

# **RISING TIDE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL**

## **Minutes**

### **Board of Trustees Meeting**

**February 26, 2024**

*Virtual Meeting*

#### **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**

Chairperson, Chris Schelleng, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. In attendance were Chris Schelleng, Laura Stearns-Flynn, Sean Kelly, Amy Norris, John Polvere, and Dr. Ian Rivera. Also in attendance were Michael O’Keefe, Head of School; Maureen Herrmann, Assistant to Head of School; and Eric Mello, Business Manager.

Sandy Kozlowsky and Zahra Williams, Principal/Assistant Head of School, were absent.

**ATTACHMENTS/HANDOUTS:** February 26, 2024, Agenda; 2024 January Board Meeting Minutes; 2024-25 Board Meeting Dates – Draft; January 2024 Financial Reports

#### **GUESTS**

Theresa Szczepanski, STEM Instructional Coach

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **MEETING MINUTES**

Laura made a motion to approve the January Board Meeting Minutes. Sean seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

#### **SCHOOL REPORT**

##### **Mid-Year STAR Data Report**

Theresa explained that the school is using the external screener, STAR Assessments, as a valid and reliable assessment for math proficiency and reading comprehension to see where intervention is needed to get students up to grade level. The first screening was conducted the

first week of school for grades 5-10. Theresa reviewed grade level results and about 2/3 of students in each grade level were at or above benchmark at the start of the school year; the remaining 1/3 were flagged as needing intervention.

After a second screening done in late January, students were given a Student Growth Percentile (SGP) based on growth from the Fall screening. Results showed growth in our program with the exception of 5<sup>th</sup> grade math. In subgroups classified as high intervention, growth was significant. These students received treatment with a learning specialist and/or targeted support. In reviewing growth among students at or above benchmark, there are a few areas to work on to challenge those students. IEP students in 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade math could use some additional support to get their SGP up to at or above 50 percentile. Some math units have been added into the 5<sup>th</sup> grade STEM classes to reinforce skills.

### **Lottery and Enrollment Update**

Michael reported that the Annual Lottery was held on February 15. Amy Naples, Executive Director of the Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce, drew names. There were 423 applicants for grades 5-12. We had 138 applicants for Grade 5 (118 last year) and 73 applicants for Grade 9 (68 last year). We took in 92 new students for next year's 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Applicants for 6-8<sup>th</sup> grades are on a waiting list because we have full cohorts at those grade levels. We expect some seats to open up through Spring and we will let people in off those waiting lists. All applicants for grades 10-12 were admitted.

Since we do not have a firm number of 8<sup>th</sup> graders continuing to the Upper School yet, and the fact that historically not all applicants for 9<sup>th</sup> grade end up coming to Rising Tide, it is difficult to know how many students we will be able to accept for 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Based on past patterns, the school decided to accept all applicants for Grade 9, anticipating we will start the year with 80-90 students. If we were to get significantly more, we would need to adjust section sizes and/or hire additional teachers.

Next Wednesday will be Accepted Students Day from 1:30-3:00. New students will hear from school leaders, get a glimpse into inquiries/skills workshops, meet student leaders, hear about sports and clubs, as well as see some student performers.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **2024-2025 Board Meeting Dates**

The proposed 2024-25 Board Meeting dates were presented.

Sean made a motion to approve the schedule with the January meeting to be held on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Amy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

#### **Succession Plan – Working Draft and Discussion**

The Nominating & Governance Subcommittee had several meetings to address a Head of School Succession Plan. Michael stated that the Draft supplied to the Board was to be a

framework for success regardless of who is here when it is needed. Maureen has been assisting with a working document of all key components such as attorney contacts, lender information, passwords, etc. to allow quick access to pertinent information. Board members were asked to review this document and be able to discuss/vote on it at the next Board meeting.

### **Recognition of Sandy Kozlowsky's Service to the Board**

Since Sandy was ill, this has been moved to next month's agenda.

## **FINANCIALS**

### **January Financials**

Eric presented the January financial report. The budget was based on 620 students and tuition at \$18,303/student. Our projected enrollment is 617 students at the same tuition rate. Total Income is under budget by (\$26,805) mostly due to 3 fewer students than budgeted.

On the Expense side, we are under budget by \$8,319. The year-to-date Net Income compared to budget is (\$18,487). Our cash flow is strong with a total cash balance of \$2,074,249. Our benchmark is \$1,934,565, which is approximately 60 days of operating the school.

Eric reviewed the Profit and Loss YTD. Under Expenses, Pupil Services is down; we've had some faculty out on PFML so that skews categories because substitutes are brought in while they are out. We are over budget on health and corporate insurance, which are hard to budget precisely. We will add a little more into the budget for next year.

Amy made a motion to accept the January financials. Ian seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

## **BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Nominating and Governance** – Nothing to add.

**Communications and Advocacy** – MCPSA Advocacy Week was last week.

**Finance and Audit** – Nothing to add.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

## **ADJOURN**

Sean made a motion to Adjourn. Laura seconded the motion. All voted in favor to Adjourn.