

# **RENAISSANCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL OF THE ARTS**

## **Board of Trustees**

**Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 12:30 PM**

**Location: 299 Kirk Road Rochester, New York**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

***Mission:** Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts will provide children an enriched and rigorous educational experience through the infusion of the humanities and arts rooted in a culture of high academic standards leading to success in college and careers.*

### **Welcome/Call to Order and Introductions**

- **Members Present:** Steven Gordon, Alan Caine, Tom Merkel, Amy Reingold, Natalie Washington, Aaron Rosen, Bert Brinkerhoff
- **Members Absent:** Cheryl Hayward, Linda Dickey
- **Others Present:** Donna Marie Cozine, Craig Eichmann, Alan Lockwood, Harry Marino, Nan Westervelt

Meeting called to order by Steve Gordon at 12:44 p.m. This meeting is held virtually due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda Items**

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

- **Motion 76.7 to approve Consent Agenda for Items listed below:**
- **(Motion to approve: May 20, 2020 Agenda.)**
- **(Motion to approve: Minutes from April 22, 2020 Board Meeting.)**
- **Motion to approve: Alan Caine Seconded: Bert Brinkerhoff**
- **Ayes: 7      Nays: 0**

Mr. Gordon welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and read into the minutes the resignation of Louis Spiro due to personal commitments.

### **Chief Educational Officer Report [Dr. Donna Marie Cozine]**

Dr. Cozine reviewed the COVID19 continuity of learning plan and the reentry committee details. A comprehensive CEO report was provided in advance of the meeting. A virtual meeting with the State was held on May 19<sup>th</sup> with various possible scenarios for when school resumes with students in the building. Dr. Cozine invited any board members who would like to join the reentry committee to reach out to her.

Instruction continues to be provided with both paper packets provided as well as virtual academy.

The rechartering process is moving along with the assistance of Andrea Rodgers Berry.

We would like to consider partnering with the T.E.I. We are closely aligned with their educational program points and this program provides us with \$50,000 in grant funds in addition to possible future funds that would impact in a positive way our merit program(s) for teachers.

### **Academic Committee Report [Tom Merkel]**

- Internal data shows that the curriculum and teaching practices we are using are working and student achievement is increasing.
- Fourth Grade performance improvements.
  - 4th Grade DRA scores went from 41% on or above grade level to 81% on or above grade level.
  - 4th Grade ELA IA scores went from 8% on or above grade level to 27% on or above grade level.
- In Grades K-2 we are making changes to the curriculum and coaching structure to allow for more strategic teaching of ELA standards and phonics instruction.
  - We are adopting the Wit and Wisdom whole group ELA curriculum for Grades 1 and 2.
  - We are adopting the Wilson Foundation's phonics curriculum for Grades K-2.
  - We have added one additional instructional coach for the 2020-2021 school year who will focus on Grades K-2.
  - Grades K-2 will have additional minutes in the schedule for phonics and foundational skills each day.
- We project that NYS Test ELA Scores would have increased an aggregate of 5 to 8 points had the tests been held this year.
  - Tom suggested that a "dotted line" be added to graphs to indicate this projected improvement.
- We will create a graph and narrative explaining these predictions for the next Academic Committee Meeting (on or around June 1).
- Internal data shows that the curriculum and teaching practices we are using are working and student achievement is increasing, however, the types of assessments have changed in the past year making it a reasonable comparison, but not perfect.
- Fourth Grade performance improvements.
  - When the current 4th graders took a "dress rehearsal" assessment (released state test questions) last year in 3rd grade in the winter, there were 6% at or above grade level.
  - This year, when they took an interim assessment created by Achievement First that looks very similar to the state test (but possibly more rigorous) 16% scored at or above grade level.

- This shows improvement and allows us to make a prediction for what would have been on the state test with approximately a 5 to 8 percentage point growth.
- In Grades K-2 we looked at the Math Benchmark assessments for the cohort but because the assessment has varying goal posts each time it is given (3 times a year), instead of using at or above grade level percentage, we use average scores.
- **Motion 76.8 to approve Wit and Wisdom and Wilson Foundations programs for the RA k-2 ELA curriculum program**
- **Motion to approve: Aaron Rosen      Seconded: Amy Reingold**
- **Ayes: 7      Nays: 0**
- **Motion 76.9 to approve the use of Achievement First's Open Source k-6 math curriculum.**
- **Motion to approve: 7      Seconded: 0**
- **Ayes: Tom Merkel      Nays: Amy Reingold**

#### **Development Committee Report [Ms. Amy Reingold]**

Nan Westervelt reported that the Reach for the Stars has been rescheduled.

#### **Finance Committee Report (Mr. Bert Brinkerhoff)**

- **Revenues**
  - Total State Revenues are favorable to budget, April CM and YTD.
  - Federal Revenues are favorable CM and YTD for IDEA funds and Title funds.
  - Food Service Revenue is unfavorable due to the reduction in meals served during the school closure. However, the loss of revenues will be offset by the anticipated drop in Food Service expense. (see below)
  - Local donations are unfavorable CM and YTD due to cancellation of fundraising programs
- **Expenses**
  - Personnel and Contracted Services are favorable to budget CM and YTD.
  - School Operations are over budget CM and YTD due to spending levels in Technology and Staff Development
  - Facility expenses which includes Debt principle payments are unfavorable to budget due to unbudgeted interest payments and the accelerated payoffs on the Nichols' debt.
  - Food service expense is favorable due to the decreased meal cost.
- **Net Cash Flow**

- Net Cash Flow is positive in the CM and YTD, both of which are favorable to budget.
- The positive cash flow enabled the acceleration of the payoff of the Nichols and private loan debt.

### **Human Resources Committee Report [Ms. Natalie Washington]**

The CEO evaluation for 2019 has been finalized and filed. The current CEO evaluation is will be completed soon.

The previously approved Organizational Chart has had minor revisions, moving Dean of Students under the Principal and the ESOL teacher under the coordinator of special services.

- **Motion 77.0 to approve the 2020-2021 Organizational Chart**
- **Motion to approve: Alan Caine      Seconded: Steve Gordon**
- **Ayes: 7      Nays: 0**

### **Governance Committee Report [Dr. Aaron Rosen]**

Lou Spiro has resigned from the board for personal reasons. Our attorney is reviewing all of our policies and procedures at this time. A framework for evaluating contractors is under consideration. Donna Marie and Craig will be presenting on this at a future board meeting.

### **Old Business**

### **New Business**

The Board will be creating a Political Outreach committee that Nan Westervelt and Amy Reingold will be participating in.

**Motion 77.1 The Board approves the participation of Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts in The 2020 Teacher and School Leader (TSL) Incentive Fund competition as a member of the Partnership for Innovation and Collaboration among Charter Schools (PICCS) initiative, lead by the Center for Educational Innovation.**

- **Motion to approve: Tom Merkel      Seconded: Natalie Washington**
- **Ayes: 7      Nays: 0**

### **Public Comments**

n/a

**Adjournment**

**Motion 77.2 to approve adjournment:**

- **Motion to approve:** Alan Caine **Seconded:** Tom Merkel
- **Ayes:** 7      **Nays:** 0