

The Genesee Community Charter School
Board of Trustees & Education Governance Council

RIVER CAMPUS: FINAL Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2022
Via Zoom

Board Members Present: Michele Hannagan, **Charlie Johnson**, Nolica Murray-Fields, Ryan O'Malley, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Kevin Sutherland, Traci Terrance, Jessica Wanner

Board Members Absent: Elizabeth Pietrzykowski, Nathaniel Sheppard, Annemarie Wess

Educational Governance Council Members Present: Shannon Hillman, Becki Mason, Alexis Stubbe
Educational Governance Council Absent:

Guests: Robin Blew, Maureen Milke, Jenna Morales, Melissa Conklin, Rahimah Wynn, Christine Farrell, Kemouy Bhalai

Legal Counsel Present: George DesMarteau

NOTE: Board Members listed in **Bold** are **Non-Voting Members**

1. Welcome, Call to Order, Agenda Overview:

Michele Hannagan called the meeting to order at 5:33pm. A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting.

2. Greeting & Teacher Presentation: 3rd Grade Team

The 3rd Grade Team (Jenna & Melissa) led the Board in the greeting this evening that was an opening welcome called a "Waterfall". With the "Waterfall", they shared a prompt for Board Members to respond to in the chat. The prompt shared was "What is an artifact or object that is really important to you or something that is personal to them?" Board members were invited to share their answer in the chat and then organically share what they saw coming up from other members in the chat. Items and artifacts shared include: grandma's tea cup, a lucky penny, my girls, crystal, a wood stove, wedding band, a John Deere tractor, guitar and more. This was chosen as the greeting tonight because it connects with the 3rd grade expedition called "Artifacts Tell a Story...Except when they don't".

Jenna and Melissa gave updates on all things about their 3rd graders' work on this expedition. This expedition began with a visit to the RMSC with a docent-led tour in which the docents (volunteer educators) explained how the artifacts on display told part of the story about the different cultures being represented in the Native Peoples' dioramas. Then the class had two guest speakers (another teacher and a guest from Ganondagan) who shared more about the culture of Native People they were able to live with—conversation shifted between the story objects themselves alone can tell and the way stories are different when they are told by the people who they belong to. An example of this shared was the Hiawatha Belt, which tells the story of the Haudenosaunee Nations coming together as a confederacy and how it wasn't until the students heard its story from Mr. Logan from Ganondagan that they really got to understand the real meaning of the artifact. The expedition continued as students did more research based on what the guest speakers shared and then the students began bringing in their own artifacts to share. During this non-traditional show and tell, all the students did was just show the item and tell the class the name of the item and then the class had to guess, or infer, what the story is behind the artifact. After the class makes their inferences, the owner of the artifact has the chance to fill in the pieces of the stories and the details of what they couldn't learn from the artifact just by looking at it. One of the biggest "Shocks of Sharing"—was a rosary one of the students brought in which led to a great conversation about how what we think something is is based on our own culture and experiences, not necessarily from the culture of the person or people it belongs to. Students have also been reading a lot of text by Native authors, so the stories are being told by the people of that culture and that it's the stories they want shared about their culture.

The expedition continued with further exploration of artifacts from the school (school lunches) and what they mean to the class/GCCS and emphasizing that it's important for us to share the story. The class will also go back to the museum to explore another focused look at exhibit items (transportation/food/music, etc.) to see what else they would add to the Museum text. The students discovered a picture of a mask that they had learned from Mr. Logan said that was something the Haudenosaunee wanted to keep private and the students were really motivated to change this. The class generated a list of ways to change this and it included reaching out to Mr. Logan, talking to the school leaders, writing a letter to the president, etc. and the students are now broken up into Crews and each crew is taking on another action to hopefully make some of this change. The class was really excited and fired up to make a change and do something about this! Expedition night will be focusing on the visual arts with 2 rotations and 3 stations that will also showcase how far the group gets in their research and outreach and letters to impact the change.

Board members gave positive feedback to the 3rd grade team and celebrated this meaningful lesson and how important it is to learn about other cultures in a respectful and authentic way.

3. Review & Approve Monthly Minutes

Review and Approve January 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion 021622.1

Upon motion of Ryan O'Malley, and duly seconded by Tasha Stevens, RESOLVED, that the minutes of the January 12, 2022 meeting minutes of the GCCS Board be approved.

Voting in the affirmative: Michele Hannagan, Nolica Murray-Fields, Ryan O'Malley, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Traci Terrance, Jessica Wanner

Voting in the negative: None

Abstaining: None

Motion 021622.1 passed: 8 to 0

4. Financial Report: December Financial Update - Robin & Shannon

December 2021 Financial Update

Robin reported on the budget to actual review through December 31, 2021. Year to date comparison includes the following:

River Campus Budget to Actual Review:

- Revenue:
 - Per Pupil Revenue: as of last billing with currently 214 enrolled students. Movement between districts is the reason for coming in slightly over budget.
 - Grants: Title I, II & IV: (Includes ESSER & ARP): at the time of budget we did not include ESSER and ARP which is why there is such a large variance.(Budget: \$38K vs. Actual:\$140K)
 - Income- Other: miscellaneous contributions and donations and rewards for a total around \$7K
- Expenses:
 - Food Service: running along well, additional early on expenditures that have been noted since the beginning of the year. Will be using this year to benchmark future adjustments to free and reduced lunch.
 - Field Study: nothing to report for the month of December. However, the program is now back running so will see more movement in this line as the year goes on.
 - Administration: salaries are aligned with budget as well as 10 month and administrative benefits.
 - Instruction: salaries include 2 long term substitutes which is driving this and the benefits higher as well.
 - Professional Development: On track with budget.
 - Supplies: This line has changed since the last meeting when a large variance was discovered.It was reviewed in the Finance Committee Meeting, some of those expenditures were reclassified to professional development, office supplies and other categories which have minimized the large variance reported last month.
 - COVID Technology/ESSER Cares: nothing to report.

- Operations: nothing new to report in this category.
 - Business Services:
 - Printing & Copying:
 - Transportation:
 - COVID Expenses:
- Capital/ Facilities: There will be a variance in rent for this year, janitorial is now being paid in house; both of which we reported on last month.
- Total Expenditures: ~\$1.5million
- Surplus/Deficit: coming in higher than what we had anticipated at this point of the year.

Balance Sheet Review: This is the cumulative report and shows investments and cash on hand in comparison to last year everything looks on target and within normal range.

- Assets:
 - Cash on Hand: Due to the timing of certain cash flows from districts and grants, cash on hand was in the negative (-\$32K) very briefly in December and a small line of credit needed to be opened. Everything was paid on time and in full and there was very little interest on the line of credit. Robin and Maureen reported that things are back on track and the lack of cash on hand was due to large purchases made before we had grant money in hand and a delay from the districts in getting their payments in.
 - Investments: continue to do well.
 - Accounts receivable: nothing new to report.
 - Prepaid Expenses- Field Studies that were paid early
 - Total Assets: \$556K
- Liabilities:
 - Accounts Payable: nothing new to report.
 - Equity: nothing new to report.
 - Net Assets: nothing new to report.
 - Board Designated Funds: nothing new to report.
 - Net Income: \$750K
 - Total Equity: \$123K
 - Total Liabilities & Equity:
- Investment Accounts Review: Overall investments are continuing to do really well and are up \$67K.
 - Vanguard: Statements are received quarterly. No new statement.
 - Fidelity: Statements are received monthly.

Kevin Sutherland, Becki Mason, and Alexis Stubbe joined the meeting at this point

5. Committee Updates

a. Community Engagement: Updates (*Jessica Wanner*)

The Community Engagement Committee (CEC) has a meeting coming up later this month. Dana from Danforth Development had some feedback about how they could coordinate to do some fundraising efforts with the CEC.

b. Discipline: (*Nolica Murray-Fields*)

None.

c. Nominating: Board Recruiting & Board Engagement/Sustainability Update (*Michele Hannagan*)

On behalf of Annemarie, Michele shared and level set with the Board to acknowledge that there has been a big ask for responsibility for the Board members at the current moment given all of the work being done for the replication and potential merger. She asked the Board to take some to self-reflect on their role on the Board and shared that she had met with Dana from Danforth Development to discuss the Board's role in fundraising efforts for the new school. It was also shared and recognized that some Board members may have experience with this type of work and others may not which is why Michele sent a survey out to the Board to gauge the level of engagement and type of engagement that the Board members are drawn to or see themselves as. These 3 key roles are: oversight of programmatic/curriculum alignment with mission and vision and school operations, oversight of policies/fiduciary and governance, and an engaged ambassador/advocate role. This survey will help us determine where we need to go for recruitment efforts based on how current members seem themselves in these roles. Board members are asked to complete

this survey in the next day or two to provide feedback on our current strengths and gifts represented on our Board for Michele and Dana to use to guide their recruitment efforts to fill those holes/gaps in representation.

Michele continued the conversation about how we can work to increase Board participation and engagement in meetings, on committees and in leadership roles. Discussion was had around how we need to welcome and encourage members to step into committee leadership roles, board leadership roles and how to we support others in feeling ready to step up into those positions which do require more time commitment and responsibility. The Board engaged in some dialogue around the conversation of encouraging new leadership on the Board and the challenges of the timeline for new people taking over those roles. There were comments and suggestions from the Board around this topic included:

- Expressing thoughts about the value of stability during the next year or so as the replication takes place
- the lack of structure as a potential barrier to participation in the leadership roles that doesn't help other members build skills (maybe mentoring next year's president)
- Beliefs that some new voices do need to be heard despite the transition
- some hesitancy that changes in leadership might threaten the approval of the SUNY Charter
- some concerns about the optics of adding an extra layer of change
- proposing the idea that the VP could move into the President role and create some new voices at the VP level to support that transition
- Proposing that more detailed "job descriptions" and expectations are developed for Members to review
- tactically thinking that in the short term there will be sensitive and time sensitive time in our process of the merger and someone with more experience can be valued in those instances

There was continued discussion about shared responsibilities and commitment to the work and a thank-you from Shannon to the work and commitment all Board members have shared in the last couple of years. Michele shared that she is willing to continue serving as the President if someone else is willing to step up as a mentee as the next President-elect. It was recommended by George to look at the officer standings and responsibilities to see if the language surrounding that position can be modified to draft something to put in the by-laws once the merger application is completed. The Board will continue to have further discussion about this topic to ensure we are thinking strategically about Board recruitment, engagement and sustainability.

Nolica Murray-Fields left the meeting.

- d. **Personnel:** (Michele Hannagan/Shannon Hillman)
None.
- e. ***Safety:** (Shannon Hillman)
None
- f. ***Diversity & Racial Equity: Updates** (Traci Terrance)

Traci shared that the Diversity & Racial Equity team is going to take a trip to Boston to celebrate Black history. The group meets tomorrow to meet with Ruth Turner (who has been leading professional development with the group) to learn more from her. Meetings continue with meaningful conversations.

6.Leadership Update: Enrollment & Recruitment Updates, Merger Update - Rahimah Wynn/Shannon Hillman

Enrollment & Recruitment Updates

Rahimah shared that she has been working with a large number of people for this year's re-enrollment process and families are all receiving their packages this week during Student Led Conferences (SLC). March 18th is the absolute deadline for re-enrollment and Rahimah has been thoughtful and strategic in creating a variety of ways for those forms to be completed and turned in (in student folders, at the bus drop off/pick up, etc.) and that because of these efforts completed re-enrollment applications are trending earlier than ever before.

Rahimah also shared some updates on recruitment efforts for new students at both the River Campus and the Flour City Campus. Rahimah, Christine, and Kemouy have been going out into the community to different recruitment fairs (ABC has been holding them) and Good Schools Roc will be holding their fair later this month. It was shared that other childcare providers and community groups (i.e. Ibero), are not doing fairs but are willing to distribute informational fliers and we have been sending ours out with their families. They are also working with radio stations (WXXI, Odyssey Platform) and are in talks with them to develop radio spots and are creating targeted display ads and streaming ads that can be targeted by zip code, geo-fencing, and keyword strategies. These types of ads will promote the upcoming Parent Info Sessions. An additional recruitment method will be sending direct fliers to the full list of RCSD PreK and Kindergarten students.

Recruitment Numbers So Far:

- 381 total applicants (243 GCCS and 138 Flour City) through Good Schools Roc
- 229 applicants this time last year through Good Schools Roc

Breakdown of the 381 applicants so far includes:

- 26 are Flour City English Language Learners ELL
- 47 River Campus ELL
- 203 River Campus Free and Reduced Lunch
- 46 River Campus IEP
- 332 in district
- 21 multiples - approximately 6 sets

One of the biggest needs for recruitment that was identified is some type of branded swag/freebie-give-aways. Currently GCCS does not have anything and many other schools at the fairs do. Kemouy is working on collecting samples from other schools to see what would be possible for GCCS.

Other Updates: - Shannon

Facilities:

Shannon gave some updates on the flood that happened in the school that resulted in the closing of school on Friday, 2/11. What was a small leak in the women's bathroom resulted in a broken pipe and a geysers of water that flooded into the main office areas and hallways and into the Kindergarten classroom a bit on the lower level. The pipe has been replaced and is entirely fixed and RMSC has resumed full responsibility. There has been a request to have the carpets shampooed to prevent any mold build up and RMSC will be doing this work next week first thing when GCCS is on February Recess.

GCCS only had one snow day built into the calendar this year and it was used on the previous Friday which means that we are now short a student day. Staff is in discussion on what other day (possibly a PD day or holiday day) would be good to add school. The emergency days identified are: April 15th (Good Friday) before Spring Break, the Friday before more Memorial, or Juneteenth (June 19th) which is the last week of school. The staff is also considering doing a half student day or PD day, etc. and there are challenges with ensuring that nursing services are provided. The Board has been asked to share ideas and recommendations to Shannon via email.

Student Led Conferences (SLCs) :

These SLCs started today and they have been held in person (unless the family needs different accommodations.). They are off to a great start and the overall vibe is that it feels great to have parents and families back in the building for them. The art teacher (Vanessa) had an idea to have a "Celebration Week" this week to bring a little joy into the building for this week that can be stressful for students--and the school community has had celebrations through Rainbow Day, Wacky Wednesday, Comfy Day, etc. Alexis shared the conferences this week have been a great way to witness connection between family, hear student voices and to see students prepare for Passage and she reflected that she was really proud of her students and proud and thankful for Vanessa and other new staff members to create new ideas and step into leadership roles in implementing them.

Merger Update:

Shannon reported that they have a meeting next week (Tuesday) with Susan and David of the NYS Board of Regents to discuss the merger. Shannon is both glad and anxious to hear from them as we haven't heard a

lot from them about the merger. She is not sure what the content of the meeting will entail but has invited some other Board Members to attend. Additionally, Shannon had a call with SUNY recently and they have also not had any communication with the Board of Regents about the merger. Shannon will report back to SUNY after the meeting.

RCSD Led Transportation Changes:

RCSD is working to create a system for themselves around transportation that is consistent across the district (including charters) and are working to establish a two- tiered system to establish two times for schools to operate—either 7:30am-3pm or 9am-4pm. The New York Charter System is advocating for charters in the district to tell them which time they'd prefer (GCCS has picked 7:30-3pm). This change in the system may impact GCCS's early release on Wednesdays because the new system requires early pick up days/times to be the same time for all charters (which is on Fridays at other schools). GCCS still needs to determine if they are going with the early dismissal piece. Currently, this presents a lot more questions than answers but it is known that we are hoping to match times with Flour City and with ROC Sci should we choose to share space with them. George shared that the district has to provide transportation for all students and as is, can't dictate the schedule as long as it runs somewhat close to what others have but with this new system does not think that there is much wiggle room for alternatives due to the ongoing challenges of finding bus drivers facing all districts. There was a request from the Board to see the details of this information and new policy and how it will be rolled out for Charter School however, there does not need to be a Board decision on this as the policy is taking effect.

Outstanding Business

7. None.

New Business

8. None.

Open Forum

9. Future Agenda Topics and/or Public Comment:

Michele Hannagan opened up the meeting to public comment at 7:14pm.

Future Agenda Topics:

- *School Director Transition Plan Presentation*
- *Community, Culture & Climate Data Sharing*

10. Executive Session

Executive Session was not called during this meeting.

Meeting Wrap-Up

11. Review Actions and Agreements (Allison Shultes)

- Board members will complete the survey that Michele sent out to share their feedback on how they view their role on the Board in the next day or two.

Motion 021622.2

Upon the motion of Michele Hannagan, and duly seconded by Traci Terrance, RESOLVED, that the Board adjourn the February 16, 2022 meeting at 7:14pm.

Voting in the affirmative: Michele Hannagan, Ryan O'Malley, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Kevin Sutherland, Traci Terrance, Jessica Wanner

Voting in the negative: None

Abstaining: None

Motion 021622.2 passed: 8 to 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison Shultes

Secretary of GCCS- River Campus Board of Trustees

GCCS-River Campus Board Minutes/February 16, 2022