

## Longy Community Action Report and Proposal

Four parents from LCA met with Leon Botstein and Karen Zorn at Bard College last Friday, April 26th, 2013. The parents left the meeting with a strong conviction that Botstein is personally committed to establishing a new Community Programs school/division, independent from Longy management and built from the existing CP, and doing so within the next month (“before Bard’s commencement”). The parents feel that Botstein’s commitment to quickly implement this stems from a desire to address the bad public relations that resulted from the decision to close CP, which we feel reinforces his commitment to act quickly. He seemed enthusiastic to raise funds for the new school/division. He recognized that there has been significant tension between Zorn and the faculty, and felt that this moment presents an opportunity to establish independent operations between the two parties. The recent engagement of the community, and the possibility that this engagement might lead to more robust donations to a new school, also seemed attractive to him. While the details of the plan would need to be negotiated between the faculty and Bard, the parents’ general reception to this meeting was very positive. We outline our understanding of the framework here; any additional questions or comments may always be sent to us at [longycommunityaction@gmail.com](mailto:longycommunityaction@gmail.com).

- The parents felt pleased and optimistic with the outcome of the Bard meeting, but are only interested in an arrangement that is viewed positively by the faculty. This sentiment was reiterated at the parents’ meeting on Saturday.
- The new school/division would be under separate leadership from Longy, using a distinct 501(c)(3) non-profit organization if desired.
- The plan would allow for being connected with Bard College and the Longy Conservatory, but details of the relationship would need to be worked out.
- Faculty should be directly involved in working out the details in conjunction with Zorn/Botstein, presumably through a committee of two or three faculty members.
- Representatives from the parent group would be happy to participate in any meetings between the faculty and Bard/Longy if/when this would be helpful.
- The parents also pledge to assist with their expertise and labor in any way that the faculty request for the purpose of starting a new school/division.
- The new school/division would not be housed at the existing buildings of Longy, but would have use of Longy’s facilities for some times on Saturdays, on Sundays, and for other occasional use. Saturday use would not necessarily encompass the entire building.
- We discussed the possibility of extending Longy’s piano agreement with Kawai to include the provision of free pianos for the new school/division.
- Michael Bonner’s name was brought up as a candidate to lead during a transitional period, or possibly to co-direct a new school/division, but ultimately, the faculty would determine the internal structure of the separate school/division.
- We discussed the issue of orchestra auditions in May. Zorn expressed concern that if we ran auditions but were unable to create the new school/division, students might be adversely affected. Botstein observed that in such an event, Longy could sponsor the orchestras for a year, thus enabling timely auditions without adversely affecting students.
- If a new school was formed under the banner of Bard and with separate management, would you be interested in teaching there and bringing your students?