



# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

## Minutes

### Board of Trustee Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Wednesday March 19, 2025 at 8:00 AM

#### Location

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 86390720109

Passcode: 630455

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#### MISSION

The mission of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is to nurture and develop academic, social and emotional competence while building confidence, character and citizenship among its students.

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#### Trustees Present

A. Buckmire (remote), B. Keith (remote), C. Barrett (remote), C. Engerman (remote), D. Morris (remote), K. Cherry (remote), M. Gardner (remote), R. Clarke Jr. (remote), S. Dibinga (remote)

#### Trustees Absent

K. Davis Kernizan

#### Guests Present

A. Emery (remote), Christine Fisher (remote), D. Warwick (remote), David Conrady (remote)

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#### I. Opening Items

A.

## **Record Attendance**

### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

B. Keith called a meeting of the board of trustees of Boston Renaissance Charter Public School to order on Wednesday Mar 19, 2025 at 8:06 AM.

### **C. Welcome and Public Comment**

## **II. Approve Minutes**

### **A. Approve Minutes**

B. Keith made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustee Meeting on 01-15-25.

C. Engerman seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

B. Keith	Aye
K. Cherry	Aye
C. Barrett	Aye
M. Gardner	Aye
R. Clarke Jr.	Aye
S. Dibinga	Aye
K. Davis Kernizan	Absent
A. Buckmire	Aye
D. Morris	Aye
C. Engerman	Aye

## **III. CAO Update**

### **A. CAO Update**

STEAM Day was held last Friday (3/14) with high student engagement across grade levels. Another STEAM Day is scheduled in April 11. Other Science activities include fossil-making, analog adaptation projects and a school garden in April.

A math competition, 'March Mathness', was held in the lower school using ST Math.

Data meetings are being held in the Lower School this week and scheduled for the Upper School next week to analyze student growth and adjust instruction. Third round of academic team observations is underway, focusing on classroom engagement, discourse, and instructional quality. We've been responding to recent data meetings by adjusting schedules for reading/math specialists and RSTs to support high-need classrooms.

Additional PD is scheduled for April 11th focused on reading, math, and interventions. We've adjusted WIN groups to reflect student progress and provide enrichment using Lexia, i-Ready, and teacher-led instruction.

In Upper School we've made WIN groups smaller and increased coaching for teachers needing support based on observations. Co-taught classrooms are also getting additional coaching. We've adjusted math pacing to allow for reteaching and mastery rather than just moving forward. PLCs are analyzing data closely to identify focus areas and guide instruction. We're also supporting fact fluency and overall student growth.

MCAS Projections:

Math Proficiency:

- 2025 Goal: 27% proficiency (approx. 116 students).
- Current Projections: 109 students projected to pass; 32 more are close to proficiency.
- Support Measures: After-school programs, daily math practice, and writing exercises.
- Expected Range: 25–28% proficiency (an increase from last year's 20%)

Reading Proficiency:

- 2025 Goal: 35% proficiency (150 students).
- Current Projections: 129 students expected to pass (about 31%); 34 more students are within reach.
- Support Measures: Daily writing development in grades 3–6 and completion of ALP (Accelerated Learning Program).

Writing Proficiency:

- Projected Proficiency: 31–35%, aligned with reading goals.

i-Ready Data: Shows growth in the number of students at or above mid-grade level in grades 3–6 over the past three years (2022–2025). K–1 Performance: Remains steady compared to prior years. The school is focused on using i-Ready data to guide support and instruction, aiming for significant gains in math, reading, and writing proficiency across upper grades.

A board member asked: what time period the benchmark data represents?

CAO: The benchmark data Represents; End-of-year 2022–2023 (22–23), Current 2023–2024 (23–24) and Projected data for 2024–2025 and beyond.

A board member asked: if I'm looking at 3rd grade 2023 the end of year was 41%? CAO: Yes, potentially. A board member asked: if I look at this year's data, it's a different cohort of students, but 46% of those 3rd graders at this time point are projected to be proficient. Am I understanding this correctly? CAO: Yes, if they're continued on that stretch Growth.

A board member asked: To clarify, what this data is speaking to is that they're further along, potentially again, not the same group of students, But they're further along in their trajectory than they were 2 years ago. Is that correct? CAO: Yes, that is Correct and continued growth in reading is expected.

MCAS preparation: Many students are close to proficiency (partially meets category). Writing is a key area of concern. Targeted writing prep for grades 3–6 has been ongoing. Significant focus on improving idea development and grammar with students. For math practice writing constructive responses, practice using allowable resources (white boards) and IXL push for 3rd Grade. And for Science weekly MCAS prompts and writing responses and practice science assessment tools on the platform.

Our MCAS practice exam will be held March 18-19. We've been doing daily 15-minute spiral reviews since March 3rd. A practice math assessment will happen in late April to help students utilize the tools on the new platform. There are some very different components in this newest platform, especially as students add mixed numbers or fractions.

A board member asked: Are we just introducing these tools to students now, because we're just finding out that they're accessible? Or is this something that students have been able to utilize? CAO: Yes, The platform launched 2–3 weeks ago. Entering fractions, especially mixed ones, has been the biggest change we have noticed. We're working on integrating these into lessons. For 6th grade, we also need to support students in using calculators properly, including for graphing.

A board member asked: This kind of preparation should've been done earlier, at the end of last year or over the summer. This is relying on a platform and not looking at standards. How are we making sure this doesn't happen again? CAO: Yes, the platform was only just released, but your point about aligning with standards proactively makes sense.

A board member asked: Regarding the practice essay writing and open response writing , are teachers reviewing open responses and grouping students by need? CAO: Yes, typically there are two days of editing and feedback built into writing blocks.

A board member asked: Is there evidence that this feedback is happening, or is it just assumed?

CAO: We believe it's happening and have a meeting scheduled this week to ensure that. We're also getting into classrooms to check in with teachers.

#### **IV. Finance**

##### **A. Finance Update**

Reviewed the Q2 Financials and updated forecast : Financial situation is good. Reviewed DESE Measure of Risk dashboard. We show green across the board and projecting out which is what we like to see. Continue to project a surplus. We have begun moving funds to Brookline Bank. We drew down a majority of our ESSA grant funding in January.

There is a lot of conversation right now around the federal DOE; if it shuts down, lack of funding around grants, etc. Right now we are not overly concerned due to our solid financial position. We will wait and see more about what is actually going to occur at the DOE.

A board member shared that at the Finance committee meeting yesterday they had an extensive conversation around this particular issue. The CFO has given us assurances that because of the limited amount of Federal funding we get we're in good shape in the immediate future, with regards to Federal funding and the Finance committee will continue to pay attention to this issue.

The capital reserve, as we look forward, we want to think about potentially increasing that reserve again this year to cover some capital future projects. The Facilities team is looking at the next 3 to 5 years for projects for the school.

Will be looking into ways in which we can invest in our students' performances and to invest in recruiting and retaining high quality teachers.

This year we received a Daycare grant that is offsetting the losses for us, it reduced our projected deficit from 6 figures to likely a little under \$10k deficit. There is no guarantee that this will carry into next year.

Christine Fisher from Central Source will be attending today's and the May Board meetings in support of the CFO

## **B. Staff Appreciation**

B. Keith made a motion to approve year end staff appreciation.

C. Barrett seconded the motion.

The Board agreed to the year end staff appreciation and eligibility criteria to show appreciation for all of the staff's efforts for this school year, to be paid in June. It is a great retention tool and is always appreciated by staff.

Board member added: We discussed this yesterday at our Finance committee meeting and the committee was in full support of recommending this staff appreciation to the board.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

### **Roll Call**

M. Gardner	Abstain
A. Buckmire	Abstain
B. Keith	Aye
K. Davis Kernizan	Absent
R. Clarke Jr.	Aye
C. Engerman	Aye
K. Cherry	Aye
S. Dibinga	Aye
C. Barrett	Aye
D. Morris	Aye

## V. HOS Update

### A. HOS Update

Our charter has been renewed with 2 conditions. These are the same conditions we have for the current charter term.

Condition 1: By December 31, 2027, the school must demonstrate that its an academic success by providing evidence that the school has exhibited significant and sustained academic improvement as determined by the Commissioner.

Condition 2: Until further notice, Boston Renaissance Charter Public School must submit on a quarterly basis the board and committee meeting materials and minutes that document the board's efforts to ensure that the school is an academic success.

The next step is to draft our Accountability Plan for the next charter term. The 1st draft is due Friday, May 16th. Written feedback will be provided by DESE. Drafts exchanged until both parties are happy with the draft. At that point, the Department will provide provisional approval. Once the Accountability plan is accepted the Board will vote on the plan sometime between June and September.

Research for Better Teaching - Awaiting a proposal for year long on site intensive leadership professional development and coaching aligned with the Skillful Teacher professional development that teachers are participating in. The focus is high quality, instructional practices.

We have been utilizing the resource book from the skillful teacher to give feedback to teachers around their practices. Doing learning walks together, aligning everything to the skillful teacher, looking at practices, looking at higher level questioning, how we're holding students accountable for rigor, etc, so that we are having one message, one voice across the school about what a high quality classroom looks like. We had a group of 40 staff members who are wrapping up the program and we have another group of 35 teachers signed up to begin again in September. We have requested additional onsite professional development to work with the school leadership team intensely for next year. Just waiting for their proposal to come back.

Currently engaged in The Ed Inquiry Math Challenge for the 3rd grade. We've been using this platform called Ixl in 6th grade, but we have adopted it in 3rd grade for the challenge. Our data and assessment coordinators are working with Ed Inquiry looking at that data and looking at what interventions that we need to enhance to try to make some immediate impact for this year's math MCAS. We're also doing a soft rollout this year for second grade to prepare our students for next year. The data for 3rd grade Pilot looks encouraging. In discussion about further engagement and expenses for SY25/26. Awaiting a proposal and budget.

Parents in the Lower School requested at the last Parent of Renaissance meeting that they were looking for more rigorous homework other than paper copies. We are

discussing how to move to digital homework and we expect that probably won't happen until next year.

We are continuing to support educators and grow our practice in Tier 1 rigor, scaffolding and differentiating instruction. We are reviewing all lessons during PLC's and checking for understanding through walkthroughs. We are meeting with educators on a regular basis to support them through this process.

We are seeing a lot of growth and gains in our Upper School classrooms. The Upper School continues to prioritize rigorous instruction, skill development, and innovative learning experiences.

Focused efforts are underway to support students in building confidence and proficiency for the MCAS assessments.

ACCESS Testing has been completed by the ESL team. Materials have been submitted to DESE. We continue to do outreach with families to encourage volunteers for the SEPAC and ELPAC. Upper school special education teachers received training on MCAS accommodations for students with disabilities and dually identified students.

The school recently celebrated Black History Month. included 4 performances by the Specialty Team with both evening performances for the whole community and school day performances for staff and students. specialists presented dances, ukulele ensembles, piano and vocal performances, Mandarin language plays and orations, a play based on Black Panther and full band ensembles. An interactive Black Wall Street museum created in STEAM classes, a visual artwork display and a performance by Voices of Renaissance were included at the evening performance on 3/27. On March 28, an 80s-themed Soul Train celebration was hosted by the Specialty Team to conclude the festivities.

Board member attended the Black History celebration last month and shared that it was amazing and well put together.

Upcoming events:

Alvin Ailey's Ailey Revelations Celebration: A free community dance event will take place at BRCPS on Saturday, March 22 (10:30 AM–12:30 PM), featuring a performance by Voices of Renaissance.

Scholastic Book Fair: Held in the Media Arts Center from March 24–31, with extended hours during parent-teacher conferences on March 27–28.

Voices of Renaissance 25th Anniversary Concert: Scheduled for April 17 (6–8 PM), with a daytime student performance to celebrate BRCPS's 30th Anniversary.

## **VI. Committee Updates**

### **A. Governance & Nomination**

The Massachusetts open meeting law is set to expire on the 31st. Lawmakers did vote to extend, and we anticipate this will pass, but obviously no guarantees.

Working on scheduling the Board retreat. We will work with a consultant around some goal development, Board section of the strategic plan and spend time on academic oversight.

B. Keith will follow up with proposed dates.

## **B. Academic Excellence**

According to Midyear i-ready data, students are on track to meet the annual growth goal: 50% or more students are expected to meet their typical growth on i-Ready. Discussion was had about the alignment between the Bridges Math curriculum and i-ready.

CAO clarified that i-Ready assesses at the student's instructional level, not necessarily aligned directly with Bridges, but useful for identifying areas needing reinforcement.

The external researcher that is working with us analyzed winter i-Ready data and emphasized tracking student trajectories and trends. It was suggested that the math program IXL (currently used in Grade 6) be used because it better identifies where students are struggling.

The committee looked at student growth trends and data shows that Stretch Growth goals are aligning to close achievement gaps. Discussion was had around the growth that was highlighted and questions around staff consistency and the quality of instruction were raised. Curriculum is being used with fidelity for both ELA and Math in both upper and lower school. The big focus now is on classroom rigor and discourse along with differentiation and scaffolding.

WIN data was shared, CAO explained that Professional Development has been focusing on building teacher capacity by enhancing PLCs and providing more observations and feedback which led to a deeper discussion about the current teacher mentoring program that is in place and suggestions were made to possibly improve the program.

## **C. Facility**

New site : Focus has now shifted to remodeling the existing structure at Site 1424 across the street. This change is due to the school's more immediate need to free up space for administrative purposes. The new plan involves a smaller-scale project that is less complex logistically and includes constructing a two-story building at Site 1415. To proceed, they need to hire an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) to oversee the process, including managing the bidding. The estimated total cost is around \$9–10 million, including HVAC. Once the Request for Proposal (RFP) is created, they will move forward with the project.

1415 Hyde Park Ave : Next 5-10 year needs for potential repairs. Typically done in house and supplement out with estimates.



Looking at future projects:

Roof Repairs: Parts of the roof, especially around rooftop units. They've been doing patchwork, but full replacement may soon be needed. Security System: It's outdated and needs to be upgraded. Turf Replacement: The play area turf may need replacing. The original installer is no longer in business, so RFPs are being prepared. Brickwork Issues: The brick facade on 1415 High Park has structural concerns which can affect heating and climate control. General Wear: Many building components have exceeded their expected lifespan and need attention. The team is actively working on RFPs and prioritizing these updates.

#### **D. Parents of Renaissance**

We held two fundraisers at Chez Vous in March. It was a great turnout for both events. A lot of parents shared they were grateful for the opportunity to come together for fun with the kids.

An Alum reached out to A.Buckmire regarding their company sharing financial literacy with our families and possibly 6th grade students.

Our family liaison will reach out to the POR about possible doing some onsite investment and financial literacy for families, and maybe even something at the 6th grade level.

### **VII. Closing Items**

#### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

B. Keith

B. Keith made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

C. Barrett seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

A. Buckmire	Aye
D. Morris	Aye
C. Engerman	Aye
M. Gardner	Aye
B. Keith	Aye
K. Cherry	Aye
K. Davis Kernizan	Absent
C. Barrett	Aye
S. Dibinga	Aye
R. Clarke Jr.	Aye

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### **Documents used during the meeting**

- Academic Update March 2025 presentation (1).pdf
- FY25 Q2 12.31.2024 Finance Report.pdf
- BOT memo - FY25 Personnel Year End staff appreciation.pdf
- BOT Update March 2025.pdf