APPROVED

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Rooted School - Washington

Minutes

Special Meeting: FY'26 Winter Retreat and Planning Session

Date and Time
Saturday January 31, 2026 at 10:00 AM

Location
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82593733418?pwd=tXMNVm0pU6VdaRGpFjOsySdbdgZLWv.1

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

Directors Present
A. Davis, A. Duncan, A. Mason, L. White (remote), N. Chen (remote), R. Johnson

Directors Absent
None

Directors who left before the meeting adjourned
L. White, N. Chen

Guests Present
J. Singleton

I. Opening Items

A.

Call the Meeting to Order

A. Mason called a meeting to order on Saturday Jan 31, 2026 at 10:00 AM.

B. Record Attendance

II. Communications

A. Welcome Community Members

Chair welcomed community members and attendees.

B. Initial Public Comment

Board Secretary read the public comment guidance and FERPA reminder.
No public comment was offered; meeting moved into the opening activity.

III. BOARD INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS Part I

A. Welcome & Norms

Chair reviewed meeting norms and priorities for the session.
Board held a brief warm-up/relationship-building activity ("plant" icebreaker).

Norms discussion emphasized:

- Aligning work through committees/priority areas to support contribution and focus.
- Maintaining a respectful, caring tone ("love is our highest vibration").
- Staying on time / keeping meetings on track.
- Being honest/authentic in discussion.

B. School Report: Where we are

ED framed **three strategic priorities** for second semester: **deeper math acceleration**, **expanding school-based mental health supports**, and **growing enrollment**.

Math acceleration actions discussed:
Added a new schoolwide math "growth time" block (replacing prior block time four days/week) to increase math minutes.

Noted the schedule/curriculum mismatch: current 45-minute math block vs curriculum designed for 60–75 minutes.
Teacher pursued training with the curriculum company; discussion included learning from Evergreen's use of the same curriculum and reported gains.
Anticipated pacing/sequence adjustments for next year (intentional unit selection vs "vendor default").
Emphasized instructional approach/relevance (students learn differently; need modern strategies, application, coaching).

Leadership/supervision theme: discussion connected instructional improvement to the need for stronger coaching/supervision cycles and future school leader hiring priorities.

Family/student experience note: parent feedback suggested student agency/choice within the math block improved receptiveness.

IV. BOARD ACTION ITEMS

A. Academic Excellence Priority: State of the School Follow Up

Board discussed how to define ED success measures in ways that reflect **progress toward goals**, not only goal attainment, using dashboard-style thresholds ("progressing toward" vs "off track").
Discussion leaned toward evaluating whether the ED has an actionable plan + monitoring cadence, and then measuring progress against that plan.
Board connected accountability to the school's compliance obligations as an LEA (legal requirements comparable to other LEAs).

B. Governance Priority: New Board Member Onboarding Binder

Board reviewed governance/onboarding needs and acknowledged building systems "from scratch," including exploring how other charters structure board support.
Board discussed board member terms and the need to correct/update a term-end date listing (administrative cleanup).
ED expressed desire for board continuity through the next year to maintain stability during leadership transitions and growth.

C. Governance Priority: Policy Updates & Policy Access

ED stated board policies were not easily searchable/available publicly and began building a policy manual/index to address accessibility and accountability.

ED recommended prioritizing:

Executive Director evaluation policy/procedure (not currently present).
Additional governance policy considerations for small boards (including a "fewer than 2,000" policy referenced in discussion).
Compliance-related student safety/mental health policies (e.g., suicide prevention process/screener/referral).
Committees were discussed as the structure for reviewing sets of policies (governance leading initial drafts of governance-related policies; Academic Excellence for academic-related policies).

V. BREAK/LUNCH/RECESS

A. Break-Lunch

L. White left.
N. Chen left.

VI. Board Committees

A. Governance, Academic Excellence, Fund Development

The Board moved into **committee worktime** focused on creating **90-day action lists** and **calendaring next steps** (what each committee will do next and when they'll meet).
A shared approach/template was used to capture **follow-ups, owners, and timelines**, with the goal of keeping committee work organized and visible.
The group emphasized the need for a clear **"meeting owner"** for each committee (someone responsible for scheduling and logistics), not just relying on Board on Track.

Governance Committee identified near-term priorities including establishing an **ED evaluation process/procedure** and updating the **Board Member job description/role clarity** as part of strengthening governance systems.
Governance also set a **specific meeting date/time** (noted in discussion) to move work forward.

Academic Excellence Committee focused on ensuring there is a real, board-visible **academic calendar/milestone plan**, with an intentional sequence for review and board approval to avoid missed milestones.
Graduation planning (and senior-year milestones) was called out as a high-priority example of why calendar accountability matters.

Fund Development committee work connected to building **partner lists** and coordinating outreach, with emphasis on **internship/employment partnerships** as a priority.
The committee conversation included a process for list-building between meetings (e.g., people sending partner ideas ahead of the next meeting).

VII. BOARD INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS Part II

A. Charter Renewal Process

ED explained charter renewal is **performance-based** using the same general framework referenced in the compliance dashboard: **academic success, financial stability, organizational/legal compliance, and evidence-based decision-making**.

Renewal cycle described: work occurs this year, submission next fall, with approval required before contract expiration to continue operating (timeline references "27–28" operating year)

B. School Leader Hiring

Discussion included role design tradeoffs (academic dean vs principal structure; keeping leadership connected to instruction; ensuring the role is designed for school needs, not for a particular person).
Compensation ranges and structuring options discussed (e.g., dean vs current principal line; possibility of stipend model)

C. Fiscal Year and Future Budget Outlook

Budget outlook discussion included variance/questions on contracted services line item and possible drivers (e.g., special education).
ED discussed fundraising/revenue as cushion for next year and named prospective sources (e.g., community foundation, grants).
Personnel cost planning included discussion of a projected increase to account for COLA/steps and ensuring forecasting assumptions make sense.

D. Fund Development Cycle: Board Training

- Fund development was framed as a **cycle** that is closely tied to **community-building**, with both reinforcing each other.
- "Donors" were reframed as **partners** (financial, in-kind, marketing/advocacy, social media, and internship/career partners).
- The Board reviewed the partner cultivation cycle: **identify** → **qualify** → **cultivate** → **solicit** → **steward**.
- **Cultivation** was described as relationship-building through **tours, coffee/lunch, invitations**, and ongoing contact.
- The group emphasized avoiding "contrived" outreach; instead, build partner lists through **real connections** and meaningful engagement opportunities.
- Immediate next steps discussed: **identify prospective partners**, make **warm introductions**, and schedule **school tours** to begin qualifying/cultivating.
- Fundraising priorities included strengthening **employment/internship partnerships** as a near-term strategic need.
- A target was discussed to place **~50% of the Class of 2027** into internships by summer (noted as roughly **5–7 placements**).
- The Board discussed structure options: continuing committee work vs. launching an **Industry Advisory Council**, with **quarterly** cadence mentioned as a possible fit.
- Stewardship was identified as a key gap and priority: **timely thank-yous (within ~48 hours)**, handwritten notes, and more personal impact-based follow-up communications/systems.

VIII. Executive Session

A. Executive Session – Personnel Matter

Near the close of the meeting, it was noted that the Board had not gone into executive session, and that it could be done at the very end if needed, with the meeting otherwise moving toward wrap-up items.

IX. 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 2:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Mason