**Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023**

***Boston Collegiate Charter School***

# → Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

## Which student groups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?

In February 2020, the BCCS Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Plan for SYs 21-23. This aligns with the focus timeline of the Student Opportunity Act (SOA). Our subgroup academic gains are strong: in 2019, our aggregate ELA data showed SGPs above 50 for all subgroups and our aggregate Math data showed SGPs above 70 for all subgroups. We remain vigilantly focused on chronic absenteeism, having brought down the rate of absenteeism significantly since the 2017-2018 school year. That said, our quantitative data, qualitative data and experience point to a few groups on which we will focus in our next strategic plan.

1. Economically disadvantaged students who require wraparound supports and dedicated family engagement efforts to ensure their basic needs are met
2. Students, often with disabilities, who are manifesting mental and behavioral health challenges
3. African American and Latino/Hispanic students, who deserve a more anti-racist school culture so they are affirmed and can thrive compared to their White peers

The three focus areas of our strategic plan align with our interest in these students. These focus areas are: 1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; 2) Deeper Learning; and 3) Comprehensive Student Development. These focus areas have been the focus of our new strategic plan as well as our FY21 Budgeting, and we articulate their connection to the SOA plan below.

# → Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps

## What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will be allocated to these programs?

**Evidence-based program #1:** Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs

Aligned with our strategic plan from FY21-FY23, we are increasing personnel and services to support holistic student needs. This targets two of our strategic foci for this next plan: 1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and 2) Comprehensive Student Development.

In particular, our FY21 budget has introduced a new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This key staff member, who comes to BCCS after having started the Multicultural Center at Simmons University, is an ally and resource in developing an antiracist culture. She partners with the Deans and the Principals, as well as student leaders, in evolving our culture into one that is rooted in restorative justice, and she plans professional learning for our staff to ensure that staff are equipped to address their own bias and support students’ holistic needs. This professional has her own budget to deploy to support staff learning and PD, as well as culturally affirming celebrations and practices for students.

In addition, our FY21 budget has expanded our 1 person Family and Community Relations department to a 3-person department, with two Family Engagement Managers, one for each campus, who are the primary liaisons with families. These two veteran BCCS team members are supervised by the Director of Strategic Projects, who helps ensure that our family engagement work is rooted in best practice and we are doing our best to meet students’ holistic needs. This team also has a budget allocated specifically for our Students in Need, which has been supplemented through philanthropy, including, for example, to launch a weekly food pantry for our highest need families.

Finally, under the specific umbrella of Comprehensive Student Development, we’re focused on ensuring that we have a robust approach to Mental Health. We have expanded our relationship with Partnerships in Education and Resilience (PEAR) to include new social and emotional learning work with the high school and a deep dive into mental health

strategy to ensure that we have holistic supports for students across all tiers of intervention (Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3).

Looking ahead, we anticipate that our Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will continue in her role in FY22 and FY23 and continue to strengthen BCCS as an anti-racist institution. We further expect that the family engagement team will stay in their roles as well, and will continue to have funds to deploy to support our students who struggle the most. We are further excited to see the PEAR work conclude at the end of this year with recommendations for a more robust strategy for supporting mental health at BCCS, including clarity around how we are supporting our students who need Tier 3 interventions.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category1** |
| Additional incremental staffing for DEI  and family engagement | $82,700 | Chapter 70 |
| DEI budget to support staff learning | $37,800 | Chapter 70 |
| Students in need budget | $33,000 | Chapter 70 |
| PEAR contract | $30,000 | Chapter 70 |
| TOTAL | **$183,500** |  |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs |
| **SOA program categories:** | | Targeted Student Supports |

**Evidence-based program #2:** *Parent-teacher home visiting programs*

In the 2021-2023 Strategic Plan, family engagement emerged as a key focus, as noted above. We believe it is foundational to both Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as well as Comprehensive Student Development, two of our strategic plan pillars. One of our ideas, pre-COVID, was to partner with an organization out of Washington, DC, called Kindred, which brings families and school together in robust ways across lines of difference. Though COVID-19 put this idea on hold, we have instead partnered with 1647 to do trainings for our staff on strengthening the school-home connection. In Summer 2020, we trained many of our key leaders on 1647’s model for family engagement, which involves home visits. Though we did not do home visits this year because of COVID, we did launch “listening conferences,” which involved each advisor beginning the year with a ~30 minute conversation with families to hear their hopes and dreams for their child; this is rooted in the same principles as the home visit concept put forth by Flamboyan and others. We were very proud of this aspect of the launch to the school year, and find that, though we are apart, our school-family connection is stronger than ever. Also in concert with support and advice from 1647, we have been conducting follow-on phone calls to each family survey we launch related to school reopening, which has been an important way of ensuring that we are truly reaching all of our families. We hope to continue this in years to come.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| 1647 trainings and related stipends for staff | $5,000 | Chapter 70 |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Parent-teacher home visiting programs |
| **SOA program categories:** | | Conditions for Student Success |

1 The foundation categories are: Administration; Instructional Leadership; Classroom & Specialist Teachers; Other Teaching Services; Professional Development; Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology; Guidance and Psychological; Pupil Services; Operations and Maintenance; Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges; and Special Education Tuition.

# → Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets

## What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups?

* Where possible, align outcome metrics with the evidence-based programs described in Commitment2.
* If you create custom metrics, you must also identify targets for each custom metric.

*We will know our programs are successful by the following metrics.*

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| **Category** | **Outcome Metrics** |
| **Student Achievement** | * English language arts (ELA) achievement * Mathematics achievement * Science achievement   *Note: we believe that if we do right by our students of color, we will continue to see our achievement, both at the aggregate and subgroup level, go up.* |
| **Student Growth** | * ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP) * Mathematics mean SGP   *Note: we believe that if we do right by our students of color, we will continue to see our achievement, both at the aggregate and subgroup level, go up.* |
| **Additional Indicators** | * Chronic absenteeism declines by FY23 (percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of their days in membership) * **CUSTOM:** Number of students identified by PEAR as requiring Tier 3 interventions decreases from FY21 – FY23, because we’ve implemented strong interventions * **CUSTOM:** Decrease in gap between students of color and students who are white in the answer to the question, “I have a BCCS staff member who I could go to if I had a problem.” |

As noted earlier, our focus for our SOA plan, and embedded within our strategic plan for FY21-FY23, includes a focus on specific subgroups of students. Below we articulate how the metrics below align to student subgroups:

1. Economically disadvantaged students who require wraparound supports and dedicated family engagement efforts to ensure their basic needs are met
   1. We see in the data that these students are most likely to be chronically absent and also are most likely to struggle to perform academically. For this reason, we are including the metrics noted above.
2. Students, often with disabilities, who are manifesting mental and behavioral health challenges
   1. We see in the data that these students are most likely to warrant Tier 3 interventions which we have struggled to design and provide. Through our partnership with PEAR, we hope to see fewer students warranting Tier 3 interventions, because we have done a better job at Tier 1 and Tier 2.
3. African American and Latino/Hispanic students, who deserve a more anti-racist school culture so they are affirmed and can thrive compared to their White peers
   1. We see in our data that our students of color have felt most underrepresented and disconnected from school. For this reason, we include the student survey metric above.

# → Commitment 4: Engaging All Families

## How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students’ needs?

As noted above, family engagement is a key priority of BCCS particularly in the launch of the new Strategic Plan, with a three person team engaging regularly and meeting with our Executive Director weekly to ensure families are connected to the school. This team’s commitment and innovation has led to such developments as the weekly BCCS food pantry, which involves a weekly drop-off of 45 bags of groceries to our families in greatest need during COVID. The recipients are generally our families who are lowest income, and many of whom are non-native speakers of English, and the weekly drop-off during our remote learning gives our team a good touch point with our families in greatest need.

Beyond this, our family engagement managers, both of whom are native Spanish speakers, are constantly in phone or text or email communication with our families of greatest need, ensuring that these families are connected to the school. Specific to our families of children on IEPs, the BCCS Sped PAC is an active, committed, and engaged group of families who are a fantastic resource to other families, sharing tools and connections on Facebook and in other means.

In this year, we have also instituted new practices for connecting the entire family community to the school, such as the weekly newsletter that gets distributed to all families. We measure family engagement through things like family newsletter readership, attendance at our family conferences, completion of our family surveys (which include an email/text and also a phone call follow up component), completion of our beginning-of-year family listening conferences, and engagement with our family liaisons. We have also included, as part of our reopening plans, a metric in Segment 1 (our first half of Quarter 1) wherein we were tracking whether we had had two-way communication with every family, and the goal, which was attained, was to ensure we did, in fact, have two-way communication with every single family. We also have multiple avenues for family engagement such as participation in our Re-Opening Family Advisory Task Force and Advisory Group, Board of Trustees roles, Family Advisory Committee on Diversity participation, participation on our Committee on Academic and Student Affairs, and more.

# Certifications:

### ☒ By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

BCCS lined up the engagement process for the Student Opportunity Act with the approval process for our FY21-FY23 strategic plan, since the timelines aligned. The approval of the strategic plan culminated in a Board Vote on February 10, 2020. Prior to that, the following groups were engaged in informing the direction:

* A family focus group
* A staff focus group
* The DEI Task Force, comprised of BCCS students, staff, families, and Trustees
* The Committee on Academic and Student Affairs, comprised of BCCS students, staff, families, and Trustees
* The BCCS leadership team
* The BCCS Leadership Advisory Committee, comprised of a cross-functional group of BCCS staff

### ☒ By checking here, I certify that the Boston Collegiate Charter School Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan articulated herein, as part of our broader vote on the strategic plan for FY21-FY23.

**Date of vote: February 10, 2020 Outcome of vote: Unanimous Approval**