



River Valley Charter School

Board Meeting

Published on May 18, 2026 at 9:35 PM EDT

Amended on May 20, 2026 at 7:41 PM EDT

Date and Time

Wednesday May 20, 2026 at 7:00 PM EDT

Location

Zoom

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

This meeting will be on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86709262536?pwd=JZb60p052ivCCqmPAzrb5HH1EVAAbWQ.1>

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			7:00 PM
A. Record Attendance		Jonathan Nickerson	1 m
B. Call the Meeting to Order		Tanya Murdy	
C. Review Trustee Code of Conduct		Tanya Murdy	5 m
D. Public Comment	Discuss	Tanya Murdy	25 m
Public comment has been extended to accommodate all requests. 3 min per person.			
1. Kristen Hunter			
2. Carli Hamilton			
3. Robyn Demand			
4. Megan Mancuso			
5. Lauren Hajjar			
6. Shelby Lee			
7. Martha Burke			
8. David Javier			
II. Approve Previous Board Minutes			7:31 PM
A. Approve Minutes	Approve Minutes	Tanya Murdy	2 m
Approve minutes for Board Meeting on April 29, 2026			
III. Consent Agenda			7:33 PM
The Items Below form our consent agenda			
A. Accountability Committee	FYI	Tanya Murdy	1 m
B. Development Committee	FYI	Tanya Murdy	1 m
C. Executive Committee	FYI	Tanya Murdy	1 m
D. Committee on Trustees	FYI	Tanya Murdy	1 m
E. Finance Committee	FYI	Tanya Murdy	1 m
F. Vote on Consent Agenda	Vote	Jonathan Nickerson	5 m
Vote to Approve Consent Agenda			

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
IV. Board Business			7:43 PM
A. Montessori Moment	FYI	Beth MacQuade	10 m
<p>We need to prioritize grace and courtesy in our words and actions. Our responsibility is to set solid, positive examples of communication between adults in the community at all levels. We need to communicate with the children in ways that help them feel safe and secure at RVCS so that they can explore and develop their interests/pursue their curiosity. They spend a tremendous amount of time in school. Our words and actions should focus on empathy and understanding. When we are at odds children feel it, see it and hear it.</p>			
B. Discussion request by Meg Connerton	FYI	Meg Connerton	15 m
<p>1.) Request the Executive Committee share details and context related to the actions that took place a) during the RVCS Committee on Trustees meeting, and b) related to termination and removal of an E2 teacher during school hours, both which occurred on Friday, May 15, 2026.</p> <p>2.) Determine, as a Board, next steps related to reputational risk and potential misconduct.</p>			
V. Committee on Trustees			8:08 PM
<p>Bylaws Nominees Leadership Slate for 2026-2027 Discussion on 5/15 COT meeting & process</p>			
A. Update	FYI	Jonathan Nickerson	5 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominee selection with direction from DESE (Alison Bagg) and Board Facilitator (Kate Scott) • Leadership nominees for 2026-2027 • Bylaws update 			
B. Bylaws	Vote	Jonathan Nickerson	5 m
<p>Latest updates based on feedback</p>			

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
VI. Executive Committee			8:18 PM
A. Update	FYI	Tanya Murdy	10 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Executive Solutions • COL sign up • 			
VII. Finance Committee			8:28 PM
A. Update	FYI	Gary LeFave	5 m
No meeting since last BoT			
VIII. Accountability Committee			8:33 PM
A. Update	FYI	Albert Ting	5 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting since last BoT 			
IX. Development Committee			8:38 PM
A. Update	FYI	Elizabeth Rankin	5 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey to record in-kind donations and parent contributions to classrooms 			
X. Director's Update			8:43 PM
A. Director's Report	Discuss	Karen Kuse	20 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025-26 Annual IDEA LEA Determinations • ELE Review • Maritime Mixer • Literacy Night • Staff Updates • Hired a handyperson • Interviewing tech companies to outsource network infrastructure and security • Easement 			

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
• Pet & Absentee Policy			
B. Pet Policy	Vote	Tanya Murdy	5 m
C. Absentee Policy	Vote	Tanya Murdy	5 m
XI. Closing Items			9:13 PM
A. Board Meeting Survey	FYI	Tanya Murdy	1 m
Please refer to your dashboard for the survey link.			
B. Adjourn Meeting	Vote	Tanya Murdy	

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REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY The Board Chair reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.

Coversheet

Approve Minutes

Section: II. Approve Previous Board Minutes
Item: A. Approve Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material: Minutes for Board Meeting on April 29, 2026

DRAFT

River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday April 29, 2026 at 7:00 PM

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8516508581?pwd=8roWrPp5aJXvEAFctC4bxo69QnaDfv.1>

Trustees Present

A. Godino, A. Ting, B. MacQuade (remote), C. Getz, C. Whitford, D. Herrera, D. Mitchell, E. Bradley, E. Rankin, G. LeFave, J. Nickerson, M. Connerton, T. Murdy

Trustees Absent

None

Ex Officio Members Present

K. Kuse (remote)

Non Voting Members Present

K. Kuse (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

T. Murdy called a meeting of the board of trustees of River Valley Charter School to order on Wednesday Apr 29, 2026 at 7:07 PM.

C. Review Trustee Code of Conduct

- The Board Chair opened the meeting, acknowledged the unusually high attendance, and noted the heightened emotions within the school community due to recent events.
- The Board Chair addressed safety concerns, noting that additional precautions were in place for the Executive Director due to threats received, and emphasized the seriousness of maintaining appropriate conduct.
- Expectations for meeting behavior were clearly stated. The Board Chair explained that disruptive behavior could result in a recess or adjournment of the meeting.
- The Board reiterated that public comment was not open at this time and that this portion of the meeting was reserved for Board remarks and dialogue only.
- The Board Chair raised concerns about inappropriate conduct surrounding student protests earlier in the day, including filming of students.
- Examples of hostile and inflammatory communications directed toward school leadership were referenced to underscore the negative tone affecting the school community and the Board's concern about how conflict is being expressed.
- The Board emphasized that trustees are volunteers serving in support of the school, students, staff, and families, and noted the personal toll the current situation has had on Board members and their families.
- It was clarified that personnel decisions are made through established processes involving legal counsel, state agencies, and external professional advisors, and not by unilateral action of any one individual.
- The Board stated that both internal and external reviews related to allegations against the Executive Director had been conducted and reported no findings.
- The Board Chair shared that the school had been advised by state authorities that failure to adhere to proper governance processes and restore stability could place the school at risk of closure.

- The Board reiterated its commitment to following required processes, maintaining confidentiality where legally required, and acting in the best interests of the school community.

D. Public Comment

Public comment provided by:

- Melissa Tremor
- Alison Solerno
- Dan Buchard
- **Desenya**
- Dave Draper
- Jon Ellen
- Milda

Public comments:

- Multiple community members expressed concern regarding recent personnel actions and their impact on staff morale and school culture.
- Several speakers raised questions about leadership decision-making, transparency, and the handling of complaints.
- Comments emphasized the importance of maintaining the school's Montessori mission, staff stability, and community trust.
- Concerns were raised about the effect of adult conflict on students and the broader school environment.
- Some speakers expressed appreciation for the dedication of teachers and Board members while urging improved communication and reconciliation.

II. Approve Previous Board Minutes

A. Approve Minutes

E. Rankin made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 03-13-26.

A. Godino seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

M. Connerton Aye
A. Ting Aye
T. Murdy Aye
D. Herrera Aye
A. Godino Aye
G. LeFave Aye
C. Getz Aye

Roll Call

E. Rankin Aye
D. Mitchell Aye
B. MacQuade Absent
J. Nickerson Aye
E. Bradley Aye
C. Whitford Aye

III. Consent Agenda

A. Accountability Committee

No discussion

B. Development Committee

No discussion

C. Executive Committee

No discussion

D. Committee on Trustees

No discussion

E. Finance Committee

No discussion

F. Vote on Consent Agenda

E. Bradley made a motion to Approve consent agenda.

E. Rankin seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

C. Getz Aye
E. Rankin Aye
M. Connerton Aye
A. Ting Aye
J. Nickerson Aye
E. Bradley Aye
A. Godino Aye
D. Herrera Aye
G. LeFave Aye
T. Murdy Aye
B. MacQuade Absent
D. Mitchell Aye

IV. Board Business

A. Montessori Moment

- Achala presented the Montessori Moment, focusing on Montessori principles of peace, democracy, and education.
- The presentation emphasized how Montessori education supports democratic values through student agency, community responsibility, conflict resolution, and respect for diverse perspectives.
- Achala highlighted the role of freedom within limits and individual responsibility as foundational elements of Montessori practice and civic development.
- Connections were drawn between Montessori philosophy, classroom practice, and broader school culture, particularly during times of heightened community stress.
- The Montessori Moment concluded with a reminder of the shared commitment among families, educators, administrators, and trustees to the school's mission and the well-being of students.

B. Board Audit Review

- Kate Scott, an external governance consultant, presented the results of the Board audit, including an overview of the scope of her work, which involved document review, Board member interviews, committee observations, and facilitation of a Board retreat.
- The audit identified significant strengths, including strong trustee commitment to the school, a wide range of professional expertise on the Board, improved governance practices over recent years, and solid financial oversight.
- Key governance challenges were highlighted, including reduced trust and cohesion, blurred boundaries between governance and management, and inconsistent communication within the Board and with the broader community.
- The audit noted structural gaps at the leadership level, including clarity of roles and responsibilities and the need for a more robust and fully supported senior leadership structure.
- The importance of data-informed decision-making and consistent alignment among trustees was emphasized, particularly during periods of disagreement or heightened community pressure.
- The Board was advised that the current grievance committee structure is atypical for Massachusetts charter schools and should be reconsidered in favor of clearer policies and procedures for handling complaints.
- High-priority recommendations included:
 - Implementing a consistent, documented evaluation process for the Executive Director
 - Establishing leadership succession and transition planning

- Ensuring all Board members are appropriately informed of key committee work
- Strengthening Board alignment and communication norms
- Kate Scott emphasized that none of the findings negated the Board's dedication to the school and framed the recommendations as necessary steps to strengthen governance, restore trust, and support long-term stability.
- The Board engaged in discussion following the presentation and acknowledged the findings and recommendations.

C. Timeline/PBE discussion

- The Board engaged in a high-level discussion regarding the history and evolution of Place-Based Education (PBE) at the school to provide context for current community questions.
- It was noted that PBE originated during the COVID period as an outdoor learning model, enabling continued in-person education when indoor instruction was restricted.
- As pandemic conditions evolved, the program transitioned from an "outdoor school" model to Place-Based Education, with the intent of integrating experiential learning more formally into the school's instructional approach.
- The Board discussed that the development and continuation of PBE were influenced by temporary pandemic-related funding, including ESSER funds, which later expired and affected the program's sustainability.
- Trustees acknowledged that, over time, questions arose regarding alignment with Montessori principles, including concerns about uninterrupted work cycles, equitable access across levels, instructional coherence, and long-term feasibility.
- The Board emphasized that programmatic decisions, including instructional models such as PBE, fall within the responsibility of school administration rather than the Board, while the Board's role is oversight and alignment with mission and charter.
- The discussion reflected differing perspectives within the community and underscored the importance of understanding the historical context in which PBE was introduced and modified.
- The Board reiterated that its intent in discussing PBE was informational and contextual, and not to evaluate or decide upon specific instructional practices during this meeting.

D. Policy Vote

E. Rankin made a motion to Approve the Professional Code of Conduct.

E. Bradley seconded the motion.

- The Board discussed a proposed Professional Code of Conduct drafted by the external human resources firm, Blue Lion.

- During the discussion, several Board members noted initial confusion regarding the origin and authorship of the document, with clarification made that the policy was produced externally rather than authored by the Board.
- Trustees raised concerns about the scope, structure, and language of the proposed document, including whether certain provisions were overly broad, subjective, or open to inconsistent interpretation.
- Discussion focused on whether the proposed policy appropriately reflected the school's mission, values, and collaborative Montessori culture.
- Board members expressed concern that the document did not sufficiently address staff protections, including the absence of a clearly defined whistleblower policy and clarity around progressive discipline and due process.
- The potential impact of the proposed language on staff morale, trust, and psychological safety was discussed, particularly in the context of existing community tensions.
- Trustees emphasized the importance of clearly distinguishing between professional expectations and language that might discourage constructive dialogue, feedback, or dissent.
- The Board acknowledged the role of external advisors but emphasized that policy adoption and accountability rest solely with the Board.
- The discussion concluded with consensus that, in its current form, the proposed Professional Code of Conduct required substantial revision and additional context before it could be considered for adoption.

The motion did not carry.

Roll Call

- E. Bradley No
- A. Ting No
- C. Whitford No
- M. Connerton No
- C. Getz No
- J. Nickerson No
- D. Herrera No
- E. Rankin No
- A. Godino No
- G. LeFave No
- B. MacQuade No
- T. Murdy No
- D. Mitchell No

V. Committee on Trustees

A. Update

- Trustee Recruitment
- Trustee interest in leadership positions for 2026-2027

- Bylaws update

VI. Executive Committee

A. Update

- Executive Director Review/Tool
- Succession Planning: ED & BOT
- BoT RVCS emails

VII. Finance Committee

A. Update

- The Finance Committee provided an update on the school's financial position, noting that tuition revenue is tracking above projections while benefit costs are expected to increase in the upcoming year.
- The Committee reviewed preliminary budget assumptions for the next fiscal year and discussed financial risks and uncertainties, including personnel-related and legal expenses.
- The Finance Committee recommended approval of a 3.5% increase to the salary line for the upcoming school year, emphasizing fiscal sustainability while supporting staff compensation.
- The Committee confirmed that allocation of the approved salary increase would be determined by the Executive Director.

C. Whitford made a motion to To approve a 3.5% increase in the salary line item of the budget for dispensing by ED as appropriate.

C. Getz seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

E. Bradley	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
G. LeFave	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
B. MacQuade	Absent
D. Herrera	Aye

VIII. Accountability Committee

A. Update

- The Accountability Committee presented an overview of assessment data and instructional monitoring, including the use of literacy and math screeners to track student progress.
- Committee members discussed the importance of **consistent assessment administration**, data transparency, and progress monitoring to support instructional decision-making.
- Data were reviewed across multiple dimensions, including grade level, gender, and special education status, to better understand trends and identify areas for targeted intervention.
- The Committee emphasized that the work is ongoing and that additional data collection and review would continue later in the academic year.

IX. Development Committee

A. Update

- The Development Committee provided an update on fundraising and community engagement efforts, including planning for upcoming events and initiatives.
- Discussion highlighted the importance of development activities in supporting school programs and supplementing public funding.
- Trustees encouraged continued participation and volunteer involvement to strengthen development capacity and community connections.
- A suggestion was raised to consider moving development activities under the School's Foundation to improve alignment, flexibility, and coordination of fundraising efforts. The discussion noted potential benefits, including clearer separation from governance functions, increased operational flexibility, and enhanced donor privacy, while also acknowledging the need for further review before any structural changes are considered.

X. Director's Update

A. Director's Report

- The Executive Director provided an overview of key operational and instructional priorities across the school.
- An update was shared on academic monitoring and student progress, including the use of literacy and math screeners to identify areas of strength and need, and to guide instructional supports and interventions.
- The importance of data-informed decision-making was emphasized, including ongoing review by the Accountability Committee and school leadership.

- Staffing and instructional supports were discussed, including efforts to ensure appropriate services for students requiring additional academic or special education support.
- The Executive Director addressed instructional alignment, including the need for uninterrupted instructional time, adequate classroom materials, and consistency across grade levels.
- An overview of professional development priorities was provided, including collaboration, instructional alignment, and strengthening Montessori practice.
- Operational updates included ongoing attention to school safety, staffing coverage, and continuity of day-to-day school functions.
- The Director acknowledged current community challenges and reaffirmed a commitment to maintaining a stable learning environment focused on student well-being and academic growth.

XI. Executive Session

A. Vote to Move to Exec Session

D. Mitchell made a motion to Go to executive session under purpose 2.

D. Herrera seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

M. Connerton Aye
C. Getz Aye
A. Ting Aye
C. Whitford Aye
D. Herrera Aye
J. Nickerson Aye
E. Bradley Aye
T. Murdy Aye
A. Godino Aye
B. MacQuade Aye
D. Mitchell Aye
G. LeFave Aye
E. Rankin Aye

XII. Closing Items

A. Board Meeting Survey

B. 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 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
T. Murdy

Documents used during the meeting

- 2026_02_10_rvcs_accountability_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- 2026_03_03_development_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- 2026_04_08_executive_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- 2026_04_08_committee_on_trustees_meeting_minutes.pdf
- 2026_04_16_finance_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
- Professional Code of Conduct.docx
- Board Audit Report for RVCS.pdf
- 4.29.2026 Director's Report - Google Docs.pdf
- River_Valley_Charter_School_FY26_Internal_Audit.pdf
- RVCS__Fall_Data_Overview_from_2025-26.pdf

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Coversheet

Accountability Committee

Section: III. Consent Agenda
Item: A. Accountability Committee
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: 2026_04_27_rvcs_april_accountability_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf

DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

RVCS April Accountability Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Monday April 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Location

River Valley Charter School
2 Perry Way
Newburyport, MA 01950

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Committee Members Present

A. Godino, A. Salerno, A. Thoele, A. Ting, C. Irose

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

K. Kuse

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

Members of the public who attended and signed in:

Jesenia Tejada-Perez
Sarah Reynolds
Alyson Woodbury
Lauren Dufner
Amy Cameron
Leran Minc
Renee Ward
Chris Getz
Michael Clowe
Katie Perkins
Stephanie Moran
Tanya Murdy

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Ting called a meeting of the Accountability Committee Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Monday Apr 27, 2026 at 7:09 PM.

C. Approve February 2026 Minutes

C. Irose made a motion to approve the minutes from February 2026 RVCS Accountability Committee Meeting on 02-10-26.

A. Godino seconded the motion.

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

D. Internal Assessments Data Overview

Results of the fall and winter screeners were presented by K. Kuse. Acadience (math) and DIBELS (ELA) were administered to monitor and identify academic growth and student risk levels.

Disagragated data was also presented. The challenges of understanding the statistical significance of the disagragated data was discussed because of the small size of the school and the largely homogeneous student body in many categories.

K. Kuse highlighted the need for more consistent application of screeners and the impact of untimed test administration in the past. Moving forward with the winter screeners, all screeners will now be uniformly administered according to the test makers instructions.

Data showed mixed performance in DIBELS and Acadience, with significant gaps in E2 math scores.

K. Kuse emphasized the need for more Montessori materials use and improving instructional practices.

E. RVCS Internal Audit 2025-2026

Karen Kuse presented the results of the internal audit performed by staff at the school (K.Kuse, C. Vandenburg, J. Patterson), which used the same domains as the National Center for Montessori Public Schools. K. Kuse explained the rating system: Exemplary, Strong, Partial, and Limited.

K. Kuse provided specific recommendations for each domain, including defining Montessori at River Valley, increasing consistency in instructional practices, and improving communication systems with caregivers.

A discussion was had about the importance of consistency of Montessori practices across classrooms and grade levels and opportunities for increasing collaboration among teachers. The current classroom consistency was described and the need for more frequent collaboration opportunities needed.

The challenge of maintaining uninterrupted work cycles was discussed, especially in E2.

The cost challenge and need for annual budgeting for more Montessori materials was needed if the school wantsto completely furnish each classroom with a completed set of Montessori manipulatives/ materials and/or replace broken or missing components. The Montessori materials in each classroom is primarily driven by the classroom's teachers.

The audit also revealed strengths in family partnerships and student engagement, but noted weakness in leadership roles and organizational systems.

Overall the audit scored the school in the Strong, and Strong-Partial, and Partial ratings.

F. Accountability Plan Updates

A. Ting presented the caregiver survey results that was administered in February 2026 to the River Valley Charter School caregiver community. One hundred responses were received. The results to the likert scale questions were reported out in the Current (RVCS electronic newsletter) in March by K. Kuse.

Two non-caregiver Accountability Committee members reviewed the raw results, focusing on the open ended responses (A. Ting and M. Godino).

Overall, the survey showed high satisfaction with RVCS and caregivers were thrilled with much of the school.

Caregivers appreciated any and all opportunities to be involved - but especially in events - field trips, school play, dance night, mystery history - parent audience for projects at school.

Caregivers want to ensuring rigor and equity among programs

PBE is a core value for some caregivers

Other areas noted in the open response - asking the administration to lookout for opportunities to teach/ explore other languages in younger grades, transportation from other towns to school, sports opportunities.

Perhaps part of improving communication from teachers involves re-work of our progress reports/ parent teacher conference formats.

The Board should communicate its role better, and give caregivers more opportunities to learn about the board.

The survey was administered earlier than in years past so that there would be time to affect issues if needed.

The caregiver survey highlighted high satisfaction for the students experience, but identified areas for improvement, such as better communication by administration and classrooms. The committee emphasized the importance of maintaining Montessori principles and addressing these issues to support the school's mission.

Noted that in many cases that a "highlight" of the school for some was also the "lowlight" for others.

During the discussion key themes included communication and transparency, with uneven classroom experiences noted. The committee emphasized the importance of protecting the school's strengths and ensuring equitable experiences across grades.

The process of selecting committee chairs for the next year was also noted, with a preference for small, interactive groups for effective accountability.

II. 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 8:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Ting

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Coversheet

Development Committee

Section: III. Consent Agenda
Item: B. Development Committee
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: 2026_05_05_development_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf
2026_04_28_development_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf

DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Development Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday May 5, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location

RVCS Middle School Great Room
2 Perry Way
Newburyport, MA 01950

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Zoom link:

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Committee Members Present

C. Getz, E. Bradley, E. Rankin, K. Kuse, M. Connerton, M. Curcio, T. Murdy

Committee Members Absent

J. Leslie, M. Makin

Guests Present

Christina Waters, Jaime Clowe, Kristin Hunter, Laretta Bailin, Meg Mancuso, Renee Ward, Shelby Lee

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

E. Rankin called a meeting of the Development Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Tuesday May 5, 2026 at 6:08 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Approve Minutes

Christie made a motion to approve the minutes

Marianne Curcio seconded the motion to approve the minutes

II. Development at RVCS

A. Event Planning - RVCS Custom House Museum Maritime Event

Michelle and Tricia may be there to pitch in and help represent the school - We will invite Deb Campbell as well, not sure if she can be there.

Went down the list of tasks and needed items and made sure we are ready to go

Program will include a welcome from Karen, Tanya and James

Welcome to James and give him chance to say hello and introduce the Custom Maritime Museum

Mission of the school and introduction to Montessori philosophy to touch on

Hitting the highlights of the school - Depths of the relationships the school has over time, please welcome Chris Getz

- Amazing field trips
- Peace education
- Whole child education - looking at your child in the world
- mixed age classrooms are unique
- Ways to get involved
- strong sense of community and social justice
- Nobody's behind -

Development - How we raise money - committee goals

Board of Trustees

Kristin Natorio is the new Parent Alliance representative and was invited

Popsicle on the playground in the summer

Should we match khaus families with existing families

How PALS work

Mingle and filter out

Free event

Highlight the partnership between the two organizations

B. Year-end summary

Board percentage donation

C. Parent Alliance

Kristin Noatoria - parent alliance meeting Monday 3:30PM Staff lounge

Benefit Night Joe's Playland Rachel Abdulla Sayer

We can plan on 5-8pm on Friday May 29th.

III. 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 7:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

E. Rankin

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DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Development Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday April 28, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location

River Valley Charter School, 2 Perry Way, Middle School Great Room, Newburyport, MA 01950

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8516508581?pwd=8roWrPp5aJXvEAFctC4bxo69QnaDfv.1>

Committee Members Present

C. Getz, E. Bradley, E. Rankin, K. Kuse, M. Connerton, M. Curcio, T. Murdy

Committee Members Absent

J. Leslie, M. Makin

I. Opening Items

A.

Call the Meeting to Order

E. Rankin called a meeting of the Development Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Tuesday Apr 28, 2026 at 6:17 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Approve Minutes

T. Murdy made a motion to approve the minutes from Development Committee Meeting on 03-03-26.

C. Getz seconded the motion.

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

II. Development at RVCS

A. Event Planning - RVCS Custom House Museum Maritime Event

Members of the development committee discussed plans for the upcoming Maritime Mixer event at the Custom House Maritime Museum. The purpose of the event is to connect incoming Kinderhaus families and 8th grade families and board members to familiarize them with RVCS, Montessori principles and community culture.

Date and time: Thursday, May 7 at 6:30PM

Location: Custom House Maritime Museum, Water Street, Newburyport, MA 01950

A list of needed items, food, and drink was established along with tasks delegated. The committee will reconvene in one week to make sure all is in order and review end-of-year tasks.

Details: 80 person capacity - venue is upstairs

An email has gone out to invite incoming KHaus

The evening program will include a short presentation by board chair, T. Murdy, RVCS Executive Director K. Kuse, and Maritime Museum Director James Russell.

B. Planning for PA

The committee will discuss PA at the next scheduled meeting.

III. 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 7:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

E. Rankin

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REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY The Board Chair reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.

Coversheet

Executive Committee

Section: III. Consent Agenda
Item: C. Executive Committee
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: 2026_05_06_executive_committee_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf

DRAFT

River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Executive Committee Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Location

River Valley Charter School

Middle School Great Room

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Committee Members Present

C. Getz, J. Nickerson, T. Murdy

Committee Members Absent

C. Whitford

Guests Present

K. Kuse

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Nickerson called a meeting of the Executive Committee Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 7:11 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

J. Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes from Executive Committee Committee Meeting on 04-08-26.

C. Getz seconded the motion.

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

II. Director Update

A. Director Update

- Fill in from notes

III. Executive Committee

A. Executive Committee

Committee/Board Operations & Planning

- **COL signups**: Discussion that each trustee should sign up for **two** (as panelist recommendation) and ensure it appears on a future agenda.
- **Board leadership nominees (SY 26–27)**: Noted that leadership nominees would be handled in the **May** board meeting context.
- **New board member nominations timeline**: The “6:00 group” (C.O.T. context referenced) would **recommend nominees**, nominees would be **presented in May**, and the board would **vote in June**.

Finance / Budget

- **Finance update**: Mention that after a **salary increase vote** (referenced as occurring the prior Wednesday), items are largely “good to go” for the year; expectation of **one more budget update**, and that the **overall budget** would be approved at the **May** meeting to close out the year.

Governance / Policies / Bylaws

- **Policy workflow**: Reminder/discussion that **all policies go through Executive Committee first** before the full board (for review/quality control).

- **Bylaws:** Discussion of getting bylaws **out well in advance**; bylaws were described as being made **standalone** (policy references pulled out) so that policy approvals won't hold up bylaws updates.
- **Upcoming votes preview** (for future meeting agendas): referenced as including **two policies** (pet + absentee), **bylaws**, and a **treasurer vote** (see below).

Treasurer Transition

- Discussion that **Chris Whitford resigned** (reason characterized as being tired of "rhetoric"/too much), and that **Gary** would step into a **temporary Treasurer** role, requiring a future **vote**.

IV. Set Board Agenda

A. Board Agenda Topics

- Pet Policy (Exec Committee review, then Full Board vote)
- Absentee Policy (Exec Committee review, then Full Board vote)
- Updated bylaws (distributed in advance; move forward for approval)
- Treasurer transition vote (Gary stepping in after Chris Whitford resignation)
- Board leadership nominees for 2026–27
- Board candidate nominees (presented in May; vote in June)
- COL/CLL signups (trustees sign up; include on agenda)
- Finance/budget (one more update; overall budget approval in May)

V. 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 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Nickerson

Documents used during the meeting

None

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Coversheet

Committee on Trustees

Section: III. Consent Agenda
Item: D. Committee on Trustees
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: 2026_05_12_committee_on_trustees_meeting_minutes.pdf
2026_05_06_committee_on_trustees_meeting_minutes.pdf

DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Committee on Trustees Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday May 12, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Location

Zoom

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Location Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8516508581?pwd=8roWrPp5aJXvEAFctC4bxo69QnaDfv.1>

Committee Members Present

C. Getz (remote), E. Bradley (remote), J. Nickerson (remote), T. Murdy (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

I. Opening Items**A.**

Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

T. Murdy called a meeting of the Committee on Trustees Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Tuesday May 12, 2026 at 12:04 PM.

II. Committee on Trustees

A. BoT Candidate Discussion

1) Process Overview (High-Level)

- The group reviewed the consolidated candidate tracking table containing candidate identifiers, completion status of materials, and interview status.
- For each candidate, the tracker captured whether a **resume**, **questionnaire**, and **interview** were completed
- The tracker also captured **conflict-of-interest** status and relevant background fields (e.g., **Primary Expertise**, **Board Experience**, **RVCS Relationship**).
- Committee needs/fit were discussed using the tracker's committee categories (**Accountability**, **Finance**, **CoT**, **Development**, **Advisory**, **Foundation**, **PA**) and candidate alignment markings in those columns.
- Candidate discussion and decision-making were conducted using **numbers only** to preserve anonymization in these minutes.

2) Evaluation Criteria Discussed

- Board oversight vs. management
- Open Meeting Law awareness
- Confidentiality expectations
- Ability to meet time expectations/ commitment

Skills-based fit (capability coverage)

- Balancing the slate across key capability areas captured in **Primary Expertise** (e.g., accountability/education, finance/accounting, HR/compliance/operations, legal, teaching/school culture, special education/student transitions).
- Aligning candidates to the most appropriate **Committee Recommendation** as recorded in the tracker.

Independence / conflicts

- Review of **Conflict of Interest** indicators as recorded in the tracker.

4) Final Selections

- Recommendation to recommend 7 candidates to the board that provides coverage in all experience areas with recommendations to bolster all board committees

III. 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 1:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
T. Murdy

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River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Committee on Trustees Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location

River Valley Charter School Middle School Humanities Room:

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

Committee Members Present

C. Getz, E. Bradley (remote), J. Nickerson, T. Murdy

Committee Members Absent

K. Kuse

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

T. Murdy called a meeting of the Committee on Trustees Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 6:06 PM.

C. Approve 04/08/26 Minutes

J. Nickerson made a motion to approve the minutes from Committee on Trustees Meeting on 04-08-26.

T. Murdy seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

C. Getz	Aye
K. Kuse	Absent
T. Murdy	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
E. Bradley	Abstain

II. Committee on Trustees

A. Prepare board survey

- Focus on board self-assessment
- Use BoT assessment that was done last year as a point of comparison
- Recommend to Exec Committee that we push this out in the next few days with response 1 week prior to the Board Meeting

B. Trustee Recruitment

- Recommendation that we only accept complete applications
 - Soft email to those that did not complete their application with ask to join a committee
- Lots of good resumes - especially in needed experience areas
- Brook Gilbeault stated interest in being teacher representative to the board - reach out and validate
- Use prepared questions for interviews over the next week
 - Focus in the future to have board members take a certain number of DESE or similar trainings
 - Also think about taking part in community events as ambassadors to RVCS
 - Note that there should be 100% contribution to the annual fund - a meaningful amount to individual (important for grant writing as well)
- Target completion of interviews by next Tuesday
- A special CoT meeting will be required to review and finalize decisions in prep for board meeting - plan for Tuesday at noon

C. Board Bylaws Review

- Have to be explicit that we should avoid conflicts of interference
- Assess maximum terms for officers

E. Bradley made a motion to Unanimously recommend the bylaws to the board for approval.

J. Nickerson seconded the motion.

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

III. 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 7:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Nickerson

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Coversheet

Finance Committee

Section: III. Consent Agenda
Item: E. Finance Committee
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: 2026_04_16_finance_committee_meeting_minutes (1).pdf

DRAFT



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Finance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday April 16, 2026 at 8:30 AM

Location

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/267265776773538?p=P4k5ozRVK4bQb1KQTE>

Meeting ID: 267 265 776 773 538

Passcode: nX7SE9e7

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Dial in by phone

[+1 917-722-6956](tel:+19177226956), [251967298#](tel:+1251967298) United States, New York City

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Phone conference ID: 251 967 298#

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Committee Members Present

C. Marie (remote), C. Whitford (remote), D. Draper (remote), D. Mitchell (remote), G. LeFave (remote)

Committee Members Absent

K. Kuse

Guests Present

M. Garnett (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Whitford called a meeting of the Finance & Facilities Committee of River Valley Charter School to order on Thursday Apr 16, 2026 at 8:30 AM.

II. Finance

A. Review March 2025 Financial Results

The Committee reviewed the March 31, 2025 financial statements and noted the following:

- Most recent tuition data from DESE indicates a 6% increase in 2026 revenue over what was originally budgeted (\$328K).
- Current budget (reforecasted) indicates a net income of \$140K. This moves some of the originally budgeted Foundation contributions to the following year.
- Expenses are within reason of budget for 75% of the year. There has been an increase in administrative fees but all other items are in budget. The timing of Q4 expenses was considered.

B. 2026 - 2027 Budget Discussion (Tuition and Salary Pool)

The Committee reviewed the 2026 reforecasted budget and a draft of the 2027 budget, noting the following:

- Central Source has conservatively budgeted a 2% increase in 2027 tuition dollars (\$116K over updated 2026, and \$445K over original budget).
- Initial healthcare and benefit cost estimates indicated a 17% increase.
- A 3.5% increase in salary results in a balanced budget

This cost represents 69.6% of 2027 expected tuition revenue, compared to 68.6% in 2026.

C. Whitford made a motion to To approve a 3.5% increase in the salary line item of the budget. Total budget in 2027 would be \$4,130,258 compared to \$3,989,487 in the prior year. .

D. Mitchell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

- G. LeFave Aye
- D. Mitchell Aye
- C. Marie Abstain
- D. Draper Abstain
- C. Whitford Aye
- K. Kuse Absent

III. 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 9:02 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Whitford

B. Approve Minutes

G. LeFave made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance Committee Meeting on 03-18-26.

D. Mitchell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

- K. Kuse Absent
- D. Mitchell Aye
- D. Draper Aye
- G. LeFave Aye
- C. Whitford Aye
- C. Marie Aye

C. Approve Minutes

C. Whitford made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance Committee Meeting on 12-10-25.

G. LeFave seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

- D. Mitchell Aye
- D. Draper Aye
- C. Marie Aye
- C. Whitford Aye
- K. Kuse Absent
- G. LeFave Aye

Documents used during the meeting

- March Financials.xlsx
- FY27 Budget.xlsx

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REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY The Board Chair reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.

Coversheet

Bylaws

Section: V. Committee on Trustees
Item: B. Bylaws
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: RVCS_By-Laws_v7.3 (1).docx



River Valley Charter School

Board of Trustees Bylaws

Version 7.3 (Draft)

Adoption Date: _____

Prepared for Board Review and Vote

DRAFT

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0.0 Revision History

This version supersedes prior versions. The Board may maintain a separate change log for minor formatting updates.

Ver	Date	Summary of Changes	Approved by	Author/Editor
1.0	07/13/1999	Original creation and adoption of bylaws.	Board	Founding Board
2.0	04/09/2002	Updated governance language and operational alignment.	Board	
3.0	05/13/2003	Amendments to Board governance processes and meeting procedures.	Board	
4.0	07/08/2003	Updated structural elements of Board committees and procedures.	Board	
5.0	09/09/2008	Amendments to Board operations and compliance references.	Board	
6.0	06/18/2019	Updated governance language; clarified Board responsibilities; incorporated then-current state law and compliance requirements.	Board	
7.0	01/21/2026	Standardized terminology; added Whistleblower Protection, Document Retention, Public Access to Records, and Succession Planning sections; modernized governance language to align with DESE expectations; strengthened Board/Director role separation; updated OML compliance and streamlined meeting notice requirements; removed outdated operational content (e.g., curriculum/calendar oversight); replaced automatic trustee termination rules with discretionary removal rules; simplified indemnification and execution of papers language; shifted operational/legal detail to policy level.		J Nickerson

1.0 Name, Address, and Nature of School

1.1 Legal Status

River Valley Charter School (“the School”) is a regional public charter school located at 2 Perry Way, Newburyport, MA 01950, operating under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 89 and 603 CMR 1.00.

1.2 Purpose

The mission of the School is to provide a rigorous academic program grounded in Montessori philosophy and deeply connected to the history, culture, and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley.

1.3 Location

The official address of the School is 2 Perry Way, Newburyport, MA 01950.

1.4 Corporate Seal

The Board may adopt a corporate seal, which shall be affixed to official documents as required.

1.5 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the School shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following calendar year, unless otherwise amended by the Board.

1.6 Bylaws and Amendments

These Bylaws govern the Board of Trustees. If any provision is declared illegal or disapproved by an authority having jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall remain in effect.

Amendments may be proposed by any Trustee or committee and require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting Board at a regular or special meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been distributed to each Trustee at least seven (7) days in advance. Amendments shall be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“the Department”) as required.

Nothing in these Bylaws shall be interpreted to authorize the Board or its committees to exercise managerial powers over the day-to-day operations of the School, consistent with 603 CMR 1.06.

2.0 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees serves as a public employer under Massachusetts law and its members are considered special state employees for purposes of the Commonwealth’s ethics requirements. Trustees shall comply with all applicable ethics, conflict of interest, and financial disclosure obligations.

2.1 Role and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees (“the Board”) is responsible for governance and oversight of the School, ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, the Charter, and these Bylaws, while delegating day-to-day management to the Director.

The Board’s responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Compliance and Reporting: ensuring required reports, audits, and filings are completed; requesting approval for new Trustees; responding to complaints consistent with Board policy and applicable regulations; and requesting charter amendments when required.
- Oversight and Strategic Direction: hiring, evaluating, and if necessary, removing the Director; approving and monitoring progress toward the goals of the Accountability Plan; strategic planning; and approving the annual budget and providing ongoing financial oversight.
- Community and Advancement: serving as ambassadors for the School and supporting advancement activities consistent with Board policy and governance boundaries.
- Commitment to an Inclusive and Equitable School Community: promoting decision-making practices that support fair access, belonging, and positive outcomes for all students.
- Complaints brought to the Board shall be limited to matters of governance, legal or regulatory compliance, fiduciary oversight, or concerns involving the performance or conduct of the Executive Director. Operational issues, including staff-level concerns, instructional matters, and day-to-day administrative decisions, are within the Executive Director’s authority and shall not be reviewed or investigated by the Board.
- Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to authorize the Board or its committees to direct, supervise, evaluate, investigate, or otherwise intervene in the performance of employees other than the Director, or to participate in operational decision-making.

2.2 Board Policy Review & Approval

The Board shall review and approve Board-level governance policies on a regular basis to ensure alignment with applicable laws, regulations, and best practices, and that updates are communicated to the School community.

The Director shall develop, maintain, and implement all administrative procedures and operational policies. Appendices or operational parameters within Board-approved policies (e.g., annual enrollment dates, procedural forms) may be updated by the Director without further Board approval, provided no substantive governance elements are changed. The Director shall notify the Board of such administrative updates as part of routine reporting.

2.3 Bylaws Review Cycle

The Board shall review these Bylaws at least once every three (3) years, or more frequently if required due to changes in law, regulation, the Charter, or governance needs. Proposed amendments may be brought forward at any time consistent with Section 1.6.

2.4 Number and Tenure

The Board shall consist of between eleven (11) and twenty (20) Trustees and may include one faculty member appointed annually as a full voting Trustee. Trustees are elected for three-year terms and may serve up to three consecutive terms unless appointed to fill an unexpired term.

The Director serves as an ex-officio, non-voting participant in Board meetings, as may other senior staff if deemed appropriate by the Board. Ex-officio participants do not vote and are not counted toward quorum.

The Director provides reports, operational updates, and professional expertise to support the Board's oversight role. In keeping with accepted governance practice, the Director does not participate in discussions or decisions related to Board governance, Trustee appointments or performance, personnel matters, the Director's own evaluation or employment status, or topics presenting a conflict of interest. The Chair may request the Director's absence for such matters when appropriate.

The faculty Trustee is appointed at the Annual Meeting for a one-year term (renewable) and must recuse themselves from matters presenting a conflict of interest. Committee service by the faculty Trustee is voluntary.

Trustees shall not request or receive operational reporting from School staff except through the Director or as part of a Director-authorized presentation. Trustees shall not direct staff, evaluate staff, or engage staff regarding operational matters.

To support the Board's governance responsibilities, the Director may designate members of the School's leadership team to provide content-specific updates, participate in Board or committee meetings, or respond to Board questions within their area of expertise. Such engagement shall occur for informational and advisory purposes only and shall not create a supervisory or reporting relationship between Trustees and staff. Trustees shall route follow-up requests, inquiries, or feedback through the Director unless otherwise explicitly authorized by the Director.

2.5 Nomination and Election

At least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting, nominations for new Trustees shall be submitted to the Committee on Trustees. Trustees are elected by a majority vote of the entire voting Board. Vacancies shall be filled by majority vote upon recommendation of the Committee on Trustees. Following Board approval, the School will request the Commissioner's appointment of new Trustees as required; no Trustee's term begins until the Commissioner's appointment is granted.

Trustees may serve up to nine (9) consecutive years. After a hiatus of at least one (1) year, a Trustee may be reappointed.

2.6 Board Training & Self-Evaluation

All Trustees shall participate in annual training on governance, ethics, Open Meeting Law, conflict of interest requirements, charter school accountability, fiduciary responsibilities, and key School policies, as required by law or Board policy.

Newly elected or appointed Trustees shall complete onboarding and orientation within sixty (60) days of appointment, including review of the School's Charter, these Bylaws, Board policies, current strategic priorities, and applicable legal obligations.

The Committee on Trustees shall oversee Trustee onboarding, maintain records of required training completion, and recommend additional professional development opportunities as appropriate.

The Board shall conduct an annual self-evaluation to assess Board effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and inform governance development priorities.

2.7 Resignation and Removal

A Trustee may resign by submitting a written resignation to the Chair or Clerk. A Trustee absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings or four (4) regular meetings within a fiscal year may be subject to removal for cause. Removal requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting Board after reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard.

2.8 Meetings

2.8.1 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting shall be held in June (or as otherwise determined by the Board) at the School or another location designated by the Board. Notice shall be provided at least thirty (30) days in advance.

2.8.2 Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held at times and places in Massachusetts determined by the Board. The Board shall meet at least quarterly or as needed.

2.8.3 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or at the request of at least two (2) Trustees. Notice shall be provided at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

2.8.4 Notice of Meetings

Meeting notice shall be posted consistent with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and applicable regulations at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.

2.8.5 Quorum and Voting

A simple majority of voting Trustees then in office constitutes a quorum. Unless otherwise required by law, Charter, or these Bylaws, a majority vote of Trustees present decides a matter when a quorum is present.

A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting Board is required for: amendment of these Bylaws; removal of a Trustee; removal of an officer; hiring or removing the Director; and approval of the annual budget.

2.8.6 Executive Session

Executive sessions may be convened only for purposes authorized under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Before entering executive session, the Chair shall state the purpose of the executive session in open session and indicate whether the Board will reconvene in open session afterward.

A majority vote by roll call of the Trustees present shall be required to enter executive session.

Minutes of executive sessions shall be recorded and maintained by the Clerk in accordance with applicable law and shall be released when the purpose for confidentiality has expired, as determined by the Board or as otherwise required by law.

No final policy decisions or votes required to be public under law shall be taken in executive session except as permitted by applicable law.

2.9 Conflict of Interest

Trustees shall comply with the Commonwealth's conflict of interest requirements, including training and disclosures as required by law. Trustees shall act in good faith and avoid using their position for personal benefit or creating conflicts between personal interests and the School's interests.

Each Trustee shall complete and sign an annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form in a format approved by the Board and shall update such disclosure promptly if any actual or potential conflict arises during the year.

A Trustee with an actual or potential conflict of interest shall disclose the nature of the conflict to the Board as soon as practicable and, where appropriate, shall recuse themselves from discussion and voting on the matter. Such disclosure and any recusal shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

The Committee on Trustees, in consultation with legal counsel as appropriate, may review disclosed conflicts and make recommendations to the Board regarding appropriate mitigation or response.

The Clerk shall maintain all annual disclosure forms and related documentation in accordance with Board recordkeeping requirements.

2.10 Remote Participation

The Board authorizes remote participation consistent with applicable law and regulations. When a member participates remotely, the Chair shall announce remote participants, confirm that all persons are audible to one another, and ensure votes are taken by roll call.

3.0 Officers

3.1 Officers and Terms

Officers of the Board are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk, and Treasurer. Officers are elected annually from Trustees who are not employees of the School. No more than one office may be held by the same person.

3.2 Election and Vacancies

Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by a majority vote. Vacancies may be filled by the Board at any duly called meeting. Officer nominations may be presented by the Committee on Trustees prior to the Annual Meeting, and additional nominations may be made by any Trustee at the meeting at which officers are elected.

3.3 Resignation and Removal

An officer may resign by written notice to the Chair or Clerk. An officer may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting Board after reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard. Resignation and removal procedures for officers are governed by this Section.

3.4 Chair

The Chair presides over Board meetings; serves as the primary conduit for providing feedback to the Director; calls special meetings; prepares agendas; appoints committee chairs subject to Board confirmation; and serves as the official spokesperson for the Board.

3.5 Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair assumes the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence and chairs the Committee on Trustees.

3.6 Clerk

The Clerk records meeting proceedings; maintains Board documents and adopted policies; ensures meeting notices and minutes are posted as required; distributes minutes to Trustees; and supports recordkeeping consistent with Board policy.

3.7 Treasurer

The Treasurer serves as the Board's financial officer and ensures effective oversight of the School's financial health and practices.

Responsibilities include: chairing the Finance Committee; overseeing review of the annual budget prior to Board approval; presenting regular financial updates; monitoring internal controls and compliance; overseeing the annual independent audit and follow-up; ensuring appropriate custody of funds and financial documents; and serving as liaison to external auditors and advisors. The Treasurer may delegate tasks but retains responsibility for Board-level oversight.

3.8 Succession Planning

The Board shall maintain a succession plan for key officer positions and committee leadership to ensure continuity. The Committee on Trustees shall review succession planning annually and recommend interim appointments when needed.

4.0 Committees

4.1 Formation and Membership

The Board shall maintain standing committees and may establish additional standing or ad-hoc committees by majority vote. Committees make recommendations to the Board; final authority rests with the full Board.

Committee chairs are appointed by the Chair and confirmed by Board vote. Committee chairs shall be voting Trustees of the Board. Committee membership may include Trustees and, where appropriate, non-Trustees serving in an advisory capacity.

Committees are advisory bodies that support the Board's governance responsibilities. Committees shall not direct staff, supervise day-to-day operations, or engage in activities reserved for School administration.

4.2 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is chaired by the Chair and consists of the Board officers and the Director, who participates in a non-voting advisory capacity. The Executive Committee supports the work of the Board by assisting in agenda setting, coordinating committee efforts, and ensuring continuity of governance between regular Board meetings.

The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the Board only when a matter is time-sensitive and requires action before the next scheduled Board meeting, and only to the extent that such action: (a) does not involve hiring, evaluating, or removing the Director; (b) does not amend Board policy or these Bylaws; (c) does not approve the annual budget, incur debt, or enter into significant contractual obligations; and (d) does not pertain to matters reserved for the full

Board by law, the Charter, or these Bylaws. The Executive Committee shall not engage in operational or administrative decision-making or direct the work of School staff.

Any action taken by the Executive Committee shall be reported to the full Board at the next regular meeting and documented in the meeting minutes. Except for the limited authority described above, the Executive Committee is advisory and does not possess independent decision-making authority on behalf of the Board.

4.3 Committee on Trustees

The Committee on Trustees consists of voting Trustees and is chaired by the Vice-Chair. It supports Trustee recruitment and orientation, officer nominations, Board self-evaluation, required training and documentation, and Board retreats. The Committee helps ensure Board independence and compliance with ethics requirements.

4.4 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, provides Board-level oversight of the School's financial health and ensures sound fiscal management.

The Finance Committee shall review monthly financial statements (including budget-to-actual reports and cash flow), monitor the School's financial condition and report to the Board, recommend the annual operating budget for Board approval, oversee the annual independent audit (including monitoring corrective actions), recommend financial policies and internal controls, ensure compliance with applicable financial regulations including public procurement requirements, and review significant financial risks and obligations.

The Finance Committee is advisory; financial decisions including budget approval and significant commitments require full Board approval.

4.5 Development Committee

The Development Committee oversees school-based development activities, including fundraising initiatives and community engagement efforts, in coordination with School leadership and consistent with Board policy and governance boundaries.

4.6 Accountability Committee

The Accountability Committee oversees implementation of the Accountability Plan and monitors compliance with Charter commitments and performance metrics.

4.7 Board-Level Review of Formal Complaints

The Board of Trustees does not maintain a standing or ad hoc grievance or complaint committee.

Formal complaints brought to the Board shall be limited to matters within the Board's governance authority, including Board policy adherence, legal or regulatory compliance, fiduciary oversight, or concerns involving the performance or conduct of the Executive Director.

The Board Chair, in consultation with legal counsel as appropriate, shall determine whether a matter warrants Board-level review. When such review is required, the Board may address the matter as a full Board or may delegate limited fact-gathering to one or more Trustees solely for the purpose of informing governance oversight.

The Board shall not investigate or adjudicate operational matters, personnel issues other than those involving the Executive Director, instructional decisions, student-specific concerns, or matters within the Executive Director's managerial authority.

5.0 Bylaw-Referenced School Policies (Governance Summary)

The provisions below summarize areas of School policy relevant to the Board's governance responsibilities. They are included for context so that these Bylaws may be read as a largely standalone document.

Nothing in this section incorporates or depends upon the existence, structure, or specific language of any individual School policy. Policies and administrative procedures may be revised as needed without amendment to these Bylaws, provided that Board governance authority and legal obligations are preserved.

5.1 Complaint Process

The School maintains administrative procedures for receiving and resolving concerns and complaints.

The Board's role in the Complaint Process is limited to oversight of governance-level matters involving Board policy, legal or regulatory compliance, fiduciary responsibility, or concerns regarding the Executive Director.

Operational, instructional, personnel, and student-level matters are addressed through School leadership and administrative processes and are not subject to Board investigation or review, except where required to fulfill the Board's governance responsibilities.

5.1.1 Definitions – Concern Resolution Terms

For purposes of these Bylaws and referenced School policies:

- **Concern** - a question, issue, or dissatisfaction related to School operations, practices, decisions, or experiences.
- **Complaint** - a formal, written allegation that a Board policy, School policy, legal requirement, or established procedure has not been followed.

- **Whistleblower Report** - a report alleging illegal, unethical, fraudulent, or unsafe conduct, or retaliation for reporting such conduct, as defined by applicable law and Board governance expectations.
- **Grievance**- an informal term sometimes used to describe unresolved dissatisfaction. River Valley Charter School does not maintain a separate grievance process. All concerns described as grievances are addressed through the School's Complaint Process or other applicable administrative or legal procedures.

5.2 Whistleblower Protection

The School maintains procedures for receiving and addressing reports of alleged illegal, unethical, fraudulent, or unsafe conduct, as well as retaliation for reporting such conduct, consistent with applicable law and governance standards.

The Board of Trustees ensures that individuals who make good faith reports are protected from retaliation.

Whistleblower reporting is intended solely for matters involving serious legal, ethical, or safety concerns. It is not an escalation mechanism for unresolved operational issues, interpersonal conflicts, dissatisfaction with management decisions, or matters that do not rise to the level described above.

Reports are reviewed and addressed at the appropriate level based on their substance. Matters involving governance-level concerns or the performance or conduct of the Executive Director may be reviewed by the Board. Operational matters are addressed through School leadership and administrative processes.

5.3 Document Retention

The School maintains records for Board and School operations in accordance with applicable law and regulatory requirements, including state records retention schedules.

The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that Board records, including meeting minutes and official actions, are maintained, preserved, and disposed of in a manner consistent with legal requirements and sound governance practices.

5.4 Public Access to Records

Board records and meeting minutes shall be made available to the public in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and Public Records Law.

The Clerk serves as the Records Access Officer for Board of Trustees records. The Executive Director, or designee, serves as the Records Access Officer for School administrative records.

Requests for public records are handled through administrative procedures consistent with applicable law. The existence or structure of such procedures does not expand the Board's role beyond governance-level oversight.

6.0 Regulatory and Charter Compliance

The Board ensures that the School operates in compliance with Massachusetts Charter School Law, applicable regulations, the School's Charter, and guidance issued by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Board oversees compliance related to charter requirements and amendments, annual reporting and audits, accountability documentation, Open Meeting Law and Public Records Law, and applicable federal and state education laws. Trustees complete required training in governance, ethics, conflict of interest, and charter responsibilities. The Board monitors performance against the Accountability Plan and Charter commitments and maintains policies supporting compliance. The Board's role in regulatory compliance is oversight; operational compliance activities are the responsibility of the Director.

7.0 Miscellaneous

7.1 Compensation

No Trustee shall receive honoraria; Trustees may be reimbursed for approved expenses incurred in performance of voluntary School activities in accordance with School policies.

7.2 Personal Liability

Trustees and officers are not personally liable for debts or obligations of the School to the extent permitted by law. Parties contracting with the School look only to School assets for payment.

7.3 Books and Records

The School maintains complete books and records, including Board minutes and actions. Records shall be kept at the School or in a secure electronic repository as designated by the Clerk. Access to books and records by Trustees shall be coordinated through the Clerk and Director to ensure confidentiality, student privacy, and adherence to governance boundaries.

7.4 Execution of Papers

The Board establishes signatory authority and approval requirements by Board vote and exercises fiduciary oversight of the School's financial practices. The School maintains detailed fiscal policies and procedures under the Director to govern day-to-day financial operations.

7.5 Indemnification

To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, the School shall indemnify Trustees and officers for acts performed in good faith within the scope of their duties, subject to available insurance coverage and limitations under law. Nothing herein waives sovereign immunity. The Board may authorize advancement of expenses to the extent permitted by law and any applicable insurance coverage.

7.6 Approval

These Bylaws (Version 7.0) were adopted by the Board of Trustees on _____ and supersede all prior versions.

Signed: _____ (Chair) _____ (Clerk)

DRAFT

7.3 Updates

Section	Key Updates
2.9 Conflict of Interest Policy	Prior version still needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● annual disclosure form requirement ● annual signed acknowledgement ● recusal procedure / documentation in minutes ● process when a conflict is identified mid-year
2.8.6 Executive Session	Brings back from older version: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● executive session procedure ● required statement before entering executive session ● reconvening/public vote rules ● responsibility for maintaining executive session minutes
2.6 Board Training and Self-Evaluation	Prior version still needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● onboarding timeline ● required topics ● documentation of completion
2.4 Number and Tenure 2.5 Nomination and Election	Updated terms Added guidance about staff engagement with board

Coversheet

Director's Report

Section: X. Director's Update
Item: A. Director's Report
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: 5.20.2026 Board Meeting (1).pdf

5.20.2026 Board Meeting - Director's Report

- 2025-26 Annual IDEA LEA Determinations - River Valley Charter (District) was determined to Meet Requirements with a score of 96% earning 26 points out of 27 possible points.
- ELE Review - We have submitted the entire draft policy to DESE for feedback. The Week of Jun 1, 2026
- Maritime Mixer - Thursday, May 6 was wonderful!
- Literacy Night - Tuesday, May 19th from 7-8:00 Cancelled
- Staff Updates:
 - Employee renewal letters are being distributed via DocuSign this week.
 - Roles posted or to be posted:
 - Receptionist/Meal Server
 - Special Education Teacher/s
 - Director of Instruction
 - Director of Operations
 - Executive Director
 - Hired a handyman, Peter Adolph - Trial basis through June 30, 2026.
 - Interviewing tech companies to outsource network infrastructure and security
 - Infrastructure management
 - Cybersecurity
 - escalation support
 - on-site service when required
 - On-site support for:
 - network or internet outages
 - device rollouts and replacements
 - testing readiness and troubleshooting
 - critical or time sensitive issues
- [Pet Policy](#)
- [Absentee Policy](#)

Easement:

Ward Councilor, Brian Callahan, will likely recommend acceptance of the easement at the meeting on May 27, 2026. We need someone to attend on behalf of RVCS.

Coversheet

Pet Policy

Section: X. Director's Update
Item: B. Pet Policy
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: River Valley Charter School Animal Policy (1).pdf



RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

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Classic Montessori learning includes Botany, Zoology, and the study of landforms. Students study realistic animal models, and, sometimes, care for and enjoy the company of living animals. Practical life skills in the elementary years may, on occasion, include cooking, care of the environment, care of animals, and goings-out. As a public Montessori school, it is important to maintain the principles of Montessori learning while simultaneously providing an environment that protects the safety and well being of individuals. When striving to achieve this balance, the presence of animals is a significant consideration.

The presence of animals may introduce unintended consequences to the school. Air quality may be negatively affected, carpeting may retain allergens and can be difficult to clean thoroughly, urine and fecal contamination carry odor and disease, and animals may carry dander, mites, and/or microorganisms of concern. Associated items, such as bedding and food source, can be allergens. Physical injuries such as scratches and bites can occur and potentially become infected. Each of these concerns need to be addressed, and remediated to reduce negative effects on students and staff. This must occur in a manner that is safe and fair, to both animals and humans.

This policy is meant to clarify expectations and set forth procedures regarding animals in school and on school property.

Definitions

Class pet- an animal owned by RVCS, with a specific teacher designated to be responsible for its health and well-being. Responsibility may be transferred to another teacher when/if teacher placements change. It is the designated teacher's responsibility to ensure that appropriate veterinary practices are maintained, that the animal has appropriate and clean shelter, and fresh food and water at all times. The designated teacher may use classroom funds for this purpose. Students may help with these tasks if the following criteria are met- the student has no known health contraindications AND parental permission has been obtained. As class pets belong to the classroom, the animal may go home with the designated teacher or students' families over weekends and vacation periods, but shall not reside exclusively with a teacher.

Personal pet- owned by an individual person who retains rights and access to the animal regardless of their employment at RVCS. Personal pets are prohibited from the building and grounds.

Emotional Support animal- a personal pet that is kept for the purpose of emotional support. It is not the practice of RVCS to have emotional support animals at school.

Service animal- Service animals are specially trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities. In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA)¹, service animals will be allowed in school and on school grounds, within certain parameters, as defined by the ADA. The owner must be able to independently care for their pet in an ethical manner. The service provided by the

¹ Americans with Disabilities Act <https://www.ada.gov/resources/service-animals-2010-requirements/>



RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL
montessori made public

animal must be directly related to the person’s disability. The animal may only be handled by the owner, and must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless the individual’s disability prevents using these devices or these devices interfere with the service animal’s safe, effective performance of tasks. In that case, the individual must maintain control and proximity of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. The owner must abide by cleaning protocols set forth by the School.

Placement of animals in the building

To ensure that RVCS retains some spaces which are free from animals and associated concerns, only fifty percent of the classrooms in a given level may have classroom pets at any time (Kinderhaus, E1, and E2). Because students move from classroom to classroom in Middle School, classroom pets are not appropriate for the Middle School. Similarly, classroom pets are not appropriate for Specialist and Special Education spaces. Classroom pets that have been approved for a specific classroom shall remain in the classroom (unless they are being transported into or out of the building).

The health and safety of our students is our priority. RVCS will make every attempt to place students with known allergies in classrooms that do not have animals. If student enrollment or students' health status changes mid-year, or RVCS becomes aware of new and pertinent information, classroom pets may need to be re-homed.

Classroom pets and personal pets are not permitted on the playground or grass areas.

Procedure

Requests for animals in school shall be provided in writing to the Health Office and Administration who, in conjunction, will make a decision regarding each request. No animals shall enter the building without permission.

Exemptions

An individual seeking an exemption to any of the above shall contact the Health Office and School Director. The School Physician has participated in the development of this policy and may be asked to provide input for future revisions or exemptions.

School Physician signature and date _____

School Nurse signature and date _____

RVCS Director signature and date _____

Board of Directors signature and Date _____

Coversheet

Absentee Policy

Section: X. Director's Update
Item: C. Absentee Policy
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: draft RVCS Attendance policy- 25-26.pdf

RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

It is the expectation of River Valley Charter School (RVCS) that families and students will make every reasonable effort to attend a full day of school when school is in session. The continuity of day-to-day instruction is a critical dynamic to the overall success of each student. Regular attendance helps children feel connected to their classroom community and supports progression in their learning. Because Montessori lessons build upon one another and rely on consistent participation, we encourage families to prioritize daily attendance. [Research](#) supports the connection between regular attendance and a student's personal, social, and emotional wellness and academic success. Massachusetts General Laws chapter 76 sets out many aspects of compulsory attendance, including the responsibilities of families and school committees.

Families must:

- ensure that a child in their care attends school. [G.L. c. 76, §2](#).
- call the school at a designated number at a designated time as established by the school committee to report a child's absence and reason for it. [G.L. c. 76, §§1A, 1B](#).

Schools must:

- Record daily student attendance for all students
- Each school committee shall provide for and enforce the school attendance of all enrolled students children in accordance with state law. G.L. c. 76, §1.

Therefore, the administration has created the following attendance policy and the protocols included therein, to foster family and school alignment regarding student attendance.

Absence Notification/Verification Procedure

When a child is absent for any reason, families shall utilize our web-based attendance tool, PickUp Patrol, to communicate this information. If the school has not received notification of an absence through PickUp Patrol, the school shall notify the student's contacts, as listed in the directory, of the child's absence. PickUp Patrol is monitored by the front office. Please note that PickUp Patrol is not a means of communication with your child(ren)'s teachers or the Health Office. Do not leave information in PickUp Patrol that you wish others to receive, for example, confidential medical information, requests for homework, or messages for classroom teachers. Although a notification may have occurred, and this is required, family notification alone does not constitute an excused absence.

Following an absence, it is the responsibility of the student to meet with their teacher to understand what work and lessons were missed and the required make-up work. Participation in after-school or evening events will not be allowed for students absent on the day of the event.

Tardiness

Students begin their day as a class, where the daily schedule is discussed, expectations are set, and work cycle commences. Arriving late to school can negatively impact a student's day. Students arriving after the start of school (8:25) are considered tardy and need to sign in at the school office with an adult. Tardiness is noted in our attendance system and is reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Although we realize that emergencies occur on occasion, students are expected to arrive at school on time. If a family is experiencing difficulty getting a student to school on time, please contact the director's office or school counselors for assistance in managing timely arrival.

- If a student is tardy ten (10) times before December 31st families will receive a notification;
- If a student has eighteen (18) late arrivals over the course of the school year, a notification will be issued to families reminding them of the school's attendance policy. A member of administration will contact the family to schedule a meeting to develop a proactive arrival plan.

Absence and associated definitions

A student may be absent for a number of different reasons. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides the following definitions and distinctions:

- Absence- a student must be at school, at a school related activity, or receiving academic instruction for at least half of the school day to be counted as present. A student who is not present (as defined above) is considered absent from school.
- Chronically absent- Students who miss at least 10% of days enrolled (e.g., 18 days absent when enrolled for 180 school days) are considered chronically absent.
- Habitually truant- Under state law, a school-aged child who is not excused from attendance and who "willfully" fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter is considered habitually truant.

Medical Absence and Student Illness

River Valley Charter School requires families to notify the school when students have communicable illnesses. This helps us to monitor health trends and cleaning practices at school. Children who are ill should stay home while ill, in accordance with the school's health guidance. An absence will only be considered as medically excused when a doctor's note is provided. Please contact the school Health Office in the following situations:

- A new medical diagnosis or change in health or emotional status
- A newly prescribed medication (please do not initiate medication trials on school days)
- Any change(s) in current medication
- A serious injury, illness, or hospitalization
- An injury that will require ambulatory assistance (crutches, wheelchair, elevator use, cast, or sling)
- Any contagious illness
- Extended period of absence for any medical reason

If you believe your child will have an extended medical absence, please contact the Health Office and School Director to discuss the circumstances and receive support.

Dismissals

Please try to schedule appointments after school hours. In the event that you have to dismiss your child early, please use PickUp Patrol to notify the school of your intention to do so.

Religious Observations

Students may be granted excused absences when the school's schedule conflicts with their religious holidays. A student should not suffer adverse or prejudicial consequences from an excused absence, should be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make up school work missed during the absence, and will not be subject to scholastic or attendance penalties from absences incurred due to religious observances. A sincere attempt will be made to avoid field trips, assessments, and special school events on religious holidays.

Family Vacations

Please do not schedule vacations that occur during regularly scheduled school time. The school calendar is published in advance of the school year to help parents plan family trips so that they coincide with school vacations. The school follows the requirements outlined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76 Sections 1–21, which state that parents or families are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly. Under this law, individuals who knowingly encourage or cause a student to be absent from school may face legal action. With this in mind, we reaffirm the position that parents are responsible for their children to attend school every day that classes are in session. Absences due to family vacation are unexcused. RVCS teachers are not required to provide advance and/or make-up work when the student is absent from school due to vacation, excessive absenteeism, or late arrivals. Students who are absent at the time when state or national standardized tests are administered will be allowed to make up missed tests to the extent that scheduled make-up time is available and consistent with state law and regulations.

Student Absence Remediation Program

DESE requires all public schools to have a written policy regarding attendance and attendance improvement. If a student is found to be frequently absent or habitually tardy, the following process will be utilized:

When a student:

- has five absences (excused or unexcused) by December 31st, a notification will be issued to families
- has ten (10) absences (excused or unexcused) over the course of the school year, a notification will be issued to families reminding them of the school's attendance policy. A member of administration will contact them to schedule a meeting to develop a proactive attendance plan.

If absences total eighteen (18) days, the student will be considered chronically absent. School officials may consider taking any or all of the following actions:

- Scheduling and holding an attendance meeting with the parents, administrator and School Resource Officer;
- Filing a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) or criminal complaint with the juvenile court, which will result in a hearing held with the juvenile court.
- Retention when irregular attendance impacts student learning.

Our goal is to partner with families to support consistent attendance so that each child can fully participate in the rich learning experiences and relationships that are central to a Montessori education.