

RISING TIDE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

January 25, 2021

Virtual Meeting due to Governor Baker's stay at home advisory.

Narrative Mission Statement:

What is the purpose of the school?

"...The Rising Tide Charter School provides students with community-based education each day, using the Town of Plymouth as a local yet dynamic textbook which will provide fertile ground for the development of higher-order thinking skills."

Leadership and Governance:

"In accordance with MA Charter School Law, the Board of Trustees is ultimately accountable for the school's educational mission, performance and adherence to its Charter."

Call to Order

Chairman, Chris Schelleng, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. In attendance were Chris Schelleng, Norm DeCoste, Sean Kelly, Sandy Kozlowsky, and Amy Norris. Also in attendance were Michael O'Keefe, Head of School, and Eric Mello, Business Manager.

Guests

Maureen Chapman, Rising Tide Academic Director

New Business

Attachments/Handouts: Rising Tide Charter Public School Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023

In November 2019, Governor Baker signed new legislation, the Student Opportunity Act, which will provide additional funds to support students with disabilities or English learners, among others. All schools need to submit plans to the State on how the money will be spent. Michael shared the proposed plan for Rising Tide.

Sean made a motion to approve Rising Tide's Student Opportunity Act Plan as presented. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was supposed to have a site visit in May 2020. Because of the pandemic, it was pushed out and will now be a virtual visit on

March 18-19, 2021. There will be a focus group meeting involving members of the Board. More details to follow.

The Massachusetts Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) will be hosting a virtual Advocacy Day. It will be over the course of several days with a kick-off meeting on March 2 from 9-10:30, as well as virtual meetings with State senators/ reps. They hope to have school leaders, board members and families participating.

Old Business

Michael shared internal school data that Lisa updated with the January 21st town-by-town data from the State that wasn't available at last Thursday's Special Meeting of the Board. The weighted positivity rate has come down from 9.46% to 8.74%. For the first time since mid-November, the State positivity rate has dipped below 5%.

Meeting Minutes

Attachments/Handouts: Special Meeting Minutes for December 29, 2020; Special Meeting Minutes for January 7, 14, and 21, 2021; December 2020 Meeting Minutes

Sean made a motion to approve the Special Board Meeting Minutes for January 21, 2021. Norm seconded the motion. Sandy abstained and all others voted in favor to approve.

Sean made a motion to approve all other outstanding Meeting Minutes. Amy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

Financials

Attachments/Handouts: RTCPS Financial Reports for the period ending December 31, 2020

We are at the mid-year point and Eric continues to conservatively budget 660 students and tuition at \$14,811/student. We received the Plymouth County Cares Grant funds for \$157,500, as well as DESE grant funds for \$147,825. Expenses are over budget in the amount of \$261,589, and our Net Income is \$1,017. Included in the expenses are the retro active salary adjustments made in December. Cash flow continues to be steady.

Due to Grant funds received, we will need another level of auditing since we will be over the \$650,000 threshold. The fee will be an estimated increase of \$3-5,000.

In the Finance and Audit Subcommittee meeting, they discussed the renewal of our line of credit with Webster Bank. They will look at whether or not it makes sense to spend the money to renew or if there is a better use of that money.

Amy made a motion to accept the December financials. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Board Subcommittees

Nominating and Governance – They went over annual list of responsibilities. Looking at potential new Board members so we can increase the size of the Board by a couple members.

Finance and Audit – Nothing to add.

Communications and Advocacy – Did not meet.

School Report

Current enrollment is just under 670, which should carry through to mid-February. We are in the final stage of enrollment for next year, which closes February 4. The lottery will be live streamed on February 9th with State Rep Matt Muratore drawing names. Working on details for an Accepted Student Day slated for Wednesday, February 24. Hoping to have something outside at the school on a Saturday in June for new students/families. Overall, applications are down from last year, however, we typically get an uptick right before the lottery closing.

Maureen updated the Board on latest MCAS information. Some Upper School students will earn their graduation requirement(s) by passing an eligible course in lieu of MCAS. For Middle School students, MCAS testing will use a session sampling approach in which each student will take 1 session instead of 2. Schools will be released from administering tests at the same time to manage different cohorts. No schools will be added to the underperforming category this year. There will be internal planning to determine dates (April-May) and how to handle logistics of testing.

Maureen reviewed various strategies that were implemented in January to address concerns with students who were not having academic success so far this year, including staff development, benchmark skills workshops, parent engagement night, and expanded extra help in Support Block (beyond the usual Seniors). Report cards have been modified to include course narrative and individual student comments together. For the second half of the year, Michael is looking to pull together alumni tutor/mentors for extra support for students. Chromebooks will be going out over the next couple of weeks which will help with accountability.

Sean made a motion to have our next Special Board meeting on February 4 to review COVID data. Norm seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Adjourn

Amy made a motion to Adjourn. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to Adjourn.