



RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, RI 02908

MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting

Date: February 2, 2016

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Helen Edwards

Minutes approved on: March 1, 2016 w/ edits

Interpreters: Shauna Jehle, Heather Anderson

CART: Tammi Burnham

Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Montgomery called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:13 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the RI School for the Deaf.

Roll Call of Board of Trustees

- b. **Trustees in Attendance:** Amanda Montgomery, Jonathan Henner, Joseph Fischgrund, Danielle Loughlin, Nora Meah, and Jane Newkirk
- c. **Administration in Attendance:** Amy Vincenzi, Nancy Maguire Heath, Mary Pendergast and Valerie Houser
- d. **Excused:** none

• Public Comment:

- Joseph Batiano, President of the Teachers Union informed the Board that a new Teacher's Union contract has been voted on and accepted by the Membership. Negotiations were in progress for 2 years.
- Heather Niedbala and Monica Bradley, community members who are themselves Deaf parents, spoke about their disappointment that the PIP 0-3 years program (Parent Infant Partners) no longer accepts hearing youngsters into the program as had happened in the first 2 years of the program. They stated that they understand the financial and space constraints, but they feel that Deaf parents with hearing children have much to offer the program as role models for hearing parents who are learning to sign and learning about their childrens' deafness. Both parents urged the Board to consider what might be done to fund and staff such an extension to the current program.

• Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- Jane Newkirk made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 17, 2015 with minor edits. Seconded by Chairperson Montgomery. Motion approved with all in favor.
- Danielle Loughlin made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from December 1, 2015. Seconded by Jonathan Henner. Motion approved with all in favor.

- **Reports / Action Items:**
 - Report of the Chairperson:
 - Strategic Planning Update - Chairperson Montgomery asked the Board to review the packet that was e-mailed to all of them regarding Claremont Consulting's proposal. Dr. John Tarvin wrote up a strategic planning proposal that includes three options. Chairperson Montgomery feels it is a good proposal and that Dr. Tarvin could be a great help in the upcoming planned strategic planning process. Two other proposals (bids) would be needed for comparison before any decision could be made.
 - Chairperson Montgomery asked all Board members to hold the third Tuesday in March for an additional meeting. It is very difficult to get the policies done during the general meeting and this meeting will be specifically to review policies. An Executive Session will be held on February 16, 2016.
 - Please hold February 22, 2016 as well for an open meeting with feedback from the February 16, 2016 meeting.

- **Board Recruitment Update**
 - Chairperson Montgomery informed the Board that Octavian Robinson was recommended to the Board as a new Board member by Jonathan Henner. He has a background in Deaf Education, Finance and union experience. The Board approved the nomination and his name will be submitted to RIDE for possible appointment to the Board.

- **Report of the Director**
 - Director Maguire Heath reported that the Gala Committee is making progress. Invitations will be going out on February 3, 2016. A silent auction and small birthday raffles are planned at the event. CJ Jones, a Deaf entertainer, will provide a program for the enjoyment of guests. Travis Zellner, former Board Chair has agreed to serve as Master of Ceremonies.
 - We have posted for and hired a new special needs teacher to serve a cohort of students that have been identified as needing more individual support. It is hoped that she will be a great addition to the secondary department.
 - Director Maguire Heath stated that she will be holding her full report until the next meeting in two weeks due to the late hour.

- **Report of the Assistant Director for Finance**
 - Assistant Director Vincenzi distributed a copy of the Budget Report. It is based on the general ledger through January 31, 2016. Spending is on track as planned.
 - Assistant Director Vincenzi also reported that the long awaited, new, 2016 Ford Transit will be delivered in 8 to 10 weeks. In the next few weeks, specs for a new mini activity bus that will be wheelchair accessible will be submitted for approval. This is much needed for school activities.
 - RISD staff has been meeting with a vendor to update our playground to make it safer for the elementary students.
 - FM transmitters have also been purchased for the school to assist with parent engagement that need access to our workshops in their first language.

- **Guest: Valerie Houser Presents Overview on Bedrock Curriculum**
 - Valerie Houser, Curriculum & Instruction Specialist at RISD presented an overview on the Bedrock Curriculum to all Board members in attendance. This key ELA approach was initiated last year at RISD, and the teachers have been working with Kristin DiPerri,

Bedrock designer, to implement the core instruction across content with fidelity. A Power Point packet, detailing the curriculum, was distributed and reviewed. *Please see attached.*

- **The Board moved into Executive Session at 7:17 PM in accordance with R.I. General Laws 42-46-5(a)(2) to discuss collective bargaining with the NEA/Teachers' Union. A motion was made by Joseph Fischgrund to seal the Executive Minutes and second by Jane Newkirk. Motion passed with all in favor.**
- **The Board returned to open session at 8:35 PM for final announcements.**
 - **Chairman Montgomery reported that the Board passed the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) as amended through negotiations subject to edits.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 PM.