APPROVED

Da Vinci Schools

Minutes

Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High)

Date and Time
Wednesday May 17, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Location
201 N. Douglas Street El Segundo, CA 90245

Trustees Present
A. Montes-Rodriguez, C. Taylor (remote), L. Jennings, T. Johnstone

Trustees Absent
C. McCullough

Guests Present
Anna Marie Defelice (remote), Anthony Pur (remote), Callahan Vertin (remote), E. Salango, E. Whalen, J. Hawn, Larry Simonsen, Jr. (remote), M. Amato, M. Denniston (remote), N. Lara, Rachel Ksenyak (remote), V. Bravo

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

L. Jennings called a meeting of the board of trustees of Da Vinci Schools to order on Wednesday May 17, 2023 at 6:07 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

C.

Approval of Agenda

T. Johnstone made a motion to approve the agenda.
A. Montes-Rodriguez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
L. Jennings	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
T. Johnstone	Aye

D. Public Comments

None.

II. Information: Board Comments and/or Administrative Reports

A. From the Board

Dr. Jennings thanked Kitamba consultants, Rachel Ksenyak and Callahan Vertin, for joining the meeting and for their work with RISE. She also mentioned that she is looking forward to graduation which is a few weeks away.

B. From the Executive Director

Mr. Whalen provided an advocacy and advancement update. RISE has worked with multiple officials and Capital Advisors to support the conversation around direct funding for wraparound services: transportation, SSS staffing, enrichment, and colocation partnerships. Four researchers from USC visited RISE campuses for the Chan Zuckerberg grant to create a consortium of like-minded schools, validating our methods with neuroscience with a focus on mastery-based grading, trauma-informed care, restorative justice, and in-house mental health services. Due to the postponed El Camino opening, the New Schools Venture Fund application is on hold for reconsideration in the summer portfolio.

Mr. Whalen shared an update regarding El Camino College. President Thames visited the Richstone campus and met with students. President Thames and Mr. Whalen discussed opening during the 2024-25 school year. Staff, students, community members, and elected officials will have the opportunity to provide public comment in support of the program at the June and July El Camino Board meetings. El Camino's Board will vote on the MOU at the August Board meeting.

Mr. Whalen reviewed the ADA initiative's 3-pronged approach: systems, partners, and staffing. To support increasing RISE ADA and enrollment systems are designed and in place to support students. For an engaging and responsive offsite time, staff are looking

at adaptive learning technologies such as independent study tools that provide real-time feedback and scope and sequence management for every student, and performance dashboards for teachers. There are designated onsite time blocks are in place for content-specific small group instruction for teaching, reteaching, and assessment based on IS progress and competency-based PBL coaching and guidance in teams for all RISE students.

RISE is working with our partners to incentivize assistance with enrollment and attendance and increasing programming and collaboration. RISE is also deploying the School Access Coaches Program, a 1:1 mentorship program for School Access, and an extension of the RISE Social Work Program (working to alleviate barriers to attendance). The next steps include mass outreach for volunteers and working with consultant Jarrel Hill to support accessing SpEd funding.

Mr. Whalen provided more information about School Access Coaches. The objective is to provide healthy and consistent youth-adult relationships to chronically absent students with the central focus of supporting them with getting to and through high school. The application process includes an interest survey and a Sparkhire video interview. The duties of a coach include wake-up calls, motivating texts, site visits, quality time, coordination with stakeholders and the school team, and attendance to big high school moments. The program commences Fall 2023-24.

Mr. Whalen shared a staffing update which includes a Senior Office Manager, Enrollment and External Relations (extra duty assignment), Tier 3 Delegation with admin support by site, and a van driver who will support added transportation for School Attendance and Extracurriculars.

Mr. Whalen introduced Rachel Ksenyak and Callahan Vertin, consultants from Kitamba.

Ms. Rachel Ksenyak and Ms. Callahan Vertin thanked the Board for their time and briefly introduced their professional and educational backgrounds. Ms. Ksenyak noted that Kitamba’s project scope and approach is to create a financial stabilization plan aligned with RISE’s mission and model. Kitamba’s three assessments were financial analysis, local, state, and federal policy landscape, revenue opportunities, and operational efficiencies.

The Kitamba team provided an Excel budget tool, an analysis narrative including guiding principles for financial stabilization, a summary analysis and recommendations for increased revenue opportunities and cost reduction, a summary of policies including a detailed policy index, and strategies for accessing the top five policies. Also included is a Word document that provides a high-level executive overview of financial sustainability, cost-reduction, revenue opportunities, policy recommendations, and actionable findings applicable to a broader audience. Ms. Ksenyak reviewed a summary of recommendations and a breakdown of how to use the document.

Ms. Ksenyak reviewed RISE's financial challenges through the years and provided an overview of budget model projections. Dr. Jennings inquired how the budget model projections presented by Kitamba are similar to or different than what Mr. Amato presents. Mr. Amato reviewed differences in projections and noted how the three-year budget is planned. Further discussion ensued.

Ms. Ksenyak noted high-level recommendations include increasing revenue and minimizing expenses where possible. Revenue recommendations include increasing ADA, braiding in additional public funds, maximizing student enrollment, pursuing additional grants and philanthropic opportunities, and increasing additional revenue-generating activities.

Ms. Vertin provided a brief overview of Kitamba's approach to the policy analysis, reviewing the top indexed policies that touched upon financial sustainability on the state, local, and federal levels. She noted policies pertaining to ADA, LCFF duplicate categorical funding, and wrap-around services. Mrs. Montes-Rodriguez inquired about LCFF duplicate categorical concentration and supplemental funds. Further discussion ensued. Policy recommendations include advocating for revised ADA thresholds for funding in policy, advocating for duplicating categorical funding in LCFF, and advocating for campus-level access to transportation reimbursements.

Ms. Ksenyak reviewed cost-savings recommendations and explored high-leverage categories without sacrificing program quality. Recommendations include evaluating the efficacy of facilities and colocations, pursing transportation cost-savings, leveraging human capital, realigning curriculum and instructional materials and analyzing CMO fees and services. Further short-term recommendations for the Board include reviewing the final report and tools created by Kitamba, setting annual Board goals, and creating structures and practices needed to achieve goals. Long-term recommendations include recruiting additional Board members, establishing committees, formalizing additional structures and practices needed for ongoing oversight, annually assessing priorities, setting goals, and establishing structures in alignment with goals.

Mr. Whalen thanked Ms. Ksenyak and the Kitamba team for their efforts.

C. RISE High Update

Mrs. Lara reviewed the RISE 2022-23 Priorities: Advisory Communities, Project-Based Learning, and Holistic Wellness.

March and April Data and Demographics Update

In March, RISE served 194 students, 46% of whom are opportunity youth. ADA from 2/20/2023 - 3/17/2023 was 61.62% at Richstone, 56.60% at APCH, and 41.52% at New Earth. Schoolwide ADA is 55.28%.

In April, RISE served 195 students, 43% of whom are opportunity youth. ADA from 3/20/2023 - 4/14/2023 was 59.56% at Richstone, 55.43% at APCH, and 45.22% at New Earth. Schoolwide ADA is 53.91%.

Partnership update:
APCH: Belonging as Legacy classes started at APCH. RISE students are engaging with students from Harvard-Westlake as well as students and faculty from the USC and the University of Michigan for a video skills course focused on belonging, social issues, and culture. This course is for students, led by students, and will culminate in a student-created video that documents their story, which they will have the opportunity to present at USC. Planned parenthood partnership courses are underway at APCH to provide Health/Sex Ed courses. Two APCH students have been awarded the Shaheen Scholarship. The APCH Shaheen Scholarship Program is an exclusive program for members of APCH. APCH Shaheen Scholars are eligible to receive up to $15,000 per year.

Richstone: Continued Engagement in Enrichment programming centered on Music, Art, and Creative outlets. Students are engaging in summer internship opportunities based on career training. A food pantry program is being developed where RISE students can volunteer. There is a potential partnership with South Bay Workforce Investment Board for RISE & Richstone to be worksites.

New Earth: New Earth has re-launched Down to Earth, the gardening program. We added a new Enrichment program, DJ & Youth Advocacy Class. 4 of our students got an opportunity to see a USC Swim competition with staff and our interns. We had an amazing Spring Intersession turnaround with a total of 15 students enrolled. Our team began house visits to support students with any barriers preventing them from coming on-site and have seen improvement in attendance after the visits.

Mrs. Lara showed images of students at prom sharing that all students in attendance had a great time.

D. Financial Update

Mr. Amato reviewed the April balance sheet reporting the current stable cash position, net assets, and liabilities. He noted that about $110,000 in accounts receivable had been collected, and government funding is coming in. Accounts payable accrual reflects payment of quarterly partnership fees. Deferred revenue is money from grants used monthly for incurred expenses. Net changes and net assets reflect $97,000, although this amount is temporary as it only reflects through April. More expenses will be incurred for

the remaining two months. Mr. Amato then reviewed the profit and loss statement, noting federal and state revenue variances. More money was spent on operational expenses for math curriculum and other testing materials.

Mr. Amato shared that Mr. Whalen, Mrs. Lara, and the RISE team have been working on budgeting revenues and expenses for next year. He detailed new information about the Governor's May revised budget. The good news is that the COLA is 8.22% which increases dollars per ADA from the state on LCFF and other state funding programs and special education. Unfortunately, one-time grants are pulled back to support budgeting the COLA. Staff are calculating the impact of the budget for next year.

Dr. Johnstone inquired about deferrals because the overall budget is deficient. Mr. Denniston noted that there are no current talks of deferrals. He summarized the Governor's budget, noting rainy day funds are not being tapped, there are no deferrals, and a very good COLA (8.22%), albeit decreases in one-time grants that were already announced.

Mr. Amato shared that a 2-year budget will be shared next month. The budget for next year maintains minimum considerations for support and wrap-around services and operations for the three sites. Enrollment is conservative at 200, and ADA at 60%. Mr. Amato shared that additional grant monies need to be secured to maintain services. Dr. Johnstone asked about policy updates. Mr. Whalen noted guidance from Capitol Advisors. Discussion ensued.

E. Facilities Update

Mr. Bravo shared an update on the van. It will be ready for the next school year. Staff are considering brining on a driver for Da Vinci schools. Dr. Hawn is researching cost analysis, and Mr. Amato is reviewing the numbers.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of the March 29, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

T. Johnstone made a motion to approve the minutes from Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High) on 03-29-23.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Jennings	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
C. Taylor	Aye
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye

IV. Action Items

A. Accept March & April 2023 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management

C. Taylor made a motion to Accept March & April 2023 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Jennings	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye

B. Approve Master of Social Work Program MOU between CSUDH and Da Vinci RISE High

T. Johnstone made a motion to Approve Master of Social Work Program MOU between CSUDH and Da Vinci RISE High.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
T. Johnstone	Aye

C. Approve Memorandum of Understanding Between RISE High and A Place Called Home (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

C. Taylor made a motion to Approve Memorandum of Understanding Between RISE High and A Place Called Home (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024).
A. Montes-Rodriguez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent

D.

Approve Memorandum of Understanding Between RISE High and New Earth (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

L. Jennings made a motion to Approve Memorandum of Understanding Between RISE High and New Earth (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024).
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye

E. Approve Facility Agreement Between RISE High and Richstone Family Center (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

A. Montes-Rodriguez made a motion to Approve Facility Agreement Between RISE High and Richstone Family Center (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024).
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
L. Jennings	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye

F. Approve 2023-24 RISE High School Calendar

T. Johnstone made a motion to Approve 2023-24 RISE High School Calendar.
C. Taylor seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Jennings	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye

G. Approve 2021-22 LACOE Annual Report

T. Johnstone made a motion to Approve 2021-22 LACOE Annual Report.
A. Montes-Rodriguez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Taylor	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

L. Jennings made a motion to Adjourn the meeting.
A. Montes-Rodriguez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
A. Montes-Rodriguez	Aye
C. Taylor	Aye
C. McCullough	Absent

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Salango