

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
RIVERSIDE ACADEMY
HELD ON OCTOBER 10, 2024**

Directors Attending: Takia Johnson, Catherine Guerrero, Jodi Pickering, Bishop Ennis Tait, and Reginald Brazzile.

Directors Absent: Ricardo Thompson and Nick Greenberg.

Guests: Leah Donley, Jamie Brady, Zakia McKinney, Wendy Rowland and Ben Cooper.
Via Zoom: Jason McMillin and Julie Klutarich.

Bishop Tait called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m. The Board reviewed the agenda. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolution:

24-75 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the agenda subject to any amendment by the Board of Directors during the meeting.

Ms. Rowland then reviewed the Sponsor's Report with the Board. She visited the School on September 19th for a compliance visit, and her next visit is scheduled for later in October to collect staff trainings, immunization reports, safety drill notices, the Fall vendor assessment report, and to complete the first compliance period worksheets. She reminded the Board and Accel that due to recent legislation, the School is required to have an Automated External Defibrillator in the school building. The Board must also adopt an emergency action plan for the use of AEDs. She also referred the School to the Safer Ohio School Tip Line which is a free anonymous reporting system. Ms. Rowland pointed out that October will mark the first state foundation payment reflecting the current year's actual enrollment figures. She also noted the Fall Third Grade ELA testing window which is October 14th through November 1st. She pointed out that the OCCS Special Education Team has begun the process of reviewing special education student documentation to monitor compliance with legal requirements.

Mr. Brazzile then arrived at the meeting.

Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolution:

24-76 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors accepts the Sponsor's Report as presented.

The Board reviewed the minutes from the meeting and the hearing held on September 12, 2024. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Guerrero, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolutions:

24-77 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves and adopts the September 12, 2024 Board meeting minutes as presented.

24-78 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves and adopts the September 12, 2024 Hearing minutes as presented.

Mr. McMillin then presented the Financial Report for the month of September. The School was paid on 186 FTEs, which is based on last school year's final enrollment figures. The School is operating on budget with its receipts exceeding its expenses. At the end of September, the School had a cash balance of roughly \$160,000 and it is current with all of its accounts payable.

Mr. McMillin then reviewed the federal programs charts. He explained that none of the federal funds have been drawn down yet this year. He then reviewed the Five Year Forecast with the Board as well as the Department of Education and Workforce Community School Budget Form. Mr. McMillin reminded the Board that both the forecast and the budget form are templates that are required by the state. He pointed out that in the Five Year Forecast the FY25 column is based on the School's existing budget, which is based on a student FTE of 194. He explained that the Department of Education and Workforce Budget Form takes the expenses from the Five Year Forecast and breaks them down into different categories. Mr. McMillin pointed out the projected FTE growth included in the Five Year Forecast from year to year, and noted that the School is projecting modest increases in its fund cash balance at the end of each of the next five fiscal years.

In response to a question from Mr. Cooper, Mr. McMillin confirmed that the budget the Board approved in May is based on an FTE of 194. Ms. Klutarich explained that there have been no changes to the budget approved by the Board in May. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolutions:

24-79 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors accepts the financial statements as presented.

24-80 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the Five Year Forecast for the 2024-2025 school year and authorizes its Fiscal Officer to file it as presented or with any subsequent revisions required by the State of Ohio and approved by the Board President.

24-81 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the 2024-2025 DEW Community School Budget and authorizes its Fiscal Officer to file it as presented or with any subsequent revisions required by the State of Ohio and approved by the Board President.

The Board then reviewed the FY25 Consolidated Funding Application. Mr. Cooper reminded the Board that the application represents the budgets for the Board's various grant funds. He explained that the Consolidated Funding Application is completed by the Operator and reviewed by the fiscal officer. The application is then

sent to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce for approval before the application is presented to the Board for approval. Mr. Cooper pointed out that each of the grant funds included in the application ties out to the pie charts included on the financial dashboard in the fiscal officer's report. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolution:

24-82 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the FY 25 Consolidated Funding Application as presented and authorizes expenditures substantially in accordance with the application.

The Board then discussed the deadline for filing its tax return, which is November 15, 2024. Mr. McMillin explained that his office has already filed an extension until May so that the tax return can be completed after the audit is done.

Ms. Donnelly then presented the State of the School Report. The School currently has 199 students enrolled, and it is continuing its marketing efforts. She discussed the partnership with the Price Hill Library and a recently held event focusing on Third Grade Reading Guarantee Information Session coupled with test preparation strategies. She told the Board that the School plans to collaborate with the Price Hill Library for quarterly events. Ms. Donnelly will be meeting with the School's marketing manager tomorrow, and she plans to emphasize the need for the School to reach out to families of students that have withdrawn from the School in an attempt to have those students return. She explained that she is very focused on avoiding the substantial drop in enrollment that the School experienced at the end of the last school year. Ms. Pickering suggested that Ms. Donnelly reach out to the Joe Williams Center and she provided contact information for the organization.

The Board and Ms. Donnelly discussed potential partnership opportunities with Amazon and Ms. Donnelly reiterated that Amazon has reached out to offer individuals that could volunteer at the School to support reading. However, Amazon is not offering any financial support. Bishop Tait pointed out that the School should figure out whether Amazon has a community engagement agreement with the community council. Ms. Donnelly told the Board that she continues to work on developing a relationship with the community council. The Board then discussed strategies that could be used to support enrollment and how to best draw new students from the surrounding areas.

Ms. Donnelly then reviewed the results of the Local Report Card. The School received an Overall score of three stars, which is the same as last year's score. However, the School showed improvement in the area of Achievement, moving from one star to two stars. It also had a nine point improvement in the Performance Index score. Ms. Donnelly also drew the Board's attention to the fact that the School received five stars in Progress. However, in Gap Closing, the School fell from three stars to two stars, which Ms. Donnelly explained is due to poor attendance. She then discussed the School's efforts to address truancy and the School's use of Attendance Improvement Plans. With respect to Early Literacy, Ms. Donnelly explained that the School only received one star. However, Accel believes that the State did not properly record data

related to that metric. Specifically, Accel does not believe that the State correctly identified the number of third grade students that the School had enrolled for the entirety of the school year. Ms. Donnelly then discussed the School's approach to improving academic achievement for all student demographics including special education students. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolution:

24-83 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors accepts the State of School Report, including the Monthly Verification of Residency Report as presented.

The Board then reviewed a copy of the Annual Report, which was distributed as a handout during the meeting. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Pickering, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolution:

24-84 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the Annual Report subject to further modifications as approved by the Board President.

Mr. Cooper then provided the Policy Update. He discussed the Automated External Defibrillator Policy, as well as the Prohibition Against Affirming Specific Beliefs Policy, the Religious Accommodations Policy and Cell Phone Policy. Mr. Cooper also pointed out that the School will be repealing its Student Residency and Address Verification Policy due to a recent change in law. Thereafter, upon a motion duly made by Bishop Tait and seconded by Ms. Johnson, the Board of Directors unanimously passed the following resolutions:

24-85 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves the Automated External Defibrillator Policy, the Prohibition Against Affirming Specific Beliefs Policy, the Religious Accommodations Policy, and the Cell Phone Policy as presented.

24-86 RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors repeals the Student Residency and Address Verification Policy.

Thereafter, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.


Jodi Pickering, Secretary
Riverside Academy

Riverside Academy

PROHIBITION AGAINST AFFIRMATIONS OF SPECIFIC BELIEFS **POLICY**

The Board of Directors hereby adopts the following Policy regarding specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements or ideology.

The School is hereby prohibited from doing any of the following:

- I. Soliciting or requiring an employee or applicant for employment or academic admission to affirmatively ascribe to, or opine about, specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements, or ideology;
- II. Soliciting or requiring a student to affirmatively ascribe to specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements, or ideology;
- III. Using statements of commitment to specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements or ideology as part of the evaluation criteria for any employee or applicant for employment, of any employee seeking career progression or benefit; or
- IV. Using statements of commitment to specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements or ideology as part of the academic evaluation of any student.

Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to prohibit, limit, or restrict any of the following:

- I. The School's authority to require a student or employee to comply with any federal or state law, including anti-discrimination laws, or to take action against a student or employee for violation of any federal or state law;
- II. An educator's academic freedom;
- III. An educator's ability to research or write publications about specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements, ideology, or social action;
- IV. The School's authority to consider an applicant for employment's scholarship, teaching, or subject matter expertise in the applicant's given academic field; or
- V. The School's authority to offer an established character education program.

The School administrator shall make publicly available all policies, guidance (not to include any protected legal communications or guidance), and training materials used for students and staff on all matters regarding specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements, or ideology. The School administrator has the discretion to determine which policies, guidance, or training materials, if any, meet this requirement and therefore must be made publicly available.