



Rooted School - Washington

Minutes

October Finance & Fund Development

Date and Time

Thursday October 23, 2025 at 1:00 PM

Committee Members Present

A. Mason (remote), J. Singleton (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

E. ALLEN (remote), K. Silberstein (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Singleton called a meeting of the 25-26 Fund/Growth/Partnerships Committee (bi-monthly) Committee of Rooted School - Washington to order on Thursday Oct 23, 2025 at 1:04 PM.

C. Approve Minutes from 02/18/2025 Finance/Fund Development Committee Meeting

A. Mason made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance / Fund Development Committee on 02-18-25.

J. Singleton seconded the motion.

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

D. EDs October Entry Plan Actions

- **Focus Areas:** Fundraising infrastructure, partnership building, and long-term financial planning; developing toolkit, prospectus, and visual assets (photography scheduled Nov 7).
- **Enrollment Strategy:** Collaborating with **Angie Lundgren** on enrollment leads (currently 66 vs. 75 target) and coordinating with **Mariposa** for digital ad campaigns. A **45-day recruitment push** is planned before the January semester change.
- **Budget Scenarios:** Developed multiple five-year projections showing sustainability risks if enrollment remains below target.
- **Internal Systems Work:** Addressing attendance monitoring, behavioral systems (vaping, student safety), and family communications to improve retention and recruitment messaging.
- **Board Preparation:** Drafting detailed board packet including updated budget workbook, enrollment projections, and policy approvals; clarifying agenda flow and executive session timing.

II. Finance / Fund Development

A. RSV Finance Update

Budget built on **75 students**; current 65–66 impacts state apportionment and revenue projections.

- **Goal:** Increase to **85 students** if possible to stabilize apportionment.
- **Cash Flow:** 124 days cash on hand (Sept), healthy reserve position.
- **Restricted Funds:** Monitoring special education spending to avoid fund reversion; safety net award of ~\$28K confirmed.
- **New Costs:** Added teacher, paraeducator and bus aide due to new student enrollment.
- **Management Fee:** 1% Rooted Foundation fee under review; written agreement to clarify future terms.
- **Audit & Reporting:** FY23-24 audit in progress; F-196 report due to OSPI.
- **Grants:** Gates Foundation continuation (Year 3 pending), 9th Grade Success (~\$17K), and Growth Grant accrual (\$28K).
- **Financial Risks:**

- Sustainability concerns for small charters due to state funding model.
- Tight margins below 120–140 student threshold.

B. PNW Fundraising - Status Check In

Give More 24!: Achieved Firstenburg Foundation match; +40 new donors.

End-of-Year Campaigns:

- **Giving Tuesday** (Nov–Dec) mini-campaign with storytelling focus.
- **30 Days of Giving** recurring donor drive with potential challenge match.
- **Direct mail letters** highlighting tax-benefit giving.
- **Long-Term Goal:** Raise **\$500K over 24–36 months** for FY25–27 sustainability.

Infrastructure:

- Fundraising toolkit, case statement, and donor prospectus in development.
- Prospect and stewardship database built; new visuals/testimonials in progress.
- **Board Capacity:** Committee acknowledged need for stronger donor networks and potentially forming a **Development Advisory Board** to extend reach.
- **Partnerships:** Community Foundation and Firstenburg Foundation identified as near-term relationship targets once prospectus and case are finalized.

III. Long-Term Sustainability-(FY2025-26 → FY2029-30)

A. 5 Year Outlook Summary

Scenarios Modeled:

- 1.0 FTE ED + SpEd staffing increase → Sustainable in FY24-25 but cash dips in FY25-26 without enrollment/fundraising growth.
- Enrollment at 65–66 students produces deficit by Year 3; must rise to ≥75 by Spring to maintain solvency.
- **Key Levers:**
 - **Enrollment:** Ninth-grade recruitment is top priority (long-term cohort stability).
 - **Fundraising:** Bridge funding of **\$200K–\$350K annually** needed for next two years.

- **Cost Containment:** Reassess 1% management fee and contracted services.

Systemic Factors: Small high schools (<140 students) face structural funding inequities; sustainability requires diversified revenue.

IV. Committee Purpose & Annual Goals

A. Committee Charter & Goals

Purpose: Evolve from *Finance & Fund Development* into a **Finance, Sustainability, and Fundraising Committee**.

Goals:

- Strengthen multi-year fiscal planning and enrollment alignment.
- Build sustainable fundraising infrastructure (toolkit, case, donor base).
- Oversee grant management, compliance, and fiscal accountability.
- Serve as a thought partner for long-term school sustainability.

B. Committee Structure

- **Proposed Additions:** Include external community or advisory members to strengthen fundraising and donor cultivation.
- **Membership Focus:** Maintain current financial oversight roles while expanding development expertise.
- **Coordination:** Alignment with Executive Director, Operations Director, and PNW Partners on budget and fundraising deliverables.

V. Closing Items

A. Action Items

- Draft and circulate committee charter | Jamila Singleton | Before next meeting

- Clarify management fee calculations | Katie Silberstein | Provide written documentation
- Finalize fundraising toolkit & prospectus | Jamila Singleton, Eddie Allen | Meeting on Oct 31
- Update budget workbook w/ grants | Jamila Singleton | Before board meeting
- Coordinate enrollment leads & outreach | Jamila Singleton, Angie Lundgren | Ongoing
- Prepare detailed budget scenarios | Jamila Singleton | For board meeting
- Order board dinner | Jamila Singleton | Prior to board meeting

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 2:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Mason