

Board of Trustees, Ridge and Valley Charter School  
Regular Meeting Minutes

The Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Ridge and Valley Charter School was held on October 21, 2021 at 1234 State Route 94, Blairstown, NJ 07825. The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm by Kerry Barnett, Facilitator. The Trustees operate on a consensus basis in all matters. We choose to dispense with Robert's Rules of Order and Conventional Parliamentary Procedure. Our intention is to affirm the mission of the school. Ridge and Valley Charter School offers an integrated, experiential course of study in the context of the universe and its interrelationships. Adequate notice of this meeting had been made in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Laws of 1975 in the New Jersey Herald, the County Superintendent's office and with the County Administrator.

	present	absent
Voting Members (all attendees via Zoom)		
Kerry Barnett	X	
Julie Budzinski-Flores	X	
Jenn Gurdak-arrived 6:54pm	X	
Dave McNulty	X	
Jessi Sohl	X	
Cindy Terranova		X
Non-voting members:		
Robin Balles, Infrastructure Coordinator	X	
Lisa Masi, Integration Coordinator	X	
Traci Pannullo, Curriculum Coordinator	X	
Theresa Radline, Business Coordinator	X	

Facilitator: Kerry Barnett Guardian: Jessi Sohl Recorder: Theresa Radline  
Public Participants: None

**Trustee Circle Opening:** convened 6:05pm

**Public Participation:** None

**Correspondence:** None

**Leadership Team Updates:**

**Integration Coordinator Report:** Lisa Masi reported:

1. Class group names were shared. The names include:
  - Stardust Insects: Ladybug
  - Stardust Reptile & Amphibians: Ringneck Snake
  - Nova Birds: Belted Kingfisher
  - Nova Plants: Ironweed
  - Constellation Trees: Silver Maple
  - Constellation Mammals: Fisher
  - Galaxy Fish: American Shad
  - Galaxy Rocks & Minerals: Amethyst
  - Galaxy Fungi: Yellow Unicorn
2. Overnights have been very successful. Only one more team left to have their overnight in November.
3. The club list was shared. Garden Club will run for 8 weeks.
4. Juneteenth is a state holiday and our last day of school. School will end on June 16th and have an extended day the Wednesday before our Spring Break.

5. Current enrollment is at 114 students.
6. An email with a survey request was received from the NJPCSA regarding negative enrollment trends across the state.
7. 24 applications were received for next school year.

**Infrastructure Coordinator Report:** Robin Balles reported:

1. We had Community Service Day with about a dozen people attending. She was grateful for all of the work that was done.
2. Teams have been sharing harvested goods from their gardens with each other.
3. We planted winter rye as a cover crop in the potato field. The constellation team will be planting garlic as well. She is looking to have cut, native flowers in there as well in the spring.
4. More shade has been created outside with the use of umbrellas in the octagon.
5. There have been two picnic tables placed in the courtyard and a third will be built.
6. She received some quotes for the doors to be fixed and one quote for the windows to be replaced.
7. Lead and copper testing came back and passed.
8. She and Theresa Radline are attending an indoor air quality webinar tomorrow.
9. She enjoyed her time at the Constellation overnight.

**Curriculum Coordinator Report:** Traci Pannullo reported:

1. The vaccine/testing mandate took effect October 18, 2021. The state offered two options to help schools with the testing. We are going to pair with a company called Miramus. They will take care of at home kits every week.
2. There is a new reporting requirement from the Department of Health regarding absences/symptoms/cases.
3. RVCS will be hosting 2 visitors who are interested in learning how our school has created an integrated, earth-centered curriculum and program for our K-8 students. Missy Lahren, an activist, lawyer and postdoctoral researcher from the California Institute for Integral Studies (CIIS), and Michelle Murray, a CIIS doctoral student, are working on a Yale University project that aims to create a K-12+ open source curriculum inspired by the work of Thomas Berry. They will spend their visit with students and guides, participating in our experiential, nature-immersed program, as well as spending time in discussion with the Trustees regarding the founding vision and intention of our school.

**Business Coordinator Report:** Theresa Radline reported:

- Approval of September 16, 2021 minutes. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 10.21.21.a** To approve to pay bills for the dates of September 17, 2021 thru October 21, 2021 in the amount of \$198,920.61 which includes payroll. Approved by 3 ayes and 1 abstention.
- **Resolution 10.21.21.b** To approve the Board Secretary and Treasurers' Report for September 2021 and to certify that no major account or fund has been over expended and to confirm that sufficient funds are available to meet the school's financial obligations for the remainder of the year. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 10.21.21.d** To accept the Nursing Service Plan for the 2021-2022 school year. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 10.21.21.f** To approve increasing substitute rate of pay from \$90/day to \$100/day effective immediately. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 10.21.21.h** The Ridge and Valley CS (807727) hereby resolves through a Board Resolution on 10/21/21 to apply for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021-ESSER funds in the amount of \$223,631.00. Approved unanimously.

Theresa Radline reported:

1. Discussed increasing sub rate of pay.
2. Discussed the new ARP-ESSER grant.
3. Discussed Start Strong testing.

## 2nd Reading and adoption of Policy:

- 5141.10 Face Coverings

## Committee Reports:

**Communication:** Dave McNulty and Kerry Barnett held an Information Session with 3 families in attendance. It went very well. Discussion took place about publicizing the school and having an open house on December 1.

**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion :** Julie Budzinski-Flores shared that the committee would like the school to have a connection with another school that is in a different bio-region. They have thought about going through the NJPCSA to offer recommendations on schools to partner with to study each other's bio regions. The most paramount idea is to build relationships with other students and guides. The idea is to have a more long-term relationship and not just for one school year.

**Facilities:** Robin Balles shared that we don't have a maintenance person yet but a job posting is being sent to the NJ Herald and Express Times. Some pressing projects that couldn't wait were completed. The Universe Building HVAC replacement is a large project and we are working on the bid package. We received quotes for the installation of the panic alarm system and are working with Eastern Datacomm. The next meeting is Friday, October 29.

**Finance:** Kerry Barnett shared that the committee met last Thursday. They discussed enrollment, budgeting, and grants.

**Landcare:** Robin Balles shared that the committee has met a few times since the last trustee meeting. Brush mowing was discussed. Discussion was also held about controlling invasives and potential reforestation of small areas of the land. Two areas brought up were the far end of the hill by the creek trail or directly below the outdoor classroom. The fence project was discussed. Nurse Toni is donating fig trees.

**Parent:** Jessi Sohl shared that they had their first meeting last week. An overview of the committee was discussed. A wish list is in progress. A gear sale will take place at some point. A second gear swap took place. Fundraisers were discussed.

**Technology:** Theresa Radline shared that discussions are being held regarding apps to be used on the Chromebooks and how helpful it was to have them for testing. The phone line for the alarm will be installed on Monday.

## Other Business:

1. The Road Flashing Lights will be discussed at the next Facilities meeting.
2. The October 13 Guide/Trustee Development was discussed.
3. Discussion was held regarding a possible remote option for trustee meetings.
4. The Charter Renewal was discussed.

Executive Session to discuss personnel: 8:40pm

Return to Public Session: 8:54pm

- **Resolution 10.21.21.c** To approve Tess Mullen as a Classroom Aide for the 2021-2022 school year at \$90/day. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 10.21.21.e** To approve contracting with Sussex County Educational Services Commission for CST Services with a School Psychologist 2 days per week with a 3% administrative fee, not to exceed \$3,897.23/month for the dates of November 1, 2021 thru June 30, 2022. Approved unanimously.

- **Resolution 10.21.21.g** To approve offering and accepting a Support Guide contract with Tess Mullen from October 25, 2021 thru June 30, 2022 at a pro-rated salary of \$27,500.00.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03pm

Theresa Radline, Board Secretary