



RENAISSANCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Board of Trustees Meeting – Monthly Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 12:30 PM

Location: Zoom Conference Call

Minutes

Mission: *The mission of the Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts is to provide children an enriched and rigorous education through the humanities and arts integration leading to success in college, careers and life.*

Welcome/Call to Order and Introductions

- **Members Present:** Natalie Washington, Steven Gordon, Tom Merkel, Linda Dickey, Kristian Walker, Amy Reingold, Bert Brinkerhoff
- **Members Absent:** Cheryl Hayward
- **Others Present:** Donna Marie Cozine, Nan Westervelt

Approval of Consent Agenda Items – (85.3 & 85.4)

[Note: *Single items can be removed from the list and considered separately at the request of a Board of Trustees member***]**

Motion to approve consent items 85.3 (April 21, 2021 Agenda) & 85.4 (March 17, 2021 meeting minutes)

Motion: Tom Merkel

Seconded: Bert Brinkerhoff

Discussion: N/A

Ayes: 7 **Nays:** 0

Chief Educational Officer Report [Dr. Donna Marie Cozine]

Dr. Cozine reported on the results of the concerted effort to recruit and enroll English Language Learners and special education students. Currently there are 11 new ELL students enrolled and 15 special education students. Dr. Cozine recognized the work of Kimberly Felton and Rafael Torres in reaching out to the Spanish community. The RA Re-opening Committee is recommending a 15 to 1 self contained classroom for early elementary age students. RA is the only charter school that offers a 15-1 classroom for special education students and this additional classroom would feed into the current 4th-6th grade 15-1 classroom. Dr. Cozine is working on the budget for the additional classroom and will bring it to the Board for a vote in May. Dr. Cozine reported on the update of the SAVE Plan to add the pandemic response to it.

Motion 85.5 to approve the addendum to the SAVE plan to meet the requirement to include a pandemic response plan.

Motion: Tom Merkel Seconded: Amy Reingold

Discussion: None

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Dr. Cozine reported on RA's response to the Charter Renewal Report which must be submitted with an action plan about what RA is doing in the next 3 years to maintain or improve. Tom Merkel, Academic Committee Chair discussed the Corrective Action Plan for Benchmark 1, developed by the Academic Committee. It will provide more clarity about the direction the school will take to improve Benchmark 1.

Motion 85.6 to approve the required action plan in response to the charter renewal report.

Motion: Amy Reingold Seconded: Bert Brinkerhoff

Discussion: N/A

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Motion 85.7 to approve the revised Corrective Action Plan for Benchmark 1 – Student Performance.

Motion: Tom Merkel Seconded: Amy Reingold

Discussion: N/A

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Dr. Cozine requested that the Board approve the 2021-2022 school calendar and include early release days on Wednesdays to provide for staff professional development as in previous years (before Covid).

Motion 85.8 to approve the 2021-2022 school calendar

Motion: Natalie Washington Seconded: Bert Brinkerhoff

Discussion

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0

Dr. Cozine asked the Board to continue operating the school using the new CDC Covid pandemic guidelines.

Motion 85.9 to the plan to continue to operate the school during the COVID pandemic with new CDC guidelines.

Motion: Amy Reingold Seconded: Bert Brinkerhoff

Discussion: N/A

Ayes: 7 Nays:

Academic Committee Report [Tom Merkel]

Mr. Merkel reported that the April Academic committee was cancelled and a report will be available at the May meeting.

Resource Development Committee Report [Ms. Amy Reingold]

The Reach for the Stars event will be held tomorrow. Over \$11,000 has already been raised, Reach for the Stars T-shirts have been distributed and dessert boxes will be delivered to sponsors. A link to the event will be sent to Board members. Dr. Cozine asked that the hard work put into the event by the RFTS Committee and the staff involved be recognized.

Finance Committee Report (Mr. Bert Brinkerhoff)

Dr. Cozine brought to the Board's attention that all contracts between the Board and any independent contractor must be signed off on by the Board. A checklist regarding the steps to be taken when contracting outside services will be put into RA's Policies and Procedures manual.

Motion 86 to the plan to approve the contract for Robin Blew for accounting consultant services.

Discussion: N/A

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Roll Call Count

○ Steven Gordon	Yes
○ Bert Brinkerhoff	Yes
○ Tom Merkel	Yes
○ Natalie Washington	Yes
○ Cheryl Hayward	Absent
○ Linda Dickey	Yes
○ Kristian Walker	Yes
○ Amy Reingold	Yes

Financial reports were sent to the Board prior to the meeting and a brief synopsis was provided by Bert Brinkerhoff. The Finance Committee discussed the need for establishing an Ad Hoc Facility Committee. It will be created and will meet quarterly. The committee will review budgetary suggestions for the Building Operations Manager.

Human Resources Committee Report [Ms. Natalie Washington]

The HR Committee recommended that the Finance Committee consider add a PTE (Part Time Equivalent Employee) Human Resources Generalist in the 2021-22 budget. The recommendation is being made to address the increased staff that requires a higher level of HR support (benefits administration and employee relations. The cost of a PTE is more cost effective/economical than using the services of HRWorks

Motion 86.1 to approve consideration of budgeting for a PTE Human Resources Generalist in the 2021-22 budget at approximately \$65K.

Motion: Amy Reingold Seconded: Tom Merkel

Discussion: N/A

Roll Call Count

- | | |
|----------------------|--------|
| ○ Steven Gordon | Yes |
| ○ Bert Brinkerhoff | Yes |
| ○ Tom Merkel | Yes |
| ○ Natalie Washington | Yes |
| ○ Cheryl Hayward | Absent |
| ○ Linda Dickey | Yes |
| ○ Kristian Walker | Yes |
| ○ Amy Reingold | Yes |

Dr. Cozine requested that the Board extend the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) through September 2021 @ \$15K.

Motion 86.2 to extend the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) through September 2021 at \$15K.

Motion: Tom Merkel Second: Bert Brinkerhoff

Discussion: Tom Merkel suggested a cap of \$15 K.

Roll Call Count

- | | |
|----------------------|--------|
| ○ Steven Gordon | Yes |
| ○ Bert Brinkerhoff | Yes |
| ○ Tom Merkel | Yes |
| ○ Natalie Washington | Yes |
| ○ Cheryl Hayward | Absent |
| ○ Linda Dickey | Yes |
| ○ Kristian Walker | Yes |
| ○ Amy Reingold | Yes |

Governance Committee Report [Linda Dickey]

The Governance Committee recommends that the Board increase the maximum number of members allowed in the Bylaws from 11 to 13 in order to increase the number of Board members on Standing Committees. The bylaws state that at large trustees may increase or decrease the number of trustees by a vote by the majority of the board.

Motion 86.3 to submit a Non Material Change request to the State Education Department to increase the maximum number of Board members allowed in the Bylaws from 11 to 13.

Motion: Tom Merkel; Seconded: Amy Reingold
Discussion: to 13 and go to NYSED
Aye: 7 Nays: 0

Old Business: None

New Business

The Board will recognize the RA Principal (May 1, 2021) and Staff (Staff Appreciation Week 5/3 - 5/7) for their tireless efforts to create a wonderful learning environment for their students.

Public Comments: None

.....

Adjournment

Motion [86.4] to approve adjournment:

Motion: Amy Reingold Seconded: Bert Brinkerhoff
Discussion:
Ayes: 7 Nays: