

APPROVED Minutes

RENAISSANCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Board of Trustees

August 8, 2017

Location: 299 Kirk Road, Rochester, New York 14612

Mission: *Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts will provide children an enriched and rigorous educational experience through the infusion of the humanities and arts rooted in a culture of high academic standards leading to success in college and careers.*

Welcome/Call to Order and Introductions at 5:07 PM

- Members Present: Dr. Aaron Rosen, Zac Harrison, Dale Klein, Alan Lockwood, Steven Gordon, Dr. Marilyn Patterson-Grant
- Members Absent: Bert Brinkerhoff, Dr. Makini Beck
- Others Present: Dr. Donna Marie Cozine, Craig Eichman, New hires

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

[**Note:** *Single items can be removed from the list and considered separately at the request of a Board of Trustees member*]

- **Motion 57.6** to approve Consent Agenda for Items listed below:
- **(Motion 57.7** to approve Minutes from June 13, 2017 Board Meeting.)
- **(Motion 57.8** to approve Minutes from June 29, 2017 Called Board Meeting.)
- **(Motion 57.9** to approve August 8, 2017 Agenda.)
- **(Motion 58.0** to approve Officers)
- **(Motion 58.1** to approve Committee Members)
- Motion to approve: Dale Klein Seconded: Zac Harrison
- Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Appointment of New Hires – Alan Lockwood exercised his prerogative as Chair to allow the appointment of new hires as the first item, followed by celebration cake and a continuation of the agenda as presented with the organizational meeting items.

- Dr. Cozine reviewed the status of staffing. A total of 19 staff have either been provided with a new opportunity within the organization or are new hires to our school. Dr. Cozine announced the following appointments:
 - o Emily Nichol – 5th Grade Classroom Teacher
 - o Emily Brickman – 3rd Grade Classroom Teacher
 - o Mary Kay Bradley – Speech Language Pathologist
 - o Hayley Perruccio – Kindergarten Classroom Teacher
 - o Keith Parish – Kindergarten Classroom Teacher
 - o Mekko Mongeon – formerly an Assistant Teacher with RA now appointed to the 3rd Grade Classroom Teacher team.

Alan Lockwood, Chair recognized the HR committee has reviewed the credentials of recommended staff changes as well as new staff hires. The HR committee recommends that the Board approve the new hires as presented. Alan Lockwood reminded those present that this motion requires a roll call vote.

- **Motion 58.2** to approve new hires for the 2017-2018 school year.

- Motion to approve: Steve Gordon Seconded: Dr. Rosen
- Roll Call Vote:
 - Alan Lockwood - Aye
 - Marilyn Patterson-Grant - Aye
 - Steven Gordon - Aye
 - Dale Klein - Aye
 - Bert Brinkerhoff – Not Present
 - Zachary Harrison - Aye
 - Aaron Rosen - Aye
 - Makini Beck – Not Present

Six attending Board members in favor, zero nays. The motion carries. Mr. Lockwood congratulated the new hires to the RA Family.

Organizational Meeting:

- The following were disseminated to Board of Trustee Members to review prior to the next meeting:
 - Mission and Key Design Elements
 - Trustees Roles and Responsibilities

Committee assignments

- Alan Lockwood, Chair explained that committee assignments were based on his understanding of the strengths of each board member. Dr. Cozine is invited to attend any and all committee meetings. The following assignments were suggested:
- Four Standing Committees:
 - Human Resources – Dale Klein, Marilyn, Makini Beck, non-Board member Janine Barry with Alan Lockwood in attendance at committee meetings as de-facto chair until someone assumes that role.
 - Finance – Remains the same as the prior year with Bert Brinkenhoff, Craig Eichmann, Alan Lockwood and Steve Gordon
 - Development –Marilyn Patterson-Grant will carryover as the chairperson, Makini Beck, two non-Board members, staff member Oscia Miles. Discussion regarding the need for this committee to have six members for the coming year to focus on development effort as well as the inclusion of staff member Oscia Miles who will attend all committee meetings as part of her internship with Dr. Cozine.
 - Governance – Dale Klein as Chair, Steve Gordon, Zach Harrison and Aaron Rosen.
- Other Committees:
 - Facilities – subcommittee of Finance & Audit - Craig Eichmann, Steve Gordon, Zach Harrison and Alan Lockwood.
- Alan reviewed the board classes and explained in order to balance out the number of members leaving at a given year Zac Harrison will serve a two-year term while all other will serve a 3-year term.
- Alan reviewed the officers for the 2017-2018 school year:
 - Chair: Alan Lockwood
 - Vice-Chair: Dr. Marilyn Patterson-Grant
 - Secretary: Dale Klein
 - Treasurer: Steven Gordon

Motion 58.3: to accept the committee assignments with the addition of Oscia Miles to the Development Committee.

Motion 58.4: to approve the one-time exception of term served by Zach Harrison to two years, recognizing there are not term limits but with the intent to balance out the board members vacating in any given year. With all members in favor the acceptance of the committee assignments and the approval of one-timer term exception for Zach Harrison carried.

- Alan proposed that for the remainder of this Board year an assistant secretary and an assistant treasurer be appointed to prepare them for the position for the 2018-2019 school year. Following discussion this topic

was tabled pending further review.

Chief Educational Officer Report [Dr. Donna Marie Cozine]

- The CEO's Annual Report was provided to each Board of Trustees member and Dr. Cozine provided a brief overview of the sections and how it has been aligned to the NYSED CSO Performance Framework.
- Dr. Cozine invited the board to review the annual report and send any questions to her prior to September's meeting.
- An overview of staffing attrition/turnover. Data relevant to our region shows our attrition rate is lower than nearly all other Charter schools. There are only two charter schools who have a more favorable retention rate. Discussion regarding the breakdown of teachers only indicates that the retention rate is similar to available data reported for other area schools. Dr. Cozine reports that we are nearly fully staffed or have strong candidates for open positions.
- Dr. Cozine pointed out the final version of the year 3 NYSED state visit on page 47.

Finance Committee Report

- Report summary of 2016-2017
- The objectives for 2017-2018 were reviewed.
- The Auditors have been making some adjustments based on their audit therefore, financials have not been but are very close to being finalized.
- The Finance Chair spoke of the amount of money that has been brought in through grant writing and complimented the school on securing the extra funds.
- Payroll was under the budget partly due to insurance quotes versus actual expenses. Also, vacated position of Parent Liaison is understating payroll expenses at this time.
- General expenses were 3% over the budget line item.
- Finance Committee met recently to discuss the Farish Foundation Grant money and to consider utilizing those plus some surplus funds to cover the summer school program busses and the Center for Youth position. The bus expenditure was higher than anticipated, leaving a gap necessary to cover the Center for Youth position that could not be covered with only Fairsh Grant monies. Other items that affected this were discussed.
- Craig Eichmann explained the assessment as it relates to future building plans. Craig explained the potential for use of a bonding company versus the current bank. These options will be further investigated.
- Craig is pursuing best path forward to secure new building permits and stay on a timeline that will match our current plans for completion.
- Dr. Cozine and Nan Westervelt will meet to discuss the Capital Campaign plans.

Facilities Committee Report [Steven Gordon, Alan Lockwood]

- Report summary of 2016-2017.
- Objectives for 2017-2018.

Human Resources Committee Report (Alan Lockwood)

- Report summary of 2016-2017. Had a lengthy meeting July 25 that reviewed committee and re-capped goals accomplished in the prior year:
 - o Investigating ways to increase staff retention
 - o Adopted 403b match (approved by Board and in currently in place)
 - o Revised the Health Benefit Package – authorized the use of excess benefit allotment to be used in a HSA.
 - o Tuition reimbursement policy submitted to the Board with the guideline of reimbursement at the rate of SUNY system tuition. Two courses per year allowed with a preliminary indication the year prior by April 1st in order to provide adequate funds in the budget.

Discussion regarding parameters and clarification. Dr. Cozine advised that all coursework should be completed with satisfactory performance and be a student in good standing in order to receive tuition reimbursement. Also, a statement to the effect that it is expected that a staff member taking advantage of tuition reimbursement stays on

at our school for at least one more year after the completion of the course. Dr. Cozine proposed the following changes for Board consideration and approval:

Paragraph One (last sentence): If you are a full-time regular employee having completed your probationary period and are in good standing you are eligible for reimbursement of up to a maximum \$3000 (three thousand dollars). You must secure a passing grade of B or better. It is expected that the employee will stay at RA for one year following the completion of the course.

First bullet point will state that by April 1st you must provide intent to use this benefit.

Second bullet – by August 15th, September 15th and May 15th of the year in which courses will be taken you must submit the details of the course you intend to take.

All coursework may not exceed \$3000 maximum reimbursement per employee per year for exclusive use toward tuition expenses.

Motion 58.5 HR Committee Motion to Adopt Tuition Reimbursement Policy with the above revisions.

Motion to approve: Alan Seconded: Zach

Voice Roll Call:

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Objectives for 2017-2018. Janine's suggestion, undertake a full compensation review for teachers and staff including benefits and salary and compare so that at the end we can use that result to contain attrition.

Governance Committee Report (Dale Klein)

- Report summary of 2016-2017. Added three new board members with the potential to add one more.. We have started a review of policies and procedures. Zac will be working with Dan Westervelt to have an online repository for all policies and procedures. Zac advised that Michelle leading effort to combine important documents into one spot. This will allow for accountability for documents, staff, board and teachers. Zac with work with Dan and Michelle to understand where we are now and where we want to be to determine who should have access to documents. This is a continuing initiative to review and update as needed policies in this regard. The second initiative is to create a central depository for policy acts and pertinent documents to keep items in order and avoid confusion.
- Objectives for 2017-2018. Identify needs for new board members and look at prospective board members. Complete the initiative for review of Policies and Procedures.

Resource Development Committee Report (Dr. Marilyn Patterson-Grant)

- Report summary of 2016-2017.
- Marilyn handed out document of initiatives for the year. Kudos to Nan Westervelt, Director of Arts who has been shepherding the resource development committee in their work. Also to Donna Marie for her active support of the development committee.
- Dr. Grant reviewed the committee's goals for the 2017-2018 school year.
- Key initiatives either discussed or implemented were provided on the handout.
- Oscia is a valued member of the committee who provided for review a draft of fundraising goals/objectives for the 2017-18 year. The committee is currently reviewing the proposal which includes branding/sale for the RA clothing sale, Coin Wars which engages the children, Friday Fun Night, Sports Day, Barnes & Noble and Buta Pub 2.0 evening event.

New Business

- Trustees must sign the RA Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policies then provide it to Dale to file.
- Committee assignments for 2017-2018.
- **Motion 58.6** to approve revisions to the Organizational Chart (Non-Material Charter Change, attached.)
- Motion to approve: Steven Seconded: Aaron

- Ayes: 6 Nays:
- **Motion 58.7** to approve revised Responsible Use Policy (Non-Material Charter Change, attached.)
- Motion to approve: Steve Seconded: Aaron
- Ayes: 6 Nays:
- **Motion 58.8** to approve Alternative to Suspension Coordinator position and job description for the 2017-2018 school year. Not a new position but a change in title and a change in job description.
- Motion to approve: Steve Gordon Seconded: Zac Harrison
- Call Vote: 6 Ayes / 0 Nays – No further discussion – Motion carried.

State Review Reflection:

Alan Lockwood, Chair introduced that Marilyn proposed a rubric to react to State Review. Marilyn expressed concern of the observations made as they reflect to the Board vis a vis due diligence. Specific action plan including a Board Member and a staff member. Alan suggested that the Board take matrix prepared by Marilyn and identify 10 or 12 problems and look at them to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of the proposed or completed resolution. Additionally, strategies for how to sustain this. Craig Eichmann agreed to create a rubric to review with Board and staff before state visits. Dr. Cozine suggested that she and Craig will review and discuss with staff, then have Governance Committee review with Dr. Cozine and Craig with proposals at the Governance Committee meeting on 8/24/2017. The timeline will be that the whole Board will be informed and updated by the end of August. This was agreed by all parties involved.

Upcoming Events:

Family fun event is scheduled for September 9th, 2017 to include Board Members at a table to meet parents. Oscia is working on the details and we will provide food. The families will pay \$5 for up to four people and the school will subsidize a portion of the cost of the caterer. In addition, community agencies will have tables, carnival-style games will be provided as well as raffles. Oscia Miles is coordinating this event.

Parent orientation: Next Monday, 8/14 –Thursday, 8/17/2017.

Public Comments

None noted.

Adjournment at 7:15 PM

- **Motion 58.9** to approve adjournment:
- Motion to approve: Steve Gordon Seconded: Aaron Rosen
- Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

