

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 December 21, 2023 at 1234 State Route 94, Blairstown, NJ 07825. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Kasey Errico, 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 | | |
| Kerry Barnett | X | |
| Julie Budzinski-Flores | X | |
| Kasey Errico | X | |
| Jenn Gurdak-arrived at 7:30 | X | |
| Dave McNulty | X | |
| Jessi Sohl | X | |
| Cindy Terranova | X | |
| Julie Wiedemann-Ball | 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: Kasey Errico Guardian: Cindy Terranova Recorder: Kerry Barnett

Public Participants: Edward Ball, Missy McEvoy

Trustee Circle Opening: convened 6:05 pm

Public Participation: None

Correspondence: None

Leadership Team Updates:

Integration Coordinator Report: Lisa Masi reported:

1. Current enrollment is 132 students, due to a family relocating. Enrollment is 135 for 2024-25, with waiting lists.
2. Calendar events were shared:
 - a. Open House 1/10/2024
 - b. Galaxy School Dance is planned for January 19, 2024.
3. The following graduation projects were shared:
 - a. One student is working on a second bridge to access Autumn Olive Land.
 - b. One student is working on support for assembly.
4. The canoe purchase will be final in January.
5. Natural paint palettes are being sold as a fundraiser to support the Cape May expedition.
6. Thank you from all guides for the Holiday Lunch on December 20, 2023.
7. December 20 Assembly included Winter Solstice Garden Appreciation and Tuck-In Ritual.

8. The HIB-related Self-Assessment was completed and resulted in a score of 58 out of 72, an acceptable rating. All potential HIB incidents were addressed according to established protocol.
9. RVCS has 3 winter shares from the CSG at Genesis Farm.

Infrastructure Coordinator Report: Robin Balles reported:

1. The annual Memorandum of Agreement with law Enforcement was completed and submitted to the Hope State Police Barracks.
2. Garry Hollenbeck has joined RVCS to do Maintenance work part-time. He is capable and has been extremely helpful.
3. Emergent repairs have been addressed.
4. Robin proposes that 5- and 10-year infrastructure priorities be discussed at the trustee – LT retreat in spring 2024.

Curriculum Coordinator Report: Traci Pannullo reported:

1. The Tri-County Behavioral Care contract will be canceled when the 30-days' notice ends in mid-January, due to frequent staff turnover. Services in January will be provided by Lakeside Counseling Associates.
2. The NJ Public Charter Schools Association is lobbying for charters to be eligible for funding for facilities repair.
3. Guide Meaghan's son was born, and Guide Tina is serving effectively in her absence.
4. The Earth Charter International Conference will be held April 12 – 14 in Winter Park, FL, with early registration of \$400 available until January 15 (\$450 after). Traci proposed that 2 RVCS guides and/or trustees participate, as the conference is likely to host about 250 participants with a focus on Education for Sustainability and Education for Change. There is also a school about an hour from Winter Park that would be of interest for a visit. Julie Budzinski-Flores and the Leadership Team agreed to explore the possibilities and expenses for two people to attend and who, and to make arrangements/register.

Business Coordinator Report: Traci Pannullo reported for Theresa Radline:

- Approval of November 16, 2023 minutes. Approved unanimously with changes.
- **Resolution 12.21.23a** To pay bills for the dates of November 16, 2023 through December 19, 2023 in the amount of \$297,497.26 which includes payroll. Approved by 7 ayes and 1 abstention.
- **Resolution 12.21.23.b** To approve the Board Secretary and Treasurers' Reports for November 2023 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 12.21.23.c** To approve budget transfers for the month of November as attached. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 12.21.23.d** To approve the 2022-2023 audit and ACFR report to acknowledge that there were no findings and therefore no corrective action plan is needed. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 12.21.23.e** To accept the 2022-2023 School Self-Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights. The RVCS school grade is 58 out of a possible 78. Approved unanimously.
- **Resolution 12.21.23.f** To approve contracting with Lakeside Counseling Associates to provide individual and group counseling services from January through June 2024 at a rate of \$700/day, 2 days per week as well as school clearance assessments at a rate of \$175 per clearance. Approved unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Communication: Dave McNulty reported that he and Kerry Barnett hosted Carla Vanzant from Wildflower Montessori on 11/17 and enjoyed sharing the RVCS story with her. He also reported that the communication and public relations part-time position description will be shared with guides in January and will include not to exceed a predetermined number of hours, with the number of hours to be determined with Leadership Team.

Facilities: Covered earlier.

Finance: No report.

Parent: Missy McEvoy reported that:

1. The Gaga Ball Fundraiser concluded successfully and the Committee is ready to help with the next steps when notified.
2. The Parent Committee would like to focus on the Octagon for their next project and needs input on the scope of the project. Robin agreed to join the Parent Committee meeting on January 10 to share some developments, potential local collaborators from Blair Academy's architecture program, bench designs, and schedule parameters. Trustees are invited to share input with Robin by then.
3. There will be a Gear Swap in the spring.
4. The Gear Sale raised \$678, with the tie-dye T-shirts popular.
5. There are many questions regarding fundraising by the Parent Committee, particularly from new members, including whether the committee should have its own bank account and discretionary funds; what types of fundraisers are appropriate for RVCS (tricky tray, for example) and why or why not; what is the Annual Appeal; and is a conventional PTG the goal of the committee. Lisa responded regarding the Annual Appeal and the relationship with Ridge and Valley Learning Circles, the 501(c)3 that supports the school and allows donations to be tax-exempt. Traci agreed that FAQs regarding fundraising at RVCS would be helpful and could be updated as new questions arise. Julie Wiedemann-Ball and Missy McEvoy agreed to confer in January to draft a statement explaining questions regarding finances and the Parent Committee. It would be helpful for the Committee if a trustee or guide is able to join the January 16 meeting to explain the RVCS fundraising philosophy if possible.
6. The Parent Committee hasn't been taking minutes. They communicate via Telegram rather than Facebook now.

Other Business:

- Guide-Trustee development is scheduled for March 13, 2024, 2 – 6 pm. LT will be meeting with each guide in January and plan to collect questions relevant to RVCS Evolution in Year 20 and Beyond, which will contribute to the plan for the development. "What do you want to ask? What do you want to answer?"
- Robin, Traci, and Kerry agreed to join Dave McNulty and Theresa Radline on the 20th year celebration committee, to invite participation by guides and parents, and to consider website updates about the founding inspirations among other Year 20 efforts.
- Upcoming events were shared:
 - Trustee Retreat: two tentative dates were selected, Feb. 9 & 10 or March 8 & 9. Jenn and Kerry to coordinate and research off-site locations.
 - Open Houses-1/10 & 4/11
 - Tentative optional development second Thursday of the month, hosted by Kerry.
- The date of RVCS graduation is the same as Warren Tech High School, and Missy has contacted Tech about the conflict. Traci has brought the subject to the Warren County Superintendent and requested that the county be involved in coordinating and communicating about graduation dates and times.

Executive Session to discuss personnel and HIB: 8:08 pm

Return to Public Session: 8:45 pm

A school lunch sub-committee was created of Theresa Radline, Lisa Masi, Kasey Errico, and Julie Wiedemann-Ball. Trustees are invited to send questions to the committee the first week of January, including whether pack-in/pack-out could be feasible to reduce plastic packaging.

Meeting adjourned: 8:50 pm

Kerry Barnett for Theresa Radline, Board Secretary