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Mission

RFK Charter School prepares, motivates, and supports students to achieve their college and career goals

in partnership with their families and the community.

**Governance Council Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, December 17, 2020 5:30 PM (Virtual meeting)**

**Governance Council Members all virtual**:

**Roll Call:**

X Tina Garcia

X Lawrence Barela

X Joseph Sanchez

X Trey Hammond

X Clyde Ortiz

X Sister Agnes Kaczmarek

X  Tina Garcia-Shams

X Mark Walch

X Silvia McCleary

X Stacey Vigil

Yes     Quorum

**Staff**: Robert Baade, Irene Sanchez, Shawn Morris, Aaron Arellano Sierra Mapel (Community school coordinator for RFK)

**Minutes by**: Anne Tafoya

**Approval of agenda**

Joseph Sanchez motioned to approve the December 17, 2020 agenda. Trey Hammond seconded. The motion is unanimously approved.

**Approval November 19, 2020 meeting minutes**

Trey Hammond motioned to approve the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

**N/A**

**Middle School Update**

Aaron Arellano reported the latest updates at the RFK middle school. He explained that one of the activities he is doing is having the students do an outdoor activity and then they report back in the virtual classroom. This has facilitated some great conversations with the students. The focus right now is making sure students are supported with the social emotional aspect of learning.

A board member asked Aaron about the partnership with the Holocaust Museum and how their involvement has been benefitting the students. The main focus right now is preparing the students, through training, to be Upstanders instead of Bystanders. Helping the students find their voice to say something and not just watch things unfold. This is an essential skill that a student can carry with them throughout their lives.

**High School Update**

Shawn Morris reported that they are focusing on social emotional learning and support as well. Shawn is working with Robert to explore how they can use the donated land up in the Jemez Mountains for outdoor activities, in partnership with Cottonwood Gulch. Some of the students have been able to go for a few hours at a time to take advantage of the camping area. The idea is to put together a camping trip once the students can meet face to face. One of the hands-on projects the students can do now is learning how to grow food from scraps. A board member asked Shawn how they are able to do some of the more outdoor experiential learning when it’s not possible to bring everyone together. The students are able to participate in creating small rock gardens and it is beneficial for those that are taking part in those activities.

Shawn continued his report out by highlighting some of the positive things that are taking place at RFK. The school paired up with another school to provide gifts and other items for families in need. The other school gave notice at the last minute that they wouldn’t be able to participate as planned, so RFK and the community went into action with a donation drive and were able to come up with enough gifts to cover 30 students. Shawn went on to explain that the State is shifting to a different COVID testing for school employees, using a company called Vault. It will be mandatory for any school that brings students back on campus. The testing request and the information will all be submitted online. As it stands now, if students are able to come back to campus there must be two full weeks of testing. The goal is to be able to bring more students back by January 19th, but that will depend on the COVID numbers. To date there have been 6 positive cases connected with the school, but not necessarily people who have been on campus, but the State does require those to be reported. The State did an evaluation of the HVAC systems, they should be providing funds to purchase the necessary equipment to help with proper filtration. Shawn explained that 35 families have been provided with Hotspots, and the staff is working to identify and help those students that may be falling behind. Including the criteria within the Early Warning System will help with targeting the problem areas. Another area to highlight is the school has partnered with Street Food Institute and Road Runner food panty to serve about 100 families warm meals. The 80-day count is a 327, so losing about 20 students will affect the budget if legislation does not pass the Hold Harmless initiative. The school has received a $90,000 learning grant, which will enable the staff to buy additional devices and software. The grant will also provide stipends for the Homework diner. The last item Shawn wanted to mention is that the school will be holding an enrollment blitz to reengage students that have had to drop out during the year.

Questions:

How many students are struggling or dropped out?

We have identified 75 students who are struggling with either attendance or grades. There are various reasons, family members sick with COVID, students having to help the family financially. Targeted tutor is one of the activities that we will focus on to address this issue. Keeping track of the students will help to identify the issue areas as well. We really want to make sure that no student falls through the cracks. The biggest focus will be on the 11th and 12th grade students, to make sure they have the credits necessary to graduate in a timely manner. Shawn as well as other staff members would love any feedback/ideas from the board on how on school can help the students achieve success.

**Finance Committee report for November 2020**

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve the Financial statements for November 2020. Mark Walch seconded the approval. The motion passed unanimously.

**Revenues for November 2020**

* **Available Operating Funds $252,802.81**
* **Balance Sheet matches Bank reconciliation $251,234.99**

**Cash Disbursement Approval $391,373.47 –**

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve the cash disbursements for November 2020. Mark Walch seconded the approval. The motion passed unanimously.

**Questions:**

* Harris Computer- Apta accounting software - $11,200.95 - The accounting system is used by all Charter Schools and 50% of the schools did this under a group purchase, and it integrates with the states system. There will be an upgrade in the new year.
* Could it be possible the statement be sorted by amount instead of date? It is easier to view the numbers that way. Irene said she will take care of that. Higher dollar amounts will be first.

**RFR**

* RFRs submitted through November 30, 2020

**BAR (s) 5 bars**

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve the

BAR# 001-051-2021-0008-D, Fund 24301-CARES Act - $419, Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

BAR# 001-051-2021-0012-I, Fund 24301-CARES Act + $44,822, Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

BAR# 001-051-2021-0013-D, Fund 11000 - $4,931, Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

BAR# 001-051-2021-0014-M, Fund 11000 - Maintenance, Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

BAR# 001-051-2021-0015 M, Fund 11000 – Maintenance, Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

**Questions:**

When you say maintenance is it just to move money with a new zero change? Yes

Irene explained how money is moved and why it is required to have no negative amounts at the end of the year.

**Cash on hand** – Months of cash on hand is 1.12

Enrollment count is 321 and which stays within the budget of actual of 93%

**Findings for Last Year**

Audit year 2019 are listed as the same from previous meetings.

General fund detail $289,617.94

**Sierra Mapel RFK Community School Coordinator**

Sierra introduced herself and gave a brief update on the activities that she is doing this semester. She has conducted individual meetings with many of RFK partners and stakeholders to bring them up to speed and to convene a Community school council.

Sierra gave a presentation on a student developmental assets profile survey that was conducted at RFK this semester This is something the school has decided to integrate into the needs assessment this year. It is a survey that was created by a nonprofit called the Search Institute with over 2 decades of research done on 5 million youth grades 4 to 12. It is an evidence-based survey that was developed to look at 40 different criteria considered to be assets in the lives of young people. This is based on a resilience model and what factors are necessary to create resilience in kids. This is also a way to collect data on social emotional support and is an incredibly useful tool. Sierra explained that she was able to perform the survey with about 70% participation rate, which is considered a good turnout. It was powerful to gather such valuable data to guide the staff on how best to help support the students. It is through this knowledge we can design activities and programs that will address issue areas and really move the needle in the right direction. Sierra mentioned that RFK is the only Charter school conducting this survey at this time.

Sierra continued her report out by mentioning the Homework diner and how they are able to give stipends to the teachers that are running it, by combining grant money from several sources. The goal is to provide support through virtual space to families.

**Strategic Plan- general discussion of the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats)**

Lawrence Barela reviewed the 5 themes.

There were some comments from the board members and how their role as a member fits in with the strategic plan. Its it a conflict of interest and how do we gain some clarity? Robert commented that he would like to discuss this with each board member, who is interested in playing a larger role, in a more individual setting.

Clyde and Mark said they were interested in being involved with the school more.

**House keeping**

Tina reviewed the need for more board members to sign up for specific committees that are related to the roles and duties of a Governance Council member. Information was requested re: Committee responsibilities and meeting requirements as well as combining committees. It was explained that Audit committee must be a standing committee. Tina will provide committee responsibilities.

Tina reminded the council members to submit their updated bios and to complete all required training hours.

**Executive Director’s report**

Robert started his report by stating that the Charter has been renewed for another 5 years and expressed his appreciation to the council members for the role they all play in helping the school succeed.

The biggest concern weighing on everyone is when the students will be able to return to in person learning. The biggest issue is how to administer testing, because this will be impossible to do virtually, students need monitoring during crucial testing dates, and it would be too easy to look up test answers if done virtually and not on campus. To help address all of these issues that are emerging because of the pandemic and virtual learning and how students can be brought back to campus safely. Robert has enlisted the help of Albuquerque Interfaith to conduct training. Robert invited and encouraged council members to attend these trainings as they become available.

Robert continued by explaining how important the legislative session will be and all the advocacy that will be taking place to support the many bills that will be introduced to support the school as well as the South Valley area.

**Meeting adjourned**

Sister Agnes Kaczmarek a motion to adjourn the meeting. Clyde Ortiz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Robert F Kennedy Charter School

Governance Council Meeting

12/17/2020