

Rockford Charter School Organization

Board Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2022

Held In Person at Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107

1. Call to Order – 11:30 a.m.
 - a. Present: Jay Ware, Kenny Cunningham, Carla Redd, Anisha Grimmett, Antonio Turner, Principal Shavina Baker, Rick Aylward, Emily Wallen, Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski
 - b. Absent: Jacob Bradt
2. Approval of Agenda
 - a. A motion to approve the Agenda was made by Carla Redd and seconded by Anisha Grimmett.
 - i. Roll Call Vote:
 1. Kenny Cunningham – Aye.
 2. Carla Redd – Aye.
 3. Antonio Turner – Aye.
 4. Anisha Grimmett – Aye.
 5. Jay Ware – Aye.
 - ii. Motion passed.
3. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2021 and the Special Board Meeting Minutes of January 31, 2022
 - a. A motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2021 and the Special Board Meeting Minutes of January 31, 2022 was made by Carla Redd and seconded by Antonio Turner.
 - i. Roll Call Vote:
 1. Kenny Cunningham – Aye.
 2. Carla Redd – Aye.
 3. Antonio Turner – Aye.
 4. Anisha Grimmett – Aye.
 5. Jay Ware – Aye.
 - ii. Motion passed.
4. Public Comment - None.
5. New Business
 - a. Discuss/Approve policy regarding COVID-19 Vaccines for employees
 - i. Attorney Sosnowski advised the Board that as of last month the U.S. Supreme Court did strike down the emergency rule issued by the Department of Labor as it related to mandatory vaccinations. Attorney

Sosnowski further advised that this does not preclude companies from instituting their own vaccination policies but it does prevent the government from mandating vaccines.

- ii. Principal Baker stated that all employees that are not vaccinated are submitting to weekly testing and sending the results to her. Principal Baker stated that since the discussion at the last board meeting the quarantine period has gone from 10 days to 5 days and currently there is not a COVID related attendance policy when talking about staff.
 - iii. Attorney Sosnowski provided Board Members with an update regarding COVID 19 and the status at the State level regarding COVID initiatives and paid sick leave and school masking requirements.
 - iv. Discussion took place regarding tabling this issue indefinitely and bringing it back up should there be another surge.
 - v. Jay Ware inquired as to whether Principal Baker felt safe from COVID when out in public. Principal Baker stated that the position in the building was to wear a mask and teachers have been following her lead regarding mask wearing. Principal Baker stated that the expectation is that if a parent sends a child to school in a mask then the child is expected to return home in a mask.
 - vi. Roll Call Vote on Tabling Vaccination Mandate Policy:
 1. Kenny Cunningham – Aye.
 2. Carla Redd – Aye.
 3. Antonio Turner – Aye.
 4. Anisha Grimmatt – Aye.
 5. Jay Ware – Aye.
- b. Discussion on potential new Board Members
- i. Tamir Bell
 1. Kenny Cunningham stated that Principal Baker met with Tamir Bell and gave him a tour of the school.
 2. Principal Baker stated that she has been observing people in the community that are movers and shakers and he is a photographer in Rockford. He is currently a photographer for the Mayor and has had some speaking engagements in Arkansas and mentoring young people. Principal Baker stated that she reached out to him because she believes that the work he is doing in Rockford is impactful and important. Principal Baker stated that she thinks he would be a good fit for the Board because he would bring a different perspective.
 3. Jay Ware stated that he agrees 100 percent and that Mr. Bell is really impressive.
 4. Carla Redd moved to have Tamir Bell becoming RCSO's newest board member, the motion was seconded by Anisha Grimmatt.
 - a. Roll Call Vote:
 - i. Kenny Cunningham – Aye.
 - ii. Carla Redd – Aye.
 - iii. Antonio Turner – Aye.
 - iv. Anisha Grimmatt – Aye.

v. Jay Ware – Aye.

b. Motion passed.

6. Principal's Report

- a. Principal Baker provided a summary of the Principal's Report to the Board Members. Principal Baker stated that enrollment is at 213 students and enrollment for the next school year is underway with their lottery taking place on March 16, 2022. Principal Baker stated that usually students have to be 5 years old by September 1st, however, this year an extension was made to where students now have to be 5 years old by October 15th and she believes that this will drive enrollment for more students.
- b. Principal Baker stated that she has started recruitment for next year and Emily Wallen has already started to interview candidates for the Kinder and 3rd grade positions.
- c. Principal Baker stated that they continue to wear masks without issue or incident and it has been built into the climate and culture of their building and they have had no objections from staff, students and families.
- d. Principal Baker stated that they continue with NIU STEAM for professional development and they will begin tutoring for students during the first week of March with stipends for existing teaching staff to offer tutoring on Mondays and Wednesdays VIA online instruction, and they are collecting a \$20 deposit for devices which will be returned should the devices be returned to RCSO.
- e. Principal Baker stated students in grades 3 through 5, will sit for IAR testing this month. It is important to note that for the last two years the state has waived accountability so RCSO has remained in the same designation, however, this year the outcome of the IAR test results and the five essential survey will be the components for RCSO's designation for next year.
- f. Principal Baker stated that they just completed the NWEA Testing (Map Testing). Principal Baker stated that RCSO's 5th grade students are showing higher than expected progress.
- g. Principal Baker stated that for marketing for next year they will have new billboards and will be advertising with Rockford Buzz as a sponsor for them. Commercials will be in full rotation at the end of this month and run through the summer. Principal Baker stated that Target had heard about their African American Studies on the radio and they reached out to the school and asked to come out and meet with Jackson and donated about \$2,000-3,000 worth of supplies for Black History Month.
- h. Principal Baker stated that she set up a meeting with the District to discuss how they can spend the new funds that came from COVID. The biggest issue has been the requirement to front the money and then the District will reimburse. Discussion was had with the District and Charter Schools about having the reimbursement be more frequent with the quarterly payments so that the Charter Schools receive funds faster. Principal Baker stated that having the District purchase items on behalf of the school in the past has been a disaster, and they are still missing materials.
- i. Principal Baker stated that originally she was not included on the Principal's Reports from the District and other charter schools were not getting the updates either. The District has approved adding Principal Baker to their updates going forward.

7. Finance Committee Report

- a. Rick Aylward provided a summary of what was discussed at the last Finance Committee meeting. The cash balance at the end of January was a little under \$2 million. RCSO received their quarterly payment at the end of January. Revenue is ahead of the budget by a little over \$300,000.00. The reason is that the first student allocation that they received from RPS jumped \$2,300.
- b. Principal Baker stated that she believes that the reason for the increase is due to the figures on the Illinois report card and how much it costs to educate each student. The increased number for the student allocation is a truer amount than what has been reported to the State and what RCSO was not getting for many years.
- c. Carla Redd inquired if RCSO has received any money for social and emotional support for kids. Principal Baker stated that in addition to the social and emotional learning component, they found out very recently that Rosecrance has set up counseling in a lot of the RPS schools and she is not sure how RPS is funding that. What RCSO has been told to do regarding these kinds of funds is to take whatever the funding source is and the amount and put it into specific buckets where RCSO wants to use those funds.
- d. Rick Aylward stated that through the end of January the net income is over budget by \$350,000.00. Rick Aylward stated that at the Finance Committee meeting they have begun working on the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year budget and he will have that to discuss at the April Board Meeting.
- e. Rick Aylward stated that expenditures were under by \$50,000.

8. Update on Required Board Member Training

- a. Attorney Sosnowski stated that at the last Board meeting that the Board had discussed picking a day and having everyone come in for training. She and Principal Baker are working on setting this up and they will make sure that it is a day that works for everyone. They will host virtually and in-person so everyone will be able to attend.
- b. Principal Baker asked that as many board members, who are able to attend the next Board Meeting to attend because the next meeting will have next year's budget on the agenda and she would like to be able to have meetings with her staff to renew contracts before the end of the school year.

10. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn was made by Anisha Grimmertt and seconded by Carla Redd.
 - i. Roll Call Vote:
 1. Kenny Cunningham – Aye.
 2. Carla Redd – Aye.
 3. Antonio Turner – Aye.
 4. Anisha Grimmertt – Aye.
 5. Jay Ware – Aye.
 - ii. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: April 21, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. (Meeting will be held in-person at Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107)