

APPROVED



## RISE Prep Academies

### Minutes

#### RISE Prep December Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Tuesday December 2, 2025 at 10:00 AM

**Location**

30 Cumberland Street Woonsocket, RI 02895

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A vote may be taken on any agenda item.

Zoom link: [https://us04web.zoom.us/j/8615357511?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/8615357511?pwd=VVhWdElmLzRRWWhvOFZDQVVBZzQrZz09#success)

[pwd=VVhWdElmLzRRWWhvOFZDQVVBZzQrZz09#success](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/8615357511?pwd=VVhWdElmLzRRWWhvOFZDQVVBZzQrZz09#success)

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**Directors Present**

C. Dias, G. Gasey, J. Leveille, P. Hamilton, T. Calouro

**Directors Absent**

J. O'Rourke, M. Beauchamp

**Ex Officio Members Present**

S. Izzi

**Non Voting Members Present**

S. Izzi

**Guests Present**

K. Waller, Mike Trainor, R. DaCruz, Zach

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## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

P. Hamilton called a meeting of the board of directors of RISE Prep Academies to order on Tuesday Dec 2, 2025 at 10:06 AM.

### C. Approve Minutes - October Board Meeting

J. Leveille made a motion to approve the minutes from RISE Prep October Board Meeting on 10-07-25.

C. Dias seconded the motion.

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

C. Dias made a motion to move communication presentation to top of agenda.

G. Gassey seconded the motion.

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

## II. Communications Update

### A. Digital Advertising Analytics

Mike Trainor and Zach provided an overview of the current **digital advertising campaign** designed to increase public awareness of RISE Prep. They emphasized that limited awareness of the school allows opponents to shape the narrative, and that digital advertising is the most efficient and cost-effective method to counter this.

Zach outlined the targeting framework used in the campaign:

- Ads are targeted by **geography, behavior, and interests**.

- Geo-targeting focuses on **RISE Prep's sending communities**, aligned with demographic data.

- Current campaign targets **decision makers in households with young children**, reflecting the focus on **enrollment season**, particularly for the Upper Academy.

Zach also reviewed **six weeks of engagement metrics**, noting:

- the **click-through rate (CTR)** is above baseline, indicating effective targeting.

- total digital advertising spend to date: **\$11,700**.

- **video ads**, especially on YouTube, are performing strongly due to the **high quality of the video assets**.

Board members raised concerns that the current ads are targeted toward families, as **vocal opponents of the school often do not have children and they can't see them**.

Mrs. DaCruz clarified that the present campaign is **enrollment-focused**, which justifies the family-targeted approach' however future advertising rounds will have **different audiences and objectives**. The campaign is **grant-funded** in support of enrollment efforts.

Mrs. Diaz requested a **comprehensive budget breakdown** for the entire digital advertising campaign, including monthly recurring costs and one-time or additional expenditures

Zach noted that many of the campaign assets are **reusable**, increasing long-term value.

Mrs. Diaz expressed that while the campaign appears well-executed, **return on investment is difficult to quantify**.

**Zach** will provide a full budget breakdown for the digital advertising campaign at a future meeting. Mrs. DaCruz stated that she will continue to outline future advertising phases and target audiences.

## **B. Newsletter Release Timeline**

### **III. Executive Director Updates**

#### **A. Facilities Updates**

Mrs. DaCruz provided an update on the Stage II submission process:

- stage II has been **submitted**, along with **supplemental information filed on December 1**.

- the school is currently **awaiting placement on the Woonsocket Planning Board agenda**.

- there will be **one Planning Board meeting in January**, as Beacon Charter is scheduled before the board in December.

Mrs. DaCruz also noted several municipal updates:

- **John Ward** has been appointed to the **Woonsocket Zoning Board**.

- **Alan Fung** is serving as the **attorney for all Woonsocket special boards**.

Mrs. DaCruz reported that the **Mayor has requested** that the school consider paying **full taxes as part of a PILOT agreement**. Mrs. Waller asked whom to contact for specific tax figures. Mrs. DaCruz advised reaching out to the Administrative Aide for detailed amounts and calculations.

#### **B. RISE Prep Accountability Star Rating 2024-2025**

Mrs. DaCruz stated that the RISE Prep's rating stayed the same, which was a pleasant surprise, as many charter schools dropped to 1 star, and many are facing 1-year renewals.

#### **C. Academic Updates**

Mrs. DaCruz reported that the school is currently developing **plans for PSAT and SAT sets and RICAS** as well.

Mrs. Gassey inquired about open staffing roles. Mrs. DaCruz stated that **hiring is ongoing**.

Mrs. DaCruz informed the Board that there is currently **one student outplacement**.

In response to Mrs. Diaz's question about the SPED program, **RD** explained that the Lower Academy has a **Dean** overseeing SPED and a **contracted supervisor** oversees the SPED program school-wide.

Mrs. DaCruz stated that One or two additional outplacements may be necessary in the Upper Academy due to behavioral needs. She noted that students transferred from **Woonsocket High School** are generally doing well, including those who had been involved in fights earlier in the fall.

Mrs. DaCruz shared that **disaggregated RICAS data** shows significant performance differences between the scholars who **began their education at RISE** or have been enrolled for multiple years, versus the **recent transfers** into the school.

#### **D. November Food Support & Ongoing Food Pantry**

Mrs. DaCruz reported that the recent **food drive was successful**, with **40–85 families participating each week**. The school will continue to keep the **food pantry open** and is exploring **partnerships with local industries** to support and expand the initiative.

#### **E. Enrollment for 2026-2027**

Mrs. DaCruz stated that the enrollment is open, and going well.

#### **F. Consideration of RISE Prep Virtual Learning Plan 2025-2026 for RIDE Submission**

Mrs. DaCruz reported that the proposed **Inclement Weather Virtual Instruction Plan** would allow the school to shift to **virtual learning during severe weather**.

The plan requires **only one signature for approval and** authorizes the school to provide **live online instruction** on days when in-person attendance is not possible.

G. Gassey made a motion to to approve the Virtual Learning Plan 2025-2026.

C. Dias seconded the motion.

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

### **IV. Consideration of Land Surveys for Upper Academy Site Plans**

#### **A. Consideration of Land Survey Scope**

G. Gassey made a motion to to move before CM bid.

C. Dias seconded the motion.

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

Mrs. DaCruz reviewed the remaining requirements for the **Stage II application**, noting the need for **additional environmental testing**. The proposed cost for this work is **\$83,000**, to be contracted with **Parr Engineering**. Additional **land surveys** will also be required to complete the submission.

**Mrs. Waller** stated that this is primarily a **cash-flow timing issue**, not a question of overall affordability.

- C. Dias made a motion to approve the change order.
- G. Gasey seconded the motion.
- The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## V. Consideration of Chevron Parking Variance at Upper Academy Site

### A. Consideration of Chevron Parking Variance

Mrs. DaCruz reported that the **School Building Authority (SBA)** requires the project to include **chevron-style parking**. The school would like to **request a waiver** of this requirement in order to create **two dismissal lanes**, which would improve traffic flow and student safety during pickup.

- C. Dias made a motion to approve the variance request.
- T. Calouro seconded the motion.
- The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## VI. Consideration of Construction Manager Bid Award - Upper Academy Project

### A. Consideration of Construction Manager Bid Award Recommendation

Mrs. DaCruz reviewed the full selection process for the Construction Manager role:

- the school received **7–8 proposals**.
  - **Mrs. DaCruz and KCM** independently scored all submissions.
  - three finalists were selected for interviews: **Consigli, AZ Corp,** and **Mill City**.
- Finalists were asked to complete **pre-work**, deliver a **presentation**, and submit **follow-up materials**.

Interviews were conducted by Mrs. DaCruz, **KCM,** and **Mrs. Waller**.

The Board is welcome to conduct an additional interview with the recommended candidate if desired.

Mrs. DaCruz reported that **Consigli** submitted the strongest proposal and follow-up materials. Key strengths included:

- a highly qualified **superintendent** assigned to the project.
- use of the **original project timeline**, with confidence in meeting it.
- a proposal that, while more expensive, includes **significantly more staffing capacity**.
- extensive experience with **RIDE SBA** projects.
- **positive references**, all confirmed by KCM.

Mrs. DaCruz stated that the Board may **motion to award the bid** to Consigli or request an additional interview.

Mr. Leveille asked whether the price could be negotiated.

**Mrs. Diaz** suggested asking Consigli to **narrow the gap** between their bid and the next lowest bidder.

Mrs. DaCruz cautioned that negotiations should avoid removing elements that the school considers essential.

The Board discussed focusing negotiations on **general conditions** and **general requirements**.

Mrs. Diazs recommended a motion to **approve Consigli, not to exceed the proposed contract amount**, and make the approval **contingent on the Executive Director negotiating the price downward**.

The Executive Director would be required to request that Consigli reduce the price by **half the difference** between their bid and the next lowest bid, while retaining discretion to accept a smaller reduction depending on the services included.

C. Dias made a motion to approve Consigli as the Construction Manager for Upper Academy Project with the caveat that the Executive Director will negotiate a lower price.

G. Gassey seconded the motion.

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

## VII. Finance Update

### A. Audit Progress Update

Mrs. Waller reported that the annual audit may be **delayed** due to the unexpected requirement for a **Federal Single Audit**. This requirement was not anticipated during initial planning and may extend the audit timeline.

### B. Consideration of Pre-Development Loan Term Sheet

Mrs. DaCruz reported that the **Champlin Foundation** may be able to provide a **small facilities grant**, estimated at approximately **\$10,000**. She noted that these funds would likely support **asbestos-related needs**.

**Mrs. Waller** reviewed the status of the **predevelopment loan**, explaining that it will be issued **after RIDE approval**. Mrs. Waller noted that the RIDE approval meeting has **not yet been scheduled**, it is expected to occur in **December**, though it may shift to **January**.

Mrs. Dias asked whether RIDE has provided any recent updates. Mrs. DaCruz shared that a meeting with RIDE is scheduled for **December 10** to discuss the project and next steps.

### C. Upcoming Financial Reports for Board Review

Mrs. Dias suggested moving the **Financial Updates** to the **next meeting** to allow sufficient time for review and discussion of the financial reports.

**Mr. Waller** will prepare and share the following materials at the next meeting: **budget-to-actuals report, balance sheet and financial projections**.

## VIII. Upcoming Board of Directors Meeting - January 6, 2026

### A.

### **Board Agenda Item Input - January 6, 2026**

The Board agreed to move the meeting to January 13, 2026.

### **IX. Closing Items**

#### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

G. Gasey made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

C. Dias seconded the motion.

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

K. Waller

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Note: Members of the public may provide public comment virtually, but the Board of Directors must participate in the meeting in-person.