APPROVED

Da Vinci Schools

Minutes

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

Date and Time
Monday December 4, 2023 at 4:30 PM

Location
201 N. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245
1635 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90813

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

Trustees Absent
None

Guests Present
E. Salango, E. Whalen, James Py, Larry Simonsen, Jr., M. Amato (remote), M. Denniston, M. Wunder, Miles Denniston, N. Lara, V. Bravo, V. Rodriguez (remote)

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 Monday Dec 4, 2023 at 4:36 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

C.

Approval of Agenda

T. Johnstone made a motion to approve the agenda.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

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

D. Public Comments

None.

II. Information: Board Comments and/or Administrative Reports

A. From the Board

None.

B. From the CEO/Superintendent

None.

C. From the Executive Director

Mr. Whalen noted that the team has submitted the following items to LACOE regarding the Letter of Concern: Assessment Plan, Attendance Intervention Plan, Graduation Plan, and the Recruitment and Retention Plan. RISE received an extension on submitting the Fiscal Stabilization Plan (FSP). The preliminary summary of the FSP is due Friday, January 19, 2024, and the final FSP is due Friday, February 2, 2024.

Mr. Whalen provided an El Camino College Update. Staff are waiting for El Camino College's green light to pass our MOU to their board for approval. Mr. Whalen has a meeting with President Thames on Wednesday, December 6.

Mr. Whalen shared an update on attendance. Staff are currently investigating a Universal Screener to support attendance and resource allocation. Dr. Leslie Clifton has been supporting RISE with Independent Studies protocols.

School Access Coaches are trained, live-scanned, and have completed the volunteer packet. Currently in progress are TB Test and Safe Schools Training Modules. A few Coaches have started onsite support. Cecilia Whalen is supporting student outreach, Bernard Coleburn is providing personal training at New Earth, Courtney Houston will be

hosting a social media workshop, and Chaz Ashley will be supporting as a leadership mentor.

Mr. Whalen shared current fundraising efforts/updates. Learning Innovation Fund ($75k) was submitted this week, and funds will support the El Camino Campus Expansion. There might be potential for more funding in the second cohort. RISE has applied for the Mental Health Service Oversight and Accountability Commission grant ($400K). RISE was not awarded funds for the Catalyze Challenge (up to $250k) and the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant Program: The RISE IMPACT Program ($600k over four years).

RISE has been selected to be featured in The Giving List - Los Angeles. The Giving List curates and distributes information about mission-aligned non-profits to high-capacity donors in Los Angeles County, successfully connecting non-profits to donors and generating revenue.

RISE was featured in an article on The 74. The article was produced in partnership with The 74 and the XQ Institute.

Mr. Whalen noted the current advancement priorities. Mr. Whalen attended the CDE Conference: A Call to Action: Building A Better Future for California Students Experiencing Homelessness Summit and connected with Deputy Superintendent Portillo. He presented the financial shortfalls of the current ADA model. Mr. Whalen also presented at the CAASFEP Conference - Building a Better Future for CA Students Experiencing Homelessness Conference. There is a scheduled meeting with Debra Duardo on January 16. Principal Naomi Lara and Board member Dr. Carla McCullough support fundraising efforts and will attend the Raymond James & Associates Winter Party (fundraising). Mr. Whalen will be attending theYASS Convening in New York in December.

Mr. Whalen shared the Da Vinci RISE Equity Report, which details RISE's request for additional funding to sustain the program.

D. RISE High Update

Principal Lara reviewed the 2023-24 RISE priorities: instruction, DV signature practices, and restorative practices.

Mrs. Lara shared that Dr. Lesly Clifton has been contracted to support with ADA and Daily Engagement Support. Dr. Clifton is the Principal at Escondido Charter and the Executive Director of the CA Consortium for Independent Study. She is serving as a consultant to help RISE review and rethink our systems for ADA and daily engagement collection and reporting. The process thus far includes consultation meetings to derive plans, an evaluation of IS board policy and contract, the development of templates for a

new system, and a feedback session with the RISE team. A survey is being administered to staff for feedback to finalize plans. The rollout of the new system will start in Quarter 3.

Dr. McCullough shared her appreciation regarding the thought process and the timeline behind the rollout. Dr. Johnstone noted that meeting with our auditors would be valuable for Dr. Clifton.

Mrs. Lara reviewed the Sown to Grow platform. It will be used for easy and engaging student check-ins that provide personalized feedback and a built-in curriculum that empowers schools to improve students' social, emotional, and academic well-being. Their mission is to empower K-12 schools to improve students' social, emotional, and academic health through an easy and
engaging check-in, reflection, and teacher feedback process. A free trial is granted for the remainder of the year. APCH is the pilot site. There will be a low-cost price point if the pilot is successful and will serve as a daily check-in and SEL advisory course assignment.

Mrs. Lara discussed the Alternate Credit Recovery plan, which is up for Board approval. She reviewed the background information and reviewed the proposal. The administration and staff are proposing a mechanism of credit recovery for failed or missing courses that is dependent upon valid assessments of reading, writing, and mathematics: ELA Reading - NWEA MAP Growth CC Reading. ELA Writing - Educational Testing Service (ETS): Grade Level Assessment of Writing. Mathematics - NWEA MAP Growth CC Math. These assessment tools have been calibrated for grade level application, K-12, using data. These assessment tools have been calibrated for grade level application, K-12, using data sets of tens of thousands of student responses. The work our students submit is assessed and evaluated against the results of this data.

Mrs. Lara shared information regarding the South Bay Workforce Investment Board - Collaborative internship program that will bring paid work experiences to the RISE students. The MOU is up for Board approval as well.

E. Financial Update

Mr. Amato briefly noted that the Annual Audit for 2022-23 SY, ending June 30, 2023, is up for approval. There were no comments, no changes, and nothing negative to report.

Mr. Amato reviewed the 1st interim report, an extension of the original budget approved in June for the 23-24 school year. There have been changes in the original budget, including ADA and enrollment projections. Enrollment in the original budget was 200, and the current projection is 190. ADA in the original budget was 60, and the current projection is 53.5%. These changes lower the revenue of the original budget from $1.947m to $1.726m. The positive news is that there is more state money this year than planned in the original budget due to big state grants (Learning Recovery Emergency

Block Grant) and carrying over unused money from previously awarded grants. This supported the budget by $350k, which makes up for ADA and revenue loss. The original budget required $820k to balance the budget; our current budget requires $560k to break even. Staff are still waiting to hear about two grants Mr. Whalen mentioned, and the team continues to look for more grant opportunities. Mr. Amato noted that the worst-case scenario is that RISE uses reserves to cover the funding gap. If RISE uses its reserves, we will still exceed LACOE's minimum of 3% without counting unreserved grants and monies.

Dr. Jennings noted that RISE is under on salary thus far. Mr. Amato shared that it is due to several factors, including budgeting for a full staff starting July 1, adjustments made in staffing, and timing gaps in hiring.

Mrs. Montez-Rodriguez inquired about the reserves percentages. Mr. Amato shared that the reserve percentage in the original budget is 21.9%, and the current projected percentage is 22.3%. The 22.3% reflects what RISE will have left if we break even. LACOE requires 3% in reserves and requests a fiscal stabilization plan detailing a plan if RISE does not receive the $560k in unsecured grants. To stay at LACOE's 3%, RISE would need $128k. Under the first interim budget, RISE would still be above the minimum.

Mrs. Montez-Rodriguez asked if we will continue to count the unsecured funds moving forward into the 24-25SY. She noted seeking understanding regarding what is needed for a healthy organization and to help the Board determine a timeline to support advancement. Mr. Amato shared that our current 20%+ in reserves is a healthy amount, and each year, the budget must be framed based on what is happening with our school and organization. RISE is currently struggling with aspects of the finances related to enrollment, ADA, and State and Federal government funding. The reserves can decrease quickly if we do not find the grant funding to cover the funding gap each year to run the RISE model as we currently do. In regards to 24-25SY, it's a different world. We will need to see how this year ends up. In the absence of changes and funding, we will have to look at a different RISE and cost model to sustain because grant funding is unknown, and we cannot rely on it. Dr. Jennings noted that we could be awarded multi-year grants later in the year, and Mr. Amato agreed that if we obtain those grants, those funds can support funding for future years, but that is unknown.

Dr. Wunder said he would like more time and energy focused on supporting students and less dependence on grants. He noted that ADA and recruitment and enrollment are the right focus areas for efforts instead of fundraising. There are conversations in the future that are needed, but after discussions with the auditor and after hearing back from the WASC committee regarding accreditation. Mr. Amato noted that LACOE requires the fiscal stabilization plan by February, which will address what changes are needed to be stable.

F. Facilities Update

None.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of the November 1, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

C. Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes from Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High) on 11-01-23.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

IV. Action Items

A. Accept October 2023 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management

T. Johnstone made a motion to Accept October 2023 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

B. Approve First Interim Report to LACOE

A. Montes-Rodriguez made a motion to Approve First Interim Report to LACOE.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

C. Approve Fiscal Year 2022-23 Annual Audit Report

C. Taylor made a motion to Approve Fiscal Year 2022-23 Annual Audit Report.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

D. Approve Worksite Agreement between South Bay Workforce Investment Board and Da Vinci Schools: LA County

L. Jennings made a motion to Approve Worksite Agreement between South Bay Workforce Investment Board and Da Vinci Schools: LA County.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

E. Approve Credit Recovery using Alternate Mastery Assessment

C. Taylor made a motion to Approve Credit Recovery using Alternate Mastery Assessment.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

V. Closed Session

A. Public Employee Discipline (Gov. Code § 54957(b))

B. Reconvene for Public Session and Closed Session Reporting

Closed session reconvened at 6:04pm.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

C. Taylor made a motion to Adjourn Meeting.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Salango