



MEETING MINUTES – General Meeting

Date: February 14, 2018

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Helen Edwards

Minutes approved on:

ASL Interpreters: Shauna Jehle and Heather Anderson

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 6:43 p.m.

Roll Call of Board of Trustees

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

Public Comment:

- No one registered for public comment.

• Faculty Guest Speaker:

- Director Maguire Heath introduced Chris Masiello, who is the new School Librarian at RISDeaf. Mrs. Masiello gave a PowerPoint presentation about her vision, philosophy and what she hopes the library will mean for the RISDeaf community. There is an open door policy in effect for the students and staff to go in at any time, because the Library seeks to be an essential part of the school. Mrs. Masiello introduced Ramathan's 5 Laws of Library Science to the Board. Many new library programs have been implemented for teachers and students this year. They have been very well received. Mrs. Masiello has also redesigned various library spaces and utilized community volunteers. She has also arranged to have a well-known Deaf story teller, Dack Virnig come in and present to students on March 21st. There will be three different, developmentally appropriate sessions for various groups of students.

• Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes:

- Jodi Merryman made a motion to approve the January 10, 2018 meeting minutes with no edits; this motion was seconded by Jane Canulla. Motion approved with all in favor.

• Report of the Chairperson

- Board member recruitment update – There is a possible candidate for the Board coming in on February 15th. There will be an interview with the candidate and then a tour of the school.

There are three other seats still open.

- Chairperson Montgomery gave a brief update on the various committees. The Finance Sub-committee met February 8th. The Personnel Sub-committee has a meeting during the third week in February. The Health and Wellness Sub-committee has been postponed a few times due to weather conflicts. The next meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2018 at 5:30 pm in the front conference room. Interpreters have been secured.
- **Report of the Director**
 - Enrollment is currently at 73. Referrals are in the pipeline coming in April and we have been advised of potential referrals for June and September. The profile for the school right now is that the elementary group is expanding rapidly. Preschool and Kindergarten are also growing steadily. This is a good trend as the opportunity to introduce deaf and hard of hearing children to accessible language should happen as early as possible in the younger years. This year's high school student population is smaller than in past years, with many students having arrived to RISD late in their school careers, thereby requiring many specialized services and accommodations for learning and language.
 - The mid-year quarterly monitoring review occurred recently with RIDE. This quarter's data was not dramatic but is steady. Using *Thinking Maps* continues to tie the various curriculum together.
 - We have returned to the Rediker Student Information System. RISDeaf had switched to Power School, hoping to be able to better analyze data and create smoother processes for data sharing, but the company could not live up to what was promised and needed.. RISDeaf is now back with Rediker with an expanded platform.
 - The School Improvement Grant, when applied for, was with the intention of applying to become a RI Empowerment School. RISDeaf hopes to submit the application by June 1st. The benefits to this School include increased flexibility to better serve our unique learners.
 - Athletics:
 - The Girls' ESDAA Basketball Tournament was held this February 9th and 10th in Delaware. Our girls' team came in 4th.

The Boys' ESDAA Basket Ball Tournament will be held on February 16th thru the 19th, hosted here at RISDeaf. Eight teams will participate from schools for the deaf along the Eastern seaboard. Hosting this tournament for 120 players is costly. Funds raised from the Golf Tournament will be used. We have also received numerous donations and have recruited community volunteers to help make this a success. Nathan Engel, our Athletic Director & After School Coordinator, has done a great job organizing this event. Jr. NAD will be selling food, and some students will be selling Rooster Gear. Our Girl Scouts will be selling cookies.

RISDeaf also has a youth basketball team (ages 8-14 years), which is quite large this year. There will be a small tournament in March, as there are only two other schools that RISDeaf play against in the youth league.

The School will be bringing Special Olympics to RISDeaf, having joined the Unified League for the first time. This Unified League has both typical players and more challenged players playing together as partners on the basketball court. It is a very successful league in Rhode Island with 38 teams. As of today's meeting 14 RISDeaf players have signed up.

- **Report of the Assistant Director**
 - RISDeaf's current spending for FY2018 is on track. Quarter 3 will end on March 31st.
 - The Finance Committee met on 2/8/18 to review the current budget and planned spending for the remainder of FY18.
 - The SIG line (School Improvement Grant), is a three year grant that totals \$885,881. Some spending will occur during this fiscal year for *Thinking Maps* and other professional development. RISDeaf has the ability to move more or less money from one year into another based on the timeline and ability to reach goals of the SIG.
 - The Transformation line is monies from RIDE specifically for RISDeaf curriculum improvements. It was unclear in the past if RISDeaf still had access to these funds. At this time the funds are available and are being used for assessment materials, curriculum development and curriculum PD for Teachers.
 - The Food Service Audit occurred on 2/6 and 2/7. Several minor findings were noted, but no major deficiencies. The reviewers were impressed with how well the SFA program is running and managed in its first year. All items noted are being addressed.
 - The Financial and HR audit being done by the Bureau of Audits is continuing. The Auditors are mostly working off-site reviewing our policies, financial records and accounting practices. So far, they indicate that they are happy with the clear documentation that RISDeaf has presented to them.
 - No HR items to report.
- **The Board may seek to convene in Executive Session in accordance with R.I. Gen Laws 42-46-5(a)(2) to discuss negotiations with the Teachers' Union**
 - Jane Canulla motioned to go into executive session. Nora Meah seconded. The Board voted in favor. The Board discussed issues related to the current negotiations with the Teachers Union.
 - Jane Canulla motioned to exit Executive Session. Nora Meah seconded. A motion was made to seal the minutes by Jodi Merryman and seconded by Jane Canulla. The Board unanimously voted in favor. There was nothing to report.
- **Strategic Plan edits**
 - The Board presented feedback to Director Maguire Heath who handed out revised drafts with edits from the previous month. Director Maguire Heath reviewed all of the feedback received and offered new edits.
 - Agreement that Goal 3 – Significant change is still needed in goal and outcomes.
 - Director Maguire Heath asked the Board members to review the draft distributed at the meeting for overall flow and clarity of message and to provide feedback prior to the March meeting. It is anticipated that this stage is almost complete and that timelines will be addressed next.
- **Adjournment 8:56 pm**