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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 September 16, 2021**

**4:30 PM**

**Governance Council Members all virtual**:

**Roll Call: Chair:** Tina Garcia-Shams, Mark Walch (virtual), Sylvia McCleary, Lawrence Barela, Clyde Ortiz (virtual)

**Absent**: Stacey Vigil, Joseph Sanchez, Trey Hammond

**Yes:** Quorum

**Staff**: Robert Baade, Irene Sanchez, Aaron Arellano, Shawn Morris

**Guests: Josue Olivares** Executive Director of Rio Grande Community Development Corporation, Brittney Barreras District 12 Representative

**Approval of agenda**

Lawrence Barela made the motion to approve the September agenda. Sylvia McCleary seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval June meeting minutes**

Sylvia McCleary motioned to approve the August 2021 meeting minutes\*. Lawrence Barela seconded. The motion passed unanimously. \*Approval pending requested corrections/changes

**Public Comment**

Josue Olivares the Executive Director from Rio Grande Community Development Corporation attended to meeting to present what his organization is all about. Explaining that they help to develop programs and share with other communities. He shared a video of how they successfully incubate businesses. His organization identifies gaps and community needs. One of their approaches is to identify the most critical needs. They services about 110 business a year and are in the process of expanding. Currently they are partnering with the International District and understand how important it is to collaborate by working with Color Theory: for example, Siembra Leadership HS has integrated their curriculum to align with the Color Theory model. Josue went on to express that his organization is interested in looking at what activities will create the most impact in a community. Robert has given his support in many ways.

**Questions:**

***Please explain how you support and engage students and families?***

* Individuals interested in starting up a business will have a workspace set up for them, with access to WIFI to connect with coaches and mentors. There is a receptionist on site to answer phones and an area for storage.
* The idea is to create a work model of their business to test long term sustainability. We incubate a business for up to 5 years with goal to launch at the 6th year. Often are services our to help low income families find a sustainable career path.
* We help families look at their long-term retirement goals and help them invest their hard-earned savings into a viable business. It is crucial that we help them succeed to increase their investment. On the plus side we are helping to build skill sets needed to succeed.

***Do you ever present to HS students?***

* We haven’t had the opportunity to do that yet, the pandemic has slowed those plans down, but there is a waiting list and we will be able to do more once we expand.

***Do you have any success stories to share?***

* Yes, we have several start ups that have moved from catering and food trucks to a brick and mortar locations.

Josue explained that they have several partnerships, including RFK, to streamline the process to connect with students. He did mention that there is only an age restriction for students interested in working the commercial kitchen (need to be 16yrs)

Next guest on the agenda is Brittney Barreras, District 12 Rep, she introduced herself as a South Valley resident. She is interested in connecting with students to speak on behalf of the benefits of politics and wants to encourage the student voice. She expressed that she is more than willing to help find available funding solutions as well as come talk with students at RFK.

***Questions:***

***As a representative will you be able to be on the look out for legislation that could help or hurt Charter schools?***

* Yes, I have taken the opportunity to learn more about the educational system and the hurdles that the Charter schools face.

**Middle School** **High School Updates**

Aaron Arellano reported that students and staff at the middle school are now in the new portables and really enjoying the space. Both students and staff have been working on getting use to meeting again in person and it has been a big adjustment for many. It really is about reestablishing rituals and routines. The staff is working to meet each student where they are and providing support as needed. Daily reminders are given to the students regarding COVID safe practices, students are excited to see each other and most have been compliant. 22 students will have the opportunity to participate in a walking field trip executed by Cottonwood Gulch. In October students will participate in an overnight trip near Grants, and this opportunity has motivated students to step up their performance.

Aaron explained that the Student Council has reconvened and will head the school spirit week as well as taking over the daily announcements.

Aaron offered other updates:

* Linx construction will be setting up the green house area.
* The school is fully staffed
* Some of the students who attended the middle school after the Washington MS shooting have decided to go back to their home school and our staff have provided full support to those students during this difficult time.
* Adding more security cameras to provide a safer campus.

**Questions/Comments:**

***Why did the students who enrolled from Washington MS decide to go back?***

* We are not, sure but we have offered our full support

***Do you offer orientation as the Middle School level?***

* Yes, it is offered during advisory class

***Commenting on how the students are dealing with returning to school***- some students do have anxiety about learning in person again so the staff is trying to make the school a soft-landing place for them.

It is also important to note that we have been providing the staff with support with frequent check ins and offering any resources that they may need.

**High School Update**

Shawn Morris provided the high school updates; stating that 361 total students are enrolled, with 270 at the high school an 91 at the middle school, this takes into account students enrolling and disenrolling. There have been 2 COVID cases, with many students having to quarantine due to possible exposure. Shawn reported that the partnership with LULAC is ongoing, with about 9 students enrolled in the program. We are continuing to work on an additional location to provide the opportunity to students in the South Valley to enroll in the PSA course through LULAC, the current location is at the Career Enrichment Center.

PED has put out the latest reentry toolkit on September 14th, with all the revisions it is hard to keep pivoting but the changes have been implemented.

**Questions/Comments:**

***We did 15 months of virtual learning-will the schools be conducting assessments?***

* Yes, we just completed the assessments at the middle school level and should receive the data soon.
* At the high school level, we are pushing those assessments dates back a bit to give staff time to adjust:
  + Learning loss will be assessed
* We are currenting working with students to help prepare them for the PSAT testing.

***Viewing the data to see if the students did better or worse during the pandemic is essential as well as conducting a grade comparison. Interpreting the data in a correct manner is an important step in supporting the students.***

***Adjustment is the key to help identify the needs of the students and the staff is working hard to pivot and meet those individual students where they are.***

**Finance Committee Report**

Lawrence Barela stated that the committee convened to do a line-by-line review of the August financial reports and BARs, addressing any questions or concerns. Irene Sanchez presented pie charts with an explanation of the different expenses-(Other contract services 33% $177535.25), (Payroll & Benefits 55% $299,331.38), (All Supplies 10% $55,835.46), (Assets 2% $12,178.98). The idea is to start with a baseline comparison using the charts so that moving forward a bigger picture of the financials will emerge.

**Questions:**

***What is the definition of assets in the context of the school?***

* Assets include the purchase of computers, smart boards and once funding is released the school will purchase additional items.

**Vote:**

Sylvia McCleary made the motion to approve the finance committee report for August. Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Vote:**

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve the cash disbursement. Mark Walch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**BARs**

**Vote:**

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BARs 001-051-2122-0003-D, 001-051-2122-0004-I, 001-051-2122-0005-I, 001-051-2122-0006-T, 001-051-2122-0007-I, 001-051-2122-0008-M, 01-051-2122-0009-I, 001-051-2122-0010-I, 001-051-2122-0011-M, 001-051-2122-0011-M, 001-051-2122-0012-M, 001-051-2122-0013-M,001-051-2122-0014-M, 001-051-2122-0015-M, 001-051-2122-0016-M, which were presented and reviewed during the finance committee meeting. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR # 001-051-2122-0003-D, ($2,802). Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve the BAR #001-051-2122-0004-I, $4,432. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0005-I, $86,466. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0006-T $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0007-I, $9,616. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0008-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0009-I, $1,500. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0010-I, $300. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0011-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the

motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0012-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the

motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR #001-051-2122-0013-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR # 001-051-2122-0014-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR # 001-051-2122-0015-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve BAR # 001-051-2122-0016-M, $0. Tina Garcia-Shams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Vote:**

Sylvia McCleary made a motion to approve the Blanket BAR. Lawrence Barela seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**RFR**

* RFR submitted through August 30, 2021.

**Cash on hand** – Months of cash on hand is 2.61 months

Enrollment count is 361 (270 High School, 91 Middle School) which stays within the budget of actual of 101%

**Audit Findings – FY’2020**

6 findings, 1 repeat finding.

**Update on Financial Institutions**

Sylvia McCleary gave a brief update on the process of switching banking institutions. Sylvia, prior to this meeting, had brought in paperwork required to sign up with Sandia Credit Union and Nusenda. Robert reached out to Nusenda and they sent over a list of services they provide. Sylvia stated that she did research the top ranking banks/credit unions in the Albuquerque area; Nusenda is on that that list. Next steps would be to take a vote to decide if a meeting should take place between Robert, Irene, Mark and Nusenda. Is it better for RFK to move from Wells Fargo to a credit union. Sylvia stated she would be happy to initiate the meeting and will include Robert, Mark and Irene.

**Presenters at the GC meetings- discussion**

Robert spoke about potential presenters for upcoming Governance Council meetings: Explora, Junior Achievement, Cottonwood Gulch, Legislators who support RFK, Golden Apple (increasing the teacher pipeline). Mark suggested inviting parents and or community members. Robert did mention he has set up a series of listening sessions with the community to get a better idea of what the community’s response has been to the pandemic and what needs they may have. Another suggestion is the Sandia Foundation-David Pearcy. What about potential funders that could learn more about the school? We do have potential funders that are interested in the school-Kellogg, Thornburg. Richard Romero (consultant). Mid Rio Grande Council. Senator Padilla may be a presenter at the next meeting. Mark mentioned that it may be important to bridge the contacts Robert has by introducing them to the Governance Council members.

**Housekeeping**

* Board retreat on October 10
  + Mark went over the general agenda
* Encourage everyone to get their training hours
* Need to consider creating an Equity Council Committee and to go through Equity Training
* Council members are encouraged to think of people who would be a good fit for the board or getting involved with RFK
* Need to talk about attendance of board members and other responsibilities.

**Executive Director’s Report**

Robert stated that RFK does have some job openings. The person has been running the cafeteria is leaving to open a second restaurant. Robert is very happy for their success but will work quickly to fill that position. There has been some teaching staff turnover. A few teachers will be returning to APS. Enrollment is strong, the number is down a little bit and hope to have it back up by the 40th day. The budget may be decreased by $100k if the goal is not realized. It is important to pay attention to the 80-day count, if the school doesn’t grow to 400 the state allocation may not be there. Robert explained t there is (encumbered) money available and just waiting for authorization, to release it, to start many of the large school projects. Robert expressed that he is transitioning more of the daily operational work over to Shawn and Aaron and be a good support to them.

**Adjourn**

**Vote:**

Lawrence Barela made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sylvia McCleary seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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Robert F Kennedy Charter School

Governance Council Meeting

09/16/2021