



MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting

Date: September 13, 2017

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Helen Edwards

Minutes approved on: November 8, 2017

ASL Interpreters: Shauna Jehle and Yvette Johnson

CART Reporter: Shelly Deming

Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Montgomery called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:33p.m.

Roll Call of Board of Trustees

- b. **Trustees in Attendance:** Amanda Montgomery, Jane Canulla, Danielle Loughlin, Joseph Fischgrund and Nora Meah
- c. **Excused:** Jodi Merryman
- d. **Administration in Attendance:** Director Nancy Maguire Heath, Mary Pendergast, Special Education Administrator, and Barbara Cesana, Assistant Principal.
- e. **Excused:** Amy Vincenzi, Assistant Director for Finance and Operations

Public Comment:

- No one registered for public comment.
- **Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:**
 - Danielle Loughlin made a motion to approve the July 12, 2017 meeting minutes; seconded by Nora Meah. Motion approved with all in favor.
 - Joseph Fischgrund made a motion to approve the August 2, 2017 meeting minutes; seconded by Nora Meah. Motion approved with all in favor.
- **Report of the Chairperson**
 - Chairperson Montgomery thanked the Board members for submitting references for recruiting new members to the Board.
 - Contract negotiations with the teacher's union will be starting within 2 months. It was requested that at least one Board member serve on the negotiating team. Meetings will be scheduled well in advance so that interpreters can be secured.
 - It was acknowledged that Joseph Fischgrund wrote letters, on behalf of the Board, to the new teachers welcoming them to our school.

- **Report of the Director**

- Director Maguire Heath reported that we had a very smooth opening for school this year. The new staff members are settling in nicely. A few arrived late because they had to re-locate to the Rhode Island area.
- The separation of Middle School and High School has started off successfully. The Middle School students seem to enjoy the new model and having their own space and team of teachers.
- The three middle school teachers attended a Middle School Responsive Classroom training in New York in August. It helped them develop a strong and cohesive team approach.
- The middle school students attended a team-building field trip to a ropes course. It was a great experience for all.
- The high school re-design occurred under the supervision of Barbara Cesana, our new Assistant Principal. Barbara will be overseeing students in middle school, high school and students in the career and transition programs.
- Early childhood center now has preschool and kindergarten combined. Kindergarten was more connected to the elementary school in prior years. This is more aligned with the state teacher certifications and recommendations from RIDE.
- Current enrollment is at 70 students. Six graduates have left and one student moved out-of-state. We have 57 staff and 9 ADIL employees. Adil is a temporary placement agency. The ADIL staff helps us meet student needs outlined in their IEPs. Most ADIL employees serve as 1:1 student support for behavior management, instruction and or adaptive living skills.
- Our assessment calendar begins October 1st. Initial assessments include benchmark and baseline measures. Benchmark assessments give us information that helps us compare students' academic performance throughout the year and across years. Baseline assessments give us a measure of where our new students are performing across a variety of domains and allow us to measure regression that may have occurred during summer months.
- Both youth and varsity soccer are underway. The varsity team is coached by Lauren Hovstovsky and the Youth team, a growing program, is led by three staff. We have 9 students participating in youth soccer this year.
- The school will definitely continue its membership with the Eastern States Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA) this year. We will have a young varsity team, and our students this year are not seasoned enough for a larger more competitive league, therefore a letter was sent to Coastal Prep League stating our intentions to withdraw this year.
- The FRIENDS sponsored golf tournament raised \$5000. This amount is about half of what we typically raise. There were 22 fewer golfers in attendance this year. Another fund raiser will be scheduled to try and raise some additional funds to cover costs for the upcoming basketball tournament that we will be hosting.
- The middle school students are raising money to help the people in Texas (particularly families at the Texas School for the Deaf) affected by Hurricane Harvey. A beautiful video was presented by the students.
- The school's new food service program is working out well. It took many up-front hours to set up the systems. As a result, things are running smoothly. Special thanks to Amy Vincenzi for her hard work.
- We have transitioned to a new student information system called PowerSchool in hopes of gaining ease in data collection. Barbara Cesana and Todd Furlong have worked through the summer feeding all of the information into the new database. The system also promises to interface with the nursing database and the IEP program (TIENET). It is our hope that this new database will be easily used by staff and host a parent portal.
- Four of our students are attending the East Providence Career and Technical Center this year. Two are studying Culinary Arts, one is enrolled in Auto Tech, and one is enrolled in a Computer and Gaming program. They attend four days a week, 7:20 to about 9:45 and then return to school to complete academic content classes here at RISD.

- Kayla Canne , a local journalist who signs fluently, presents a current events/journalism program weekly to four high school here at RISDeaf. She is a staff writer for The Sun Chronicle in Greater Attleboro, Massachusetts.
 - Mary Pendergast informed the Board that we are being IDEA monitored by RIDE this year. This compliance monitoring happens every five years.
 - Mary also reported that the school was found to be in 100% compliance in all areas related to Medicaid school based claiming practices.
- **Report of the Finance Committee**
 - The Finance Committee met with Amy Vincenzi, Assistant Director of Operations and Finance last Friday, September 8th to discuss the FY17, '18 and '19 Budgets. The discussion focused on strategy and processing the system. Director Maguire Heath went over the budget report with the Board. The Board voted to support the budget as presented.
- **Discussion Items:**
 - Strategic Planning Update – A Power Point was e-mailed to all Board members. This Power Point will be presented to the staff on September 29th at 1:00 pm by the Wycliffe team, our school strategic planning leaders. The community stakeholder meeting is scheduled for October 4th from 6:00 pm -8:00 pm, providing we have ASL interpreters. At the November 8th Board meeting, the final Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board.
 - Nora Meah will join the team for the next strategic planning conference call on Wednesday, September 20th at 1:00 pm.
 - Grant Update – Director Maguire Heath reported that the SIG was submitted and approved and the school was awarded more than \$800,000 to implement new strategies over the next 4 years. The grant typically runs for 3 years. We have been given an additional year for planning. Our goal by the end of the grant cycle is to become an Empowerment School.
 - Board Meeting Schedule – The Board will be meeting the 2nd Wednesday of every month. It was also mentioned that other State schools hold their Board meetings in the morning. There was much discussion on this matter. The Board was asked to think about it and let Chairperson Montgomery know if they could be available mornings rather than evenings.
- **Action items**
 - Wellness Committee Appointment – The Health & Wellness Committee requires a Board member. Jane Canulla volunteered to be a member of the committee. The Board agreed.
- **Adjournment: 8:27 pm**