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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, January 20, 2022**

**4:30 PM**

**All council members virtual:**

**Roll Call: Virtual:** Mark Walch, Sylvia McCleary, Lawrence Barela, Clyde Ortiz, Tina Garcia-Shams

**Excused Absences:** Trey Hammond, Joseph Sanchez

**Quorum:** Yes

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

**Approval of Agenda:**

Lawrence makes the motion with change to approve the January agenda. Sylvia seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of December meeting minutes:**

Lawrence makes a motion for approval of December 16th meeting minutes. Sylvia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment: Serenity Mesa Representative**

Jennifer Weiss-Burke, founder and director of Serenity Mesa has been working with Robert for a while. Robert was directed by the board at the time to work with individuals around the issue of heroin addiction. Students that are at Serenity Mesa are registered at RFK. Clyde shared info about an article that ran in the Albuquerque Journal about Serenity Mesa and was proud, as a RFK board member, about the relationship. RFK has sent staff to Serenity Mesa to work with students. Students there can only be there 90 days and they work with students ages 14-21.  Most do not have a high school diploma. The philosophy of the school is to focus on sobriety and academics to allow better chances of graduating and accommodating great future careers. Since Covid, Elliott has worked with the students at Serenity Mesa and participates in activities with kids that helps them receive credits. They are the students that we want to come from RFK– education is one way to help them get out of those challenges and lifestyles– they are worthy of getting their education. SWEPT is also a supporter of Serenity Mesa.

**Middle school update:**

Aaron is continuing to work through Covid issues. He was not able to share testing data as the state has extended the deadline for testing. The kids are behind on testing due to being sick and quarantined with Covid. The makeup plan didn’t work due to the APS cyber-attack.

The middle school is continuing to issue covid tests for students. If they are negative, they get to stay on campus. Vaccinated students with no symptoms may stay. Students in quarantine still have access to work posted online by teachers. Elliott Cook is now the new language arts teacher and long-term substitute. Ms. Juanita helps students with coping strategies with Covid and outside of Covid life situations.

**High School Update:**

Shawn has been starting to implement on-track graduation requirements. Figuring out graduation and will share in the Spring. The school was affected by APS cyber-attack. The biggest concern was the possibility of them getting into our financial system, payroll, etc. This would have been detrimental because RFK does not have the resources to pay any type of ransom. APS never reached out to let them know about the situation or how and if it was resolved. Robert believes RFK needs a seat at the APS table during times of cyber-attacks so they are aware fully of the situation. APS did not reach out to RFK with updates on how they were going to resolve the cyber-attack issues.

High school has had several cases of Covid but not enough to shut down. We may see a 1-2 week shut down in the future if cases continue to rise.

**Finance Committee Report for December 2021 - Discussion and Approval**

Lawrence makes the motion to approve the finance committee report for December. Sylvia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Cash Disbursement for December 2021 - Discussion and Approval**

Lawrence makes the motion to approve the cash disbursement for December. Sylvia seconds the motion The motion passes unanimously.

**Bars Approval 2022**

Sylvia makes the motion to approve BAR 001-051-2122-0028-I ,$9771. Lawrence seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

**School of First Choice and Strategic Plan Conversation**

Not going to proceed with the conversation without all board members present. Sylvia would suggest an afternoon session instead of a weekend. Monday 4-7 in the next couple of weeks. Mark will send out dates/information. Mark will also send out the 7 responses that he received on school of first choice. This will also be a strategic planning session.  Nothing has been done on this yet. Mark says that the board needs to have commitment and coordination to move things forward.  Robert said guidance is critical on how they implement strategic plans.

**Committee Groups- When and How**

Sylvia suggests 30 minutes at the next board to get organized.  Need to rotate committee conversations each meeting since we are all on more than 1 committee. Next meeting, we will schedule 30 minutes for the committee and come up with a plan and next steps for each committee.

**Equity Council**

Robert said Jennifer Cornish is willing to train RFK staff/board to do the Equity Training.  Shawn sent out a request and they are waiting for a reply.  State required an equity council to be established but they pushed out the deadline.  Robert wants to move forward to do the training with staff and board members.  Mark wants to know if we should do it together, but Robert believes the conversation would be different and probably better to do it separate.  At some point we would bring both groups together. Aaron said the equity council and community council have joined together and combined efforts.  Is the genesis if the Equity Council a finding RFK received? Robert shared that it always was a result of the Martinez Yazzie lawsuit that requires all schools to have an equity council.

**Executive Directors Report**

Currently our expenditures cannot be supported by the operational budget. We are overextended in the budget due to COVID, which means there will be contracts that won’t be renewed at the end of the year.  This specifically effects those that were hired short term to cover a lot of openings that were there because of COVID. We will create a budget framework and once legislation is completed we can move forward with the budget. We know there will be an increase in benefits cost for the school and the staff. Budget will need to be presented on a certain date so may have to call a special governing board meeting. Robert is also asking for capital outlay in the amount of $450K-$500K and operational funding in the amount of $100K -$150K. Kudos to Shawn and Aaron and the handling of covid and the transition is going well. Teachers and EAs are very committed to RFK morale is strong but there is frustration. Some staff have retired and some were let go because it wasn’t a good fit but they are looking at trying to find staff that will be a good fit for the school. People that work at RFK they love it because they are supported.

**Update on Bank Switch**

RFK Staff will take the next step with Nusenda. Robert and Irene will meet with Nusenda and other credit unions to decide about this.

**Adjourn**

Sylvia makes the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:03pm.

Robert F. Kennedy Charter School

Governance Council Meeting

1/20/22