APPROVED

rootedschool

Rooted School - Washington

Minutes

Special Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday June 12, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Location
Rooted School Vancouver
10401 NE Fourth Plain Blvd, Suite 201
Vancouver, WA 98662

Directors Present
A. Davis, A. Duncan (remote), A. Mason, L. White, N. Chen (remote), T. Foster

Directors Absent
R. Johnson

Guests Present
A. Lee-Kernell, S. Carney

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Mason called a meeting to order on Thursday Jun 12, 2025 at 6:04 PM.

B. Record Attendance

II. Discussion

A.

Executive Director Succession Planning

The board discussed succession planning for the executive director position, with Steven Carney announcing his transition to a Senior Director role at Rooted School Foundation starting July 1st to support Rooted Vancouver while reducing costs. They reviewed a new job description focused on community-facing and nonprofit aspects, which aims to attract a wider pool of candidates, including those without traditional education backgrounds, with Adrienne Lee-Kerenell set to handle the school and nonprofit sides respectively. The board agreed to review the job description further, particularly to ensure clarity on the relationship between the new role and Adrienne's position.

B. School Growth & Expansion

The board held a comprehensive discussion on the financial and strategic implications of merging with or acquiring another charter school. While initial conversations highlighted potential operational savings—such as the consolidation of services like JGP—financial modeling revealed that even with growth, the combined schools would face a deficit of up to $2 million, making it financially unviable. Concerns were raised about the doubling of workload without commensurate funding, Title funding limitations for charters, and student enrollment complexities across multiple districts.

The board also compared Rooted School Vancouver’s leadership model to other charter schools, many of which use co-director or part-time executive structures. They discussed the school’s current financial constraints, including a $20,000 monthly lease and loan obligation, and explored strategies to reduce expenses, such as relocating or expanding into middle school grades to establish a feeder system.

Regarding school acquisition, board members expressed reservations about financial risks, educational impact, and cultural misalignment. Ashley and others voiced concern that anticipated benefits had not materialized, describing the scenario as a “win-lose” arrangement. The board emphasized the importance of addressing current challenges and maintaining focus on strengthening Rooted’s existing model.

The discussion included broader charter expansion strategies in Washington state, where acquiring new charters is difficult. Alternatives such as expanding existing charters, leveraging federal grants, and sharing resources across boards were explored. Rooted’s board was praised for strong compliance and oversight, with a potential role emerging as an advisory or mentoring partner—rather than a merged entity—for another school.

The board concluded with consensus to stay the current course, prioritize internal stability, and explore mentoring opportunities that do not expose Rooted to additional financial or operational risk. Future scenarios and partnerships will be further developed in conversation with funders and the Commission.

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 7:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Mason