APPROVED

River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday September 18, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Location
River Valley Charter School Middle School Great Room

MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the River Valley Charter School is to provide a rigorous academic program based on the Montessori philosophy and rooted in the history, culture and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. Students will reach their full potential as scholars and become self-reliant, productive members of society. They will be adept at critical thinking and creative problem solving and will be fully prepared to succeed in future schools, careers and civic life.

Trustees Present
A. Godino, A. Ting, B. MacQuade, C. Getz, C. Whitford, D. Herrera, D. Mitchell, E. Bradley, E. Rankin, E. Simone, J. Nickerson, M. Connerton (remote), N. Durkee, P. Ganley, T. Murdy

Trustees Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
K. Kuse

Guests Present

A. Wetmore, Sara Treem

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Herrera called a meeting of the board of trustees of River Valley Charter School to order on Wednesday Sep 18, 2024 at 7:01 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Board Expectations

Board Expectations appear for all Trustees to review at all Board of Trustee meetings.

D. Public Comment

None.

II. Review Previous Board Minutes

A. Approve Last Board Meeting Minutes

D. Herrera made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 08-28-24.
D. Mitchell seconded the motion.
Minor typographical changes not affecting the substance of the minutes were made.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Getz	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
P. Ganley	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
B. MacQuade	Aye
C. Whitford	Absent

III. Consent Agenda

A.

Approve Finance Committee Minutes

B. Approve Accountability Committee Minutes

C. Approve Executive Committee Minutes

D. Approve Development Committee Minutes

E. Approve Committee On Trustees Minutes

F. Vote to Approve Consent Agenda

D. Herrera made a motion to approve the minutes from the consent agenda Executive Committee Meeting on 09-11-24.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

D. Herrera	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
B. MacQuade	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
P. Ganley	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
C. Whitford	Absent
D. Mitchell	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye

IV. Director Update

A. Director's Report

The Director's Report appears in the Board Packet. Time was allowed in the meeting for questions.

EBradley: Will the school psychologist only be doing testing? She will be doing testing and meeting with the team. She is a part time hire.

ATing: How will MCAS scores be released? KKuse: However DESE tells us to. There will be trainings soon and then it will be known. DHerrera: Once you have your information, Exec Committee can help you with

KKuse: Tomorrow, Lydia Sisson, KKuse and Micheal Esenberg (?) are meeting about a grant from Project Greenschools for the outdoor space. They would like to do a check presentation at the school in October.

V. Board Business

A. Accountability Plan 2024-2029: Vote

It is the Board's job to approve the plan or send it back.

Discussion.

ATing: Some of the measures seemed to be hard to acheive. But as long as the teachers are aware of them, we can be successful. ESimone: It does seem to be achievable. NDurkee: It doesn't feel like it doesn't give teachers a lot of flexibility if students have anxiety, there are points in the rubric that seem hard at that level. It's hard to bring this up now, but if there's a way to unlink the rubric, it could be really helpful. ESimone: Not 100% of students have to get 3.5. DHerrera: There's also an expectation of the teachers to educate the panelists on the rubric.

D. Herrera made a motion to Approve the Accountability Plan as presented in the board packet.
T. Murdy seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Getz	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
C. Whitford	Absent
T. Murdy	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
B. MacQuade	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
P. Ganley	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye

B. Food Allergy Policy: Vote

D. Herrera made a motion to Approve the Food Allergy Policy as presented in the board packet.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The previous RVCS allergy policy didn't align with the new school lunch program. It was old and much more strict that standard school allergy policies.

It has been updated and reviewed by the school physician, Dr. March, and the Executive Committee.

AChala: How does the allergen free table play out as far as isolation? KKuse: What the class has opted to do is always have a teacher and friend sitting at the table.

EBradley: Feels this policy is in line with the Montessori philosophy.

ATing: Feels this policy is much more in line and is much better for the school.

JNIckerson: How will the students feel the change? KKuse: I don't think the students will feel a change since this is the beginning of the school year. DHerrera: They may notice that a sign outside the class is no longer there.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

B. MacQuade	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
C. Whitford	Absent
M. Connerton	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
P. Ganley	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye

C. Facility of Use Policy: Vote

Vote is postponed due to consideration of wording change in the policy. It will be presented at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

D. FY 24 Caregiver Survey

Last year, former school director Jonnie Lyn Evans reported out on the data.

NDurkee reviewed the data and summarized it at a high level. Many comments expressed gratitude. Most narrative comments came through highlighting the strengths of RVCS.

Feedback that was constructive was taken into consideration follows:

Themes:
Time in the classroom should be increased.
Placed based education takes too much time away from typical classroom learning, especially when added to early release Wednesdays, portfolio half days, etc. Scheduling seems to be an issue.

Teachers should communicate before students fall behind. Parents don't have a sense of progress until progress reports come out. Proactive communication would be appreciated.

Math curriculum needs improvement. Language skills mentioned less so.

ERankin: How was the response rate compared to other years? ESimone: A little lower than the year before.

ESimone: Math Curriculum, did you see any correlation with grade levels? NDurkee: I didn't capture that here. I can look into that.

DHerrera: Pointed out the area in the Accountability plan that correlates to School Climate and Family Engagement questions in the caregiver survey. It is no longer in the survey, so now it falls back on the Director.

NDurkee: Moving the Caregiver Survey out of the purview of the committee was never discussed in the Accountability Committee, to no longer administer the Caregiver Survey. We'll need to talk about this in the committee. Disagrees that the survey should no longer live in Accountability.

VI. Executive Committee Update

A. Executive Committee

Next meeting will focus on the Director's Goals and review of the Master Policy.

If you are interested, please feel free to attend on October 9, 2024, 7 pm.

VII. Finance Update

A.

Finance

Current focus is the year end audit. The committee plans to have drafts for the next Board of Trustees meeting. All in all, we are in the same position as we expected to be. Everything seems to be in line with no major issues.

VIII. Accountability Update

A. Accountability

MCAS data will likely push out until October.

In October, the committee wIll likely look at screener data and the Montessori Audit Review and revisit the Caregiver Survey.

JNickerson: What is the Superintendent Checklist? DHerrera: It is a list of items that schools need to send in along with dates for compliance. Not all items apply to RVCS.

IX. CoT Update

A. Committee on Trustees

The committee is looking at updating the board bylaws in regards to inclusivity. Updating the bylaws takes a lot of effort and paperwork. Asks other committee heads if there are other updates they'd suggest. Please bring those updates to ATing.

Please also review committee descriptions for updates.

Board goals were discussed at the retreat. We'll discuss how that can be tracked so they can be acheived.

This year we need to have an internal review in preparation for next year's external audit. DHerrara: Who does the exteral audit? ATing: We're trying to arrange that now.

X. Development Update

A. Development

The committee is not ready to reveal the entire plan for the Charting the Course campaign. The committee is also finalizing their calendar for the year.

DHerrera: Is the committee looking for more members? ERankin: Yes. Parent representation would be great.

ERankin: Please support the Read-a-Thon. Opportunities for ad space would be wonderful.

XI. Closing Items

A. Public Comment

None.

B. Adjourn Meeting

E. Rankin made a motion to adjourn.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Godino	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
P. Ganley	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
B. MacQuade	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Herrera

C. Meeting Survey Link

Chris Whitford arrived at 8:04 pm.