybe make a reaction wall instead. Or feelings wall?

Parent suggests that these are interesting conversations that maybe he can have with Y2's. Let the kids know what you found. But at the same time there is a student bill of rights that protects their ability to use bulletin boards in ways they want – so can have a rejection board if they really want it.

What about an anonymous box? Someone writes it. So it is truly anonymous. Maybe the number of applications that someone can afford is upsetting?

Brian says more discussion has to be had – will talk about it in Town Hall with the Y2.

Cutting Policy. Brian clarifies they have reviews on Friday. And pulls all the kids who have cut classes. Find out which kids are actually cutting classes. So how many cuts. No cutting is allowed. But we have such a problem with cutting and it was happening so much – it was too many to monitor (150 kids !). So originally we said if you cut 3 classes then restricted lunch. Then changed it to 2 classes (when list got smaller) and restrict lunch. But if you are a repeat offender and you cut class your lunch will not have lunch. Point is don't cut class and your lunch will be taken away.

Parent recommends communicating in advisory. But Pew said we have a problem with advisory – it's not a normal advisory – we don't have it frequently enough – college advisory gets in the way for Y1 and Y2. Advisory just can't work in a way normal advisory works there are too many issues. Still need to all get on the same page about advisory (who should run it and how often).

As for Y1 visit to colleges. DOE has changed structure for college visits. Found it is cheaper to organize ourselves rather than go through a travel agency. Will follow up with more information re: trip.

PTA Report — came together with amazing event right before break. Thanks to so many people. PTA Raised \$2600. Won a MCAP grant \$2500 uniforms. \$13320 raised on giving Tuesday. Same as last year. We are very grateful.

Faculty Report

Faculty worried about scheduling in many different ways. To get programs for next semester (deadlines coming fast)

2) Bathrooms — want kids to be able to go to bathrooms. to add to that a key broke in the cylinder today. So another bathroom is out of order. 3) Faculty Party at the end of break was incredibly nice, warm and well-attended. 4) Lots of Worries about time. Time to get IEPs done. etc..5) All curious who the new Chancellor is.

Brian clarifies that during Finals –all school days during final exams are mandatory attendance. Don't have to stay all day, but have to come. Carol turns auditorium into a hanging area (ping pong table, study area etc...)

Ryan says Bylaws — will be done this month.

Presentation on Special Education by Julie Mirwis, Special Education Faculty –

Here is Google Slides of Presentation: [SPED Dept Presentation \[January 5th 2026\]](#)

Mirwis - co-taught 9th grade lit, Y1 seminar, large amount of knowledge amazing resource, lots of behind the scenes work.

- Mirwis gives detailed overview of what academic resources are offered at school (everything from counseling to physical and speech therapy as well as SETTS, transportation services and etc...).
- Wide variety of disabilities classifications at Bard: LD, ASD, VI, OHI, ED etc...
- There has been a major growth of SPED over the years. ****In 2016 school had 1 certified teacher (part-time), now we have 14 full time special education teachers. (1 to 14!).**
- 9th/10th grade. In all core classes we have ICT classes in both 9th and 10th grade. On the slides she runs through the various pairings of teachers. From Americas to Physics. All the core classes have an ICT option.
- Y1/Y2 College programs also have added ICT classes so there are many more elective choices for kids.
- The ICT partnerships in other electives. Really working closely with students and families to get what they need and make sure it is working for them. Can go more or less support.
- Faculty has really grown (Rachel Cho, Melissa Rosario, Anna Azeglio, Stacie Millman, Jessica Chock-Goldman, Annie Shields). A lot of in school testing can happen. Speech, etc... Everything except occupational therapist works in the building. Making sure all the providers feel comfortable in the school
- Students have grown: 4 to 98: Pew shows slides that demonstrate the change in population of kids with IEPs at BHSEC: In 2016 there were 4 kids with IEPs and now in 2026 there are 98 kids.

Breakdown: 16.7% of total student population.

9th grade: 18.9%

10th grade: 19.3%

Y1/Y2: 13.9%

Dr. Pew talks about the inequities that exist with kids with IEP in college course selection of electives. In hiring more staff they have been able to offer more classes to kids and they will continue to grow. This year they've added 2 additional courses. Also will look ahead at kids preferences. If lots of kids want to have calculus we try to figure out ways to bring in co-teacher or help teacher to see if they can support them on their own. Having additional staff has made BHSEC so much more flexible – and not over working the teachers so much. And more teachers who are comfortable teaching SWD in a college setting. While they have added electives, the kids with IEPs definitely have fewer choices, because they can't run all the college classes as ICT.

Discussion of change of SWD going from 4 to 98. Some of it came from DOE Regulations – more kids coming into the school then worked hard to communicate what BHSEC can do to support SWD who want this kind of rigorous academic school which drew more kids.

Parent asks how same or different an ICT class is from a General Class with one teacher. Co-teaching class you are there to individually support the students with the IEP, but it shouldn't change the rest of the class. The focus is on supporting the individual students – (i.e they get a graphic instructions, etc..).

Pflaum notes also that its a requirement from the city that 20% of our students have IEPs. And if we didn't recruit kids then we would get kids who weren't up to task who didn't necessarily want to come here.

Mirwis says in a more rigorous college class a kid can take it as a high school class – slightly less rigorous.

Pew – The purpose of the special ed services is to get every kid to the same goal. In our case the goal might not be reasonable for kids. I've gone into the same class that is being co-taught and a class with just one teacher and they seem very similar.

Ryan Vera – talks about how much more sophisticated and better the special ed programs have gotten.

Discussion of some of the numbers in the graph. Attrition from kids with IEP. ? Some kids leave. Some kids move out of SWD designation.

Pew adds when he arrived here was looking very carefully at numbers. Last year we got 17 kids who did not get the associates degree and all of them were students with IEPs. Most of them it was identified earlier on that Associates degree was not a reality for them which is ok. Lots of discussion about finding the right path for the right kids. Some kids aren't getting the Associates degree but just getting some college credits. The goal is not for EVERY one to get an associates degree. And that's ok.

Explains how this works for kids with IEP's.. Students who are taking the college classes as high school classes have their own syllabus in the college classes. Syllabus is given to them early. It is worked out with case manager. Case Manager has a meeting with each family individually. Gets students thoughts, parents thoughts and decide on an appropriate group of classes. Revisited every semester.

High school ICT classes now have a better ratio of IEP students to students without disabilities. Mandated Ratio is 60 to 40% of kids with IEPs. But because of the departments in an ICT classroom we were either at or exceeding the ratio.

Teachers work out how they work in ICT classes together.

Many different models of co-teaching (sometimes one teacher walking around and helping individuals, sometimes two teachers teaching together and both talking, sometimes small group activities, etc...). All different forms of teaching. Depends on class. Pew generally supports almost all the co-teaching methods he's seen here.

Students join in and say like having two teachers. Supportive of ICT classes.

Question about whether there is alumni data in terms of kids with IEPs and how they fare down the road (AA degrees, BA degrees etc...). We will look into it. Good thing to think about.

Overview of things that have been successful.

- Continue developing solid ICT partnerships
- Developed good PD for teachers in general and support faculty that do not have co-teachers with solid PD.
- Amped up Resource Center
- Need to think differently about recruitment/Admissions
- CTO – What to do for kids with IEP at college level – how to consider schools that are right fit for everyone.
- Transition Resource Center that exists and it is a wonderful resource – their entire existence is just to help kids transition from High school to after highschool. They have workshops, trainings, will work one-on-one with families. Will help make good thoughtful college lists. Etc...
- When students graduate give an exit summary. Summary of IEP and help them to figure out how to get accommodations once they go to college.

Parent asks about how to incorporate SPED goals into CEP. We have really focused on these quantifiable goals that might not be as thoughtful as they should be. Could use the individual goals for students. Are we

meeting the individual goals laid out in the progress IEPs versus regent scores. Put it into All Students have a High Quality Academic Experience. All Students Read Well. there are some uniform goals (ie graduating high school with X number regents and some goals that are more individualistic).

Tracking Special Ed Student population – can you track them by finer data points: gender, race etc...

Question about whether there is any stigma around the ICT classes. Kids say no. Mirwis says no. Parent says there is a stigma or questions coming from parents about pacing in classes. Parents say that some kids do see a difference - not necessarily negative or moving slower but different. Two teachers etc...Parent raises whether stem classes could be used to compare movement, end results etc...– but very complicated (too many different variables). Always material that everyone will have to cover but there is a lot of leeway between classes.

NEXT Month is on Goal 5: Family inclusivity!