



AGENDA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES VOTING MEETING
21st October, 2021, 6:30 PM
Google Meet link:
<https://meet.google.com/dqs-baqp-mwz>

1. **Called to order - 6.32pm**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance - [Flag](#)**
 - Lead by Mr.Rufo
3. **Attendance - Board of Trustees & Administration**

Board Trustees: D.Rufo (President – Presiding), E.Falcone, S.Glick, Y.François, G.Supplee, S.Akinfenwa, A.Waskiewicz, S.Nararahi, G.Queen
Administration: G.Guarino-Buli, K.Gruber; H.Rinker; M.Boyd; D.Cosme;
4. **Opening statements – Dan Rufo**
 - Process for New Business - please submit public comment to email - publiccomment@rak12.org
5. **Review & accept minutes from past meetings**
 - Motion to approve the **Minutes** of the **September 23 - Voting Meeting** - made by S.Glick, seconded by Y.François, all in favor, none opposed.
Motion carries
6. **Policy Reviews/Resolutions -**
 - **Board procedures - Second Reading**
 - Discussions held regarding required notices, voting procedures and requirements related to agenda and minutes. Questions from the September meeting were addressed.
 - Y.François inquired regarding the applicability of the Board procedures and Agenda preparation to Board Committee meetings and D.Rufo clarified that this only applies to Board Voting Meetings. Y.François thought that this should be explicitly specified in the documents. D.Rufo will ensure that both documents would be updated to reflect this.
 - **Board agenda preparation - Second Reading**
 - Discussions were held regarding agenda preparation. Questions from the September meeting were addressed. G.Guarino-Buli stated that as per feedback received from legal, that the agenda preparation document should have 2 line items regarding the approval of the current meeting’s agenda - first that it be approved

as published to the public and the second if there are changes needed after the agenda has been published out to the public.

- G.Buli also provided clarification as received from legal, about the notice for the Board meeting schedule in newspapers and that the requirement is that it needs to be published in newspapers once a year.
- The approval of prior meeting minutes needed to be added to the agenda preparation procedure.
- **Board Complaint Policy - First Reading**
 - Discussion was held regarding the Board complaint policy document which had its first reading in this meeting.
 - E.Falcone made some changes to pronouns to make it gender neutral
 - S.Narahari summarized the comments added to the page.
 1. The document has stated the word “resident” in multiple places which should be removed as it is not relevant for a school.
 2. Regarding the line “all grievances would be handled with the intention of all parties involved in the conflict to consensus”, can we make this language reflect all kinds of complaints, concerns, questions and not just related to conflict
 3. Anything raised via public comment is available for the general public. What is the procedure regarding complaints/concerns/queries raised via email and their transparency? Are these expected to be anonymous? Can we add some language to clarify that?
 - YFran ois had a more general question/comment. The procedure is structured as an escalation process which goes all the way to the Board. What about issues pertaining to operational processes and why would that be escalated to the Board? Isn’t the expectation that such issues be addressed at the highest level by the CEO and only be escalated if it pertains to matters of strategy? D.Rufo clarified that the Board operating policy is and has always been to provide governance to the school and to ensure that the CEO and staff are acting in accordance with the vision of RA. If there is a complaint raised to the level of the Board, the Board’s responsibility would be to evaluate if the CEO and staff followed policy with fidelity and did not break any RA policies. If they did break policies, the Board would figure out how to rectify the situation. If they didn’t the Board would respond with an appropriate response.
Y.Fran ois responded that the policy does not clarify that the responsibility of the Board is not resolution but more with evaluation of the resolutions provided by the school. D.Rufo

shared the same feedback and has suggested that the Board as a group makes the necessary updates to reflect these changes.

7. Committees Meeting updates – Committee Chairs

- Development Committee – As M.Grenier was not present; updates were provided by G.Buli
 - Operation Greencoat campaign concluded successfully.
 - Current projects:
 1. Sale of Gertrude Hawk chocolates by the Environment Club.
 2. Fruit sale for the Holidays by the COEXIST club.
 3. The Academy Council managed a stall at the football game to raise funds for the Homecoming dance.
 - Preparations are in progress for the end of year Giving Tuesday in end of November.
 - Counselling Dept is preparing for the thanksgiving and winter holiday program that supports families.
 - Denise has taken over the management of fundraising components of the website.
 - We have a new staff liaison - Stephanie Funston is working with the Development committee.
- Curriculum & Achievement - D.Rufo
 - Committee met earlier in the month and finalized that the primary goal for the year is to review curriculum to ensure they are as inclusive as possible to align with our school's commitment to provide our equitable, equal instructions and experiences.
 - We will work with the EE committee and Strategic Planning committee.
 - We will provide the slide to the strategic committee as per Yvan's slide.
- Standing Executive Session on HR – E.Falcone
 - We had notice of one separation
 - We have a few folks that are out on leave but have long term subs or internal transfers covering these positions
 - We have a couple of hiring needs and looking for 5th grade math, HS math, kindergarten PCA and we are looking for help from the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU). G.Buli provided some clarification here.
 - We are always looking for building subs, non-instructional support
 - We came up with some ideas to help with employee engagement and as a morale boost.
 - A.Waskiewicz will run with some ideas to execute ways to validate and confirm that the Board is there even though we are not physically able to be in the meeting.

- We addressed our strategic plan goals and committee charter and will be sending over to Y.François
- Action Items and Measurables will be circulated to the committee
- D.Rufo mentioned the change in title for the committee for public knowledge
- Based on topics discussed, this is not a committee open to the public. Suitable items are discussed in the board committee report but meetings are more executive in nature.
- Y.François mentioned a follow up from Finance to HR committee.
- G.Buli clarified that the matter was related the disbursement of bonus was shared with finance and Finance requested that the HR be the second committee to review this in an executive session.
- HR to meet in an ad hoc executive session next week to run through the document.
- D.Rufo and S.Glick clarified that the vote to approve the disbursement of bonus in November will proceed as planned as long as the overall allocation meets the budget. Changes to be suggested if needed by HR
- Finance Committee – S.Glick
 - We are still waiting for the 6/30/2021 Fiscal year end audit results and will be made available to the board for discussion
 - Tution invoicing started on 10/13. Most receivables to start coming in by the end of the month
 - We are monitoring PDE 363 tuition rates relative budget rates. 7 out of 19 School Districts are yet to reveal their rates.
 - Condo budget is increasing by 6% and yet to be voted on by the Franklin Commons board. Impact from that discussion will be the annual increase to the CAM charges which has already been accounted for.
 - The matter of a Single Audit item is still open. We are still waiting for the response from our auditor. We have not budgeted for this but will be around \$20K impact.
 - Disbursement of bonuses to be approved for payout in November. There is no impact to the budget as it is already accounted for. Detailed review of the line item allocation to be done by the HR Executive Committee
 - Disbursement of Fiscal Year 2021 Staff Bonuses - **VOTE**
 1. S.Glick made a motion to approve the disbursement of staff bonuses in the last paycheck of November
 2. Y.François seconded the motion
 3. All in favor - All
 4. Opposed - None
- Strategic Planning Committee – Y.François
 - Committee met on 10/14

- We continued conversation on our communication framework and completed mapping the mode of communication and audience and are looking for opportunities to streamline this work.
- We are also looking for opportunities to optimize meetings to help give time back to staff. Committee agrees that the meetings currently in place are as needed. But we would like to continue reviewing further to optimize this.
- We have not talked about branding yet
- We have a couple of follow up which need closure
- Legislative Committee – G.Queen
 - Committee did not meet this month due to scheduling conflicts
- Equality & Equity – S.Narahari
 - Minutes are summarized and brief so more details can be received as part of updates from Principal and CEO Reports so the updates are more impactful.
 - We discussed the ongoing projects at the various grade levels.
 - We discussed new projects being done by clubs
 - We continued talking about strategic goals towards building a strong school culture.
 - One of the goals is to work with C&A to keep our curriculum current and relevant to our equity goals
 - Committee has not started working on the action items yet. Heather recommended that we review the action items that came out of the MSA process for better alignment with that strategic vision
 - One of the additional items under new business was related to staff training and how to consolidate staff training and learning - more to follow.
 - DRufo - As a board, we feel strongly about the work being done by the E&E and the staff and the clubs. We want to state that the Board is behind it and do support it and ask folks to attend the trainings about this and participate in the initiatives
 - If we have a calendar of events which can make public to everyone and specifically to the board so more folks can attend
- Business Manager’s Report –Report is in then Board Drive
 - Staff roster by Business Manager - **VOTE**
 - SNarahari made a Motion to approve the staff roster
 - Y.Francois seconded the motion
 - All in favor - all
 - Opposed - none
 - Motion passes

8. Administration Reports

- High School Principal Report - M.Boyd

- We continued having some opportunities to discuss mental health concerns
- We had a senior project focussed on exercise and mental health.
- That was the focus home base lessons
- On 11/11, 9th grade QPR training through CCIU. Its a national eminence based suicide prevention program
- Continued education - Google classrooms have been in place to help with students who have had to be virtual
- Large group meetings are being facilitated through Google Meet to reduce the risk of having large crowds together and close contact tracking.
- Previous week was our spirit week for Homecoming
- Friday night - was our first ever Home football game. Community came together to support.
- Saturday night - HS had their homecoming dance indoors.
 1. In lieu of a photo booth, there was a pedestal with a camera doing a 360 degree video which the students enjoyed
- Friday - During the school day, we had the Spanish festival for K-12
- HS had their PEP rally to recognize the Fall Athletes
- Senior had their annual dance
- Last month - reported on a new initiative called “Knights to work” which is an internship program in May
- Numerous applications were received. 10 students were selected through a lottery to be part of the pilot programme.
- T&L - things have been hard due to folks being out due to Covid related issues. Coverage has been a challenge. Teams have been supportive and stepping up to cover classes and kids are continuing learning
- Formal observations have begun and will continue through winter and spring
- 10th /11th grades took the PSATs
- 12th grade participated in the SAT school day
- HS will be preparing for first trimester exams in Nov
- D.Rufo - Is the coverage burden related to numbers? M.Boyd mentioned that this is taking up the prep time so it is causing staff to eat into their after work hours.
- Y.Francois - we spent time talking about awareness of mental health for students. Have we spent enough time talking about mental health for staff and what else can be done
- M.Boyd - has the mental health of staff in focus but resolution is a challenge and admin is doing what they can to help with the situation.
- S.Narahari - gave a shout out to the football team for helping with the BLM Mural Panels

- M.Boyd - Football helped with the measurements of the panels and art teachers are prepping and some the letters have been given to the clubs and painting is underway
- G.Supplee expressed eagerness to go into school to see it. D.Rufo to share mockup with new Board members
- Middle School Principal Report – Heather Rinker
 - For social and emotional health updates, our guidance counsellor has been running lessons for the students and will go into early November to help with the skills which are in high need.
 - She will be starting social groups for some students based on need.
 - Education
 1. 7th and 8th grade teachers spent time on how to streamline google classroom for parents to be able to find consistencies
 2. This will be adopted by 5th and 6th grades as well if this works well
 3. Grade level google classrooms similar to HS have been set up to follow a student from 5th to 8th to get updates on that grade
 - Unique exp - second grade level meeting was held virtually
 1. Were able to do pbis raffles with couple of students being able to win prizes-
 2. 7th and 8th grades were able to watch mini videos about club offerings and sign ups have started through google forms
 3. Lists are being consolidated to get a schedule together for some extra curricular engagement
 4. Upcoming Events
 - a. - 5th and 6th grade Fall fest on 10/29 outside with some games, music in a relaxed setting
 - b. 11/5 - 7th and 8th grades will have something similar
 - c. Staff members K.Waser and K.Groff have been coordinating these events
 - Strategic planning - H.Rinker is still working on MSA Accreditation and making sure to tie in committee goals and action items with those of the MSA goals.
 - T&L - Staff have been supporting each other everyday in coverage, emotional support and helping each other where needed
 - Formal observations have begun with great feedback so far
 - MS Students have been taking MAP Testing
 - H.Rinker expressed appreciation for the staff for all the work being done and all their hard work despite the frustration.

- D.Rufo stated that we have only been in school for 2 months but it feels longer. One of the items in the MS Principal was to bring 5,6,7,8 together and asked on how that was progressing
- H.Rinker stated that this has started at the teacher level with respect to classroom, grading, events and expectations. We will soon be able to continue this work with the students using our clubs.
- With Coexist we will be able to have 7th and 8th graders work with 5th and 6th to explain the club goals
- We are also honing on some repeated behaviors we are seeing in MS and trying to get the climate and culture group back up along with some very focussed groups with some 5th to 8th grade students who will be a good fit for this group to figure out how to help curb some of the behaviors
- For H.Rinker personally, her vision has been shared with the teachers and the process has begun
- Y.Francois observed that one teacher had mentioned in the retreat that she wanted to see some structure to the google classroom and is happy to see the improvements being done and that we are paying attention to the feedback received.
- S.Narahari gave a shout out to the seamless transition between onsite to remote learning and appreciate the planning and efforts done by the teachers
- Elementary School Principal Report – Kendra Gruber
 - For social and emotional health
 1. The PBIS prize wagon has been very popular among the students and they look forward to this and incentivizing positive behavior
 2. ES had a school-wide PBIS reward with an extra recess and crazy sock day with full credit to Jen Kelly’s efforts to ensure students are getting their PBIS points
 3. Still utilizing Camp Tinder to use in Homebase for social and emotional learning in the classroom.
 - For continuity of education -
 1. Teachers are using google classroom to support student learning and also updating it daily
 - For unique experiences
 1. We had a fire safety week in Oct with presentations from the fire company and was made available via Google classroom and meet for remote students
 2. Oct - Social Science resources were distributed to teachers highlighting on Hispanic month and Indigenous Day
 3. We had a school wide Spanish festival

4. We have the Halloween parade next week organized by Ms.Keller. Pumpkins for decorating will be delivered and hallways would be decorated
- Strategic planning -
 1. We kicked off the Elementary Equality and Equity initiative last week with members of the E&E committee from ES coming together outlining what they want this to look like.
 2. The group had discussions on how to bring in resources and tools from Coexist to help have conversations at the elementary level for them and how to help students and teachers
 - T&L -
 1. Staff are supporting each other with classroom coverage and going above and need to help student needs
 2. Formal observations are starting in upcoming weeks
 3. First group of students have completed with MAP testing
 - G.Supplee expressed appreciation and thanks to see some of the festive traditions being brought back
 - D.Rufo is excited to see E&E initiatives coming to Elementary school.
 - D.Rufo enquired how K.Gruber was faring being new to RA and with the new role
 - K.Gruber expressed positivity despite the hurdles and gave a shout out to the teachers for focusing on what's best for the students and to the administration for the support and help with checking in with her and sharing their knowledge and resources
- CEO Report – Dr.Gina Guarino-Buli
 - G.Buli expressed thanks to the principals for the detailed reports and it has been a huge help to have the three principals be able to support staff
 - One of the questions regarding the stress on staff has indeed been related to the numbers and Zavia has been great in looking for new applicants to fill in the open positions
 - New staff have jumped right in to the culture
 - In full transparency, we are seeing real concerns with regards to discipline of students but while our #1 focus has been on being restorative and character building and their development, there are some behaviors which are required to be addressed by negative consequences.
 - Dealing with the negative behaviors and consequences is one of the factors adding to the stress and playing into the time and energy for the staff. But there is an understanding of the reason why these behaviors are persisting and staff are being patient and

helping kids get back to normalcy after the loss of 2 years of normal school.

- Teachers are being encouraged to take breaks and help the students reset.
- P&D for tomorrow is being kept short where teachers can take one session and then leave early instead of doing a full day, so they can get some personal time off
- Students are leading training to the staff based on feedback from staff on how to deal with/manage certain situations that they have not been able to deal with before. It reinforces the culture at RA where student voices are heard.
- Waitlist numbers - we are seeing more attrition than typical numbers and this is indicative of impatient cultural expectations as stated in the reasons.
- Y.Francois asked a question about the discipline issues and this is an area of concern because for many kids the school which was the main support structure was not there. He also suggested that we don't have to find resolution by ourselves but we could look at getting outside assistance to help aid the school and helping with this. This could be something which could be brought to the finance committee for consideration
- Y.Francois also asked about the status of the vaccination policy that was voted in the last meeting.
 1. G.Buli clarified that 4 staff numbers not in compliance (vaccinated or submitted request for exemption with testing) but Nov 1st seems to be a good date to meet the deadline
- A.Waskiewicz asked if there was any more guidance from Chester County on contact tracing and pool testing and if it's on track
 1. G.Buli suggested that we were approved for pool testing and consent forms are ready to go and waiting for training sessions to get the access codes. The first day for staff to aid in testing is 11/11
 2. The pandemic team and admin team have been looking at the response from Close Contacts vs number of kids coming positive, it appears that vaccinated students are not coming back positive on the PCR. It seems to be that vaccinated kids becoming positive has been more due to outside exposures
 3. Admin is considering allowing vaccinated kids who are close contacts to be allowed to return with the rapid test instead of a PCR.
 4. Staff will still need to get a PCR regardless of vaccination because they have been coming back positive with the PCR

5. The time frame for the testing is still not discussed so it would become a matter of monitoring for symptoms and allowing them to take the rapid test sooner.

- D.Rufo wanted to reiterate that we had committed to student and staff mental health and appreciates Gina's efforts to push staff to take care of their needs and that the Board supports the CEO and Gina's efforts

9. New Business

- Committee Assignments - we will wait as we are missing members
- M.Grenier who is the co-chair of the Development Committee needs to step down. D.Rufo invited other board members who might be interested.
- Committee members and votes will be deferred to the November meeting

10. Public comment

- There was no public comment via email or virtually.

11. D.Rufo stated that the board would be meeting in an executive session for real estate matters, CEO Review, some student matters as well a legal matter.

12. Adjournment -

- Y.Francois made a motion to adjourn the meeting
- GQueen seconded the motion
- Meeting was adjourned at 7.58pm