APPROVED

River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Development Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday March 3, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location
RVCS Middle School Great Room
2 Perry Way
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.

Committee Members Present
C. Getz, E. Rankin, K. Kuse, M. Connerton (remote), M. Makin, T. Murdy

Committee Members Absent
E. Bradley, J. Leslie, M. Curcio

Guests Present
Jaime Clowe (remote), Joshua Gould (remote), K. Brockmeier (remote), Kristen Natario (remote)

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 Mar 3, 2026 at 6:05 PM.

B. Record Attendance

At various times throughout the meeting new meeting participants were recognized and introduced in as timely a manner as the chair could manage. Welcome to all meeting participants and RVCS parents - thank you for attending!

C. Approve Minutes

T. Murdy made a motion to approve the minutes from Development Committee Meeting on 02-03-26.
C. Getz seconded the motion.
In order to approve minutes from the February 3, 2026 meeting of the RVCS Development Committee, the committee took individual votes to reflect participation of those who attended via zoom.

M. Makin arrived later (~6:15PM) at which point we revisited the minutes and M. Makin voted to approve the minutes with one small correction to spelling.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Leslie	Absent
M. Connerton	Aye
E. Rankin	Abstain
M. Curcio	Absent
E. Bradley	Absent
T. Murdy	Aye
K. Kuse	Abstain
M. Makin	Aye
C. Getz	Aye

II. Development at RVCS

A. Annual Appeal Update & Review

In reviewing details from the 2025-2026 K. Kuse highlighted areas of the Development Plan where we have seen success. RVCS has grown the number of leadership gifts this year. This was a target on the Development Plan - we are receiving more larger gifts on a regular basis. In addition, she shared that in all enrollment events, RVCS Annual

Fund/giving opportunities have been introduced to those in attendance. 2026-2027 Kinderhaus families will have a better understanding of how family involvement improves school community.

Discussion included looking ahead to the spring and continuing to build the RVCS culture of giving. How does development cmte want to communicate supporting annual fund through the end of the year? What type of communication would we like to send and when do we want to send? E. Rankin shared a recent print piece from another school as an example of a simple annual fund reminder. K. Kuse noted that the timing in spring is such that people are often more receptive to giving opportunities. To that end it was determined that an email reminder to community members would be appropriate and efficient to connect with community and falls within the committee's abilities when considering the spring calendar and remaining time.

Discussion included reintroducing past community building, communication and education efforts to guide new families. E. Rankin shared a binder from her son's kinderhaus year at RVCS. The binder included the following material: an introduction to Montessori education, preparing pre-schoolers for Kinderhaus and the RVCS Handbook 2017-2018. In addition, a folder from a 2017-2018 end of summer kinderhaus orientation event was shared this included the agenda for the event - making this something we could replicate. T. Murdy shared that "Popsicles on the Playground" was the post-covid iteration of this event and there was consensus that a more formal event that included an introduction to the school's interior for families would garner interest and connection with new families. Both orientation and popsicle event provide meet & greet and better understanding of the montessori classroom.

K. Kuse will connect with contact about hosting a welcome event for new families at the Custom House Maritime Museum. This event would feature 8th grade families hosting kinderhaus families to help to orient them to the school, community and culture. Suggested dates to pursue included, Thursday, May 21 OR Thursday, May 28. Meg C. suggested reaching out to 8th grade families to make sure there is representation prior to confirming the event date.

B. Review of Development Plan

The committee briefly reviewed the Development Plan to make sure we are implementing goals and staying on target. E. Rankin reviewed the mission of the development plan, noted that we are more than halfway to our $50,000 annual goal. Goals of including additional community businesses, keeping alumni families and inviting business leaders to visit the school were discussed. Cognizant of the remaining meeting time and deteriorating weather, E. Rankin encouraged all present to review the plan independently in order to adjourn on time and avoid icy conditions.

Discussion of charitable funds included pursuing Institution for Savings. K. Kuse is interested in asking L. Fable to pursue this opportunity. E. Rankin emphasized that IFS offers multiple giving opportunities per year, has an online portal and RVCS should not focus too much on amount, but on creating a relationship with the bank and its Charitable Giving Foundation.

Other community banks were discussed, and committee members will review application processes. Engaging other board members to appropriately leverage opportunities was discussed.

E. Rankin touched on planning ahead for fall 2026 by considering annual fund dates chairs and class captains before year end.

K. Kuse has a new connection with the Masonic Lodge - they are able to assist with small internal school and student needs to connect RVCS families with resources. C. Getz noted that Community Service of Newburyport could be a resource for this as well.

C. Read A Thon (2/2-2/13/2026)

E. Rankin took a moment to thank everyone from this committee as well as teachers, community partners and friends and family for making this year's read a thon successful. Teachers were especially instrumental in success. They were engaged, encouraged children to read, read to them, created time for them to read and participated in the dress up day in creative ways which is perceived to be instrumental in the increased engagement and participation this year.

In all areas, participation of students and donations, sponsors was up from 2025 (whereas from 2024 to 2025 there was a drop in reader participation).

- Fundraising total = $23,300 a 20% increase ($4000) from 2025 (2025 was $19,285),
- 169 total readers 58% of students participated - an increase of 40% from 2025 (2025 was 121= 42%)
- 44k minutes of reading logged (2025 was 30k) - just another measure of engagement
- 21% Increase in total number of donations to 524 (2025 was 432)
- This year we had 6 business sponsors plus a $100 gift card from Jabberwocky where as in 2025 we had 5 business sponsors plus $300 gift cards from Jabberwocky
- A comprehensive read a thon report/speadsheet will be available at next meeting and stored in board on track in the development committee folder - donations can be made through Friday 2/26/26
- RVCS will receive first payment from Read a thon shortly - check for 80% cut on 2/24 and remainder will be sent two weeks later

- Next year try February again? Downside was that it was close to Christmas and more time between Christmas and Read a thon would be ideal for making connections to local businesses - regardless, the read a thon did well and the earlier timeframe did not appear to be detrimental to its success. It was suggested that cmte members connect with businesses prior to the holiday to obtain commitments, E. Rankin expressed that this is a challenge. Little receptivity and cmte bandwidth prior to Christmas and on the tails of fall efforts.

D. End of Year Summary - Annual Report

E. Rankin shared the Community of Giving Summary from 2023-2024 (posted in documentation for this meeting) and suggested that we do something similar this year. Simple, straightforward and something that doesn't have the hurdle of design or costs associated with it. To be shared with the whole community with the purpose of celebrating successes with the school community, highlight participation and community building events, PA and could be used to leverage additional funds from community giving partners.

E. Planning for PA

T. Murdy gave a review of upcoming PA events:

- Spring event with Cat canceled because of low sign-ups, exploring reschedule...
- March 31 flatbread fundraiser
- April garden clean up and clothing swap
- April Playground Ribbon cutting - tentatively
- May 15th Family Glow Dance!

T. Murdy will send out a link for volunteer sign-up for events. Help is always needed and appreciated.

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 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Rankin

B. List of additional materials used during this meeting:

- RVCS Development Plan 2025-2028
- RVCS 201-2018 Welcome Binder - sample for possible replication for incoming 2026-2027 k-haus

- RVCS Kinderhaus Family orientation agenda and welcome folder - sample for possible replication for incoming kinderhaus
- Print piece Annual Fund sample from another school for inspiration
- 2023-2024 Community of Giving Summary
- Read a Thon 2026 summary

THE ORDER OF BUSINESS MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT NOTICE Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice.

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.