

Rising Tide Charter Public School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

June 16, 2025

(In person meeting)

“Rising Tide Charter Public 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, Laura Stearns Flynn, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

In attendance were Laura Stearns-Flynn, Chris Telamo, Michael O’Keefe (Head of School), Amy Norris, Eric Mello (Business Manager). Also in attendance were Zahra Williams (Principal/Assistant Head of School), Theresa Szczepenski (Academic Dean). Chris Schelleng joined during the School Report. Sean Kelley, Erin Koh were absent. There was a quorum upon Chris Schelleng’s arrival.

ATTACHMENTS/HANDOUTS: June 16, 2025 Agenda; 2025 May Board Meeting Minutes; May 2025 Financial Reports; Board of Trustees’ potential meeting dates for 2025-2026; Presentation of Spring 2025 STAR data

GUESTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

SCHOOL REPORT:

International Trips - Zahra Williams

Variety of offers for this past school year

- NYC during February break - explored some shows and culture of the city
- April break saw two offerings: (using company EF International Tours)
 - Italy (8th grade) with Pamela Leary leading, 32 students
 - Spain (Upper School) with Zahra Williams, 42 students

Mixed reviews regarding current company, looking into working with a new, smaller scaled company for future trips: ACIS which will guarantee centralized hotels, use of major airlines in their contracts, similar price points

Next year offerings will include:

- NYC trip using ETA (Educational Travel Adventures) (February break)
- Italy with Tony Papillo (April break)
- Change in venue for Upper School trip as low interest for planned adventure to the Dominican Republic. Nate Mainster is working with ACIS to plan a trip to Costa Rica (April break)

Spring STAR Data - Theresa Szczepanski

- Review of STAR data - screening tool used 3x/year to identify students' needs, academic levels and to use data in real time for targeted supports and curriculum development; looks at both achievement and student growth levels (SGL)
- RT had set a high goal that 80% student body would hit the "At or Above Benchmark" achievement level
 - ELA: met the goal with 84% At or Above Benchmark
 - Math: close to meeting the goal with 77% (up from 71% previously)
- Explored SGL to help ID any possible place for added support (50%=high growth)
 - 5th grade: 57%**
 - 6th grade: 40.5%** — this area indicated possible increased need, already working on adding targeted support built into daily curriculum
 - 7th grade: 68%**
 - 8th grade: 50%**
 - 9th grade: 47%**
 - 10th grade: 48.5%**
- **This SGL true for students on IEPs as well (59%)**
- Chris T. asked if these results are due to a particular cohort of students or can be connected to teaching/curricula

MATH

Appears that some of last year's targeted supports are having significant impacts, including spreading Math needs into both time spent directly in Math class but also building some of that into STEM class

Looking to continue to build in targeted support for gaps in numeracy - appears to be a common issue with student coming to RT across regions; RT will be piloting MIND Facts on Fire into daily practice to address

Had discussion of swinging pendulum of understanding the importance of "some memorization" for increased fluency for math facts

ELA

Look to do something similar with ELA, sharing some of time needed to address benchmark skills with coordinated effort with Social Studies

Reading Specialist is having strong impact

For example, 7th grade is now 93% At or Above Benchmark even with a new teacher, this approach/support is working

- Soon will have Spring MCAS results to compare to these STAR results

Enrollment Update - Michael O'Keefe

- Numbers are on track so far
- Worse case would be 611 students enrolled at this time for next year
 - Some indicators it may be higher (633 is hope)
 - Have opened a few additional enrollment drives
 - Have conservatively budgeted for 610 students for next year

NEW BUSINESS:

Transition of Board Officers - tonight's meeting indicates the shift to new Board of Officers per the vote last meeting, HUGE thanks to all the past officers who will be rolling off of those positions (Chris S., Sean)

Potential Meeting Dates for next year were proposed (see attached)

Chris T. moved to accept. Amy seconded. All approved.

MEETING MINUTES:

Amy made a motion to approve the May Board Meeting Minutes. Chris T seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

OLD BUSINESS: None

FINANCIAL MATTERS: (Eric Mello)

- Presentation of the May 2025 Financial Statements (see attached for details)
- Overall, this year has been positive year with a surplus due to streamlining decisions made last year that have worked out well
- Have actively decided to use this surplus to target some physical repair needed
 - Repairs to the parking lot - fixing potholes, new sealcoat
 - Glass repairs to building
 - New conference room furniture to replace those that were inherited

- Even with these repairs we will have a surplus
- Closing out June, will meet with the auditors in July

Chris T motioned to accept the May 2025 financials. Amy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Nominating and Governance:**
Met on 6/12 and were able to identify a number of potential board members who have either shown an interest or a potential interest in joining the board. We will follow up with them and hopefully will have a few new names to solidify to the board by late summer, early fall.
- **Communication and Advocacy:** none
- **Finance and Audit:** Nothing to add.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

ADJOURN

Amy made a motion to adjourn. Chris T seconded the motion. All voted in favor to adjourn. Meeting ended 8:26 pm.