

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Riverview Charter School  
January 28, 2021 6:00pm, Riverview/Zoom**

**Mission:** *Riverview Charter School's mission is to create a small, diverse learning community that actively engages students in meaningful and innovative learning experiences. Emphasizing "learning by doing," family and community involvement, and engaged citizenship, Riverview is committed to nurturing the whole child and preparing each student for a global society.*

**Members Present:**

Mary Jordan Lempesis, Katherine Ferguson, Lamarr Cooler, Arthur O'Kelley, Mindy Farris, Julia Wittchen-Price, Trey Rivers, MJ Simmons, Carol Smalls-Jenkins, Lauren Kelly, Reece Bertholf

**Leadership Team Present:** Sarah Cox, Liz O'Brien, AK Harper, Donna Haram-Deines

**Public Present:**

52 participants via Zoom.

**Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:04

**Public Session**

Agenda approved.

We are in compliance with Freedom of Information Act. Staff, parents, RCS community at large, BCSD, and news outlets notified of meeting via email at 12:00pm on January 27, 2021. Notice posted to school 12:00pm January 27, 2021.

Public Comment non agenda items:

Lamarr Cooler

Patrick Kelly

**Financial Report:** Lamarr Cooler, Treasurer

As of December 31, 2020 the cash balance for Riverview Charter School was \$1,862,764. Accounts Receivable from students totals \$19,607. Due from Government Units total \$74,705. This represents funds due RCS from USDA for the period September 2020 through December 2020 for food related expenses under the USDA expanded Summer Food Service Program. Year to Date Revenue for the six months period ended December 31, 2020 was \$3,564,348 vs. Budget of \$4,025,451. Base Student Funding year to date is \$3,359,594. Over the last six months RCS has been receiving \$560,000 per month from the Beaufort County School District. Starting January 2021, RCS will receive \$664,000 per month. Based on the increased amount RCS should receive \$7,343,550 for the 2020-2021 fiscal year compared to the budgeted amount of \$7,121,807. Year to Date Expenses total \$3.7 million vs. Budget of \$4.0 million. Salaries and Benefits total \$2.8 million vs. the budget of \$2.9 million. Total Expenses for the six months period ended December 31, 2020 exceeded Total Revenues by \$183 thousand.

Lamarr Cooler, Treasurer presented a proposal from the Interim Director and Kevin McGuire (Technology Services) for the purchase of 120 Apple iPads. RCS currently has 250 iPads available for K-5 testing and i-Ready. RCS needs 320 iPads for MAP testing for grades 2<sup>nd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> plus 40 iPads needed for MAP Fluency testing in grades K-1, plus 10 additional backup iPads. Due to the number of iPads loaned to students in grades K-5 required for virtual instruction, RCS needs the additional 120 iPads for required testing this year. The purchase of the iPads were not budgeted in the 2020-2021 budget.

Lamarr Cooler made the motion to approve the purchase of 120 Apple iPads at a total cost of \$30,080 plus tax. Mary Jordan Lempesis seconded the motion.

Motion approved by unanimous vote.

**Directors Search:**

Katherine Ferguson reports John Williams has posted. On track to close applications February, 5<sup>th</sup>. Please apply by closing date.

Lauren Kelly asks question about search- Lauren asked about the dynamics of the search committee and what leadership was asked to be on the search committee?

**Directors Report:**

Interim Director Sarah Cox thanked teachers for seamlessly implementing all of the additional COVID safety procedures we adopted: procedures include but were not limited to: 100% temperature checks, specials classes on a 4 week rotation.

The teachers continue their commitment to our students by teaching simultaneously to their virtual and onsite students.

COVID statistics since returning to our onsite hybrid model after Christmas:

33 students who were close contacts, 3 students who test positive for COVID, 10 teachers who were close contacts and quarantined appropriately per the CDC recommendations, and 3 teachers who have tested positive and were properly quarantined during their illness.

Today we had 5 teachers out due to Covid related reasons of those 5; 4 will return to work on Monday. 1 who is not scheduled to return until February 8<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, we had 4 other teachers out today due to various reasons non-Covid related.

9 teachers February 12<sup>th</sup>

This past Monday, members of the school leadership team met with members of the Medical Advisory Committee. Again, we grateful for their recommendations and willingness to help us to continue to remain open safely. Per their recommendations and in keeping with CDC guidelines we will continue to use the 14 day quarantine period for staff and students. If a student or staff is exhibiting symptoms or awaiting results of a COVID test we ask that students refrain from coming to school until the 14 day period is up or a negative test is received, as well as continue to communicate any Covid related information with the school. During our meeting on Monday, we also discussed vaccinations and will continue to monitor the vaccination process closely on behalf of our staff.

Virtual Students by grade level:

K = 7

1st = 16

2nd = 16

3rd = 19

4th = 15

5th = 11

6th = 23

7th=12

8th=17

Total= 136

Total Enrolled: 682

Total Onsite: 546

**Open Enrollment:**

We have 3 more days to apply for open enrollment. Our number of applications is lower than where we were this time last year; however, we continue to use our same marketing campaign to spread the word throughout the community. Some of the actions we did include: postcards and this year we added a QR code that when scanned took you directly to the application; press releases; ads in the Gazette for 2 weeks; banners hanging in downtown and Port Royal; social media push; weekly ads with the Chamber of Commerce; ads on Gullah radio; a Facebook boosted that targeted people within a 20 mile radius; and billboards throughout the county.

371 Total applications

138 Total kindergarten applications

29 Total claimed priority for kindergarten

Last year: 640 applications, 216 for kindergarten, 47 students claimed priority These numbers were prior to screening for disqualifications due to re-applications, zoning, and priority claims.

555 Total number of re-enrollment applications

Current enrollment:

Last year: 699

We will have preliminary lottery procedures for the board to consider in our future meetings.

In keeping the best interest of the school in mind, we believe maintaining the full virtual Fridays for the remainder of the trimester would benefit teachers, students, and the quality of instruction for all stakeholders. The optimal approach would be to maintain the current hybrid model we are using now until the end of the trimester.

However, the motion before us for a half day model on Fridays; using this approach students receive the onsite learning that the board so desperately wants to maintain, as well as provide teachers with time in the afternoon to reach their virtual students and maintain the many responsibilities they have to do this school year.

Why stay virtual on Friday:

1. Supports our teachers needs
2. Teaching two platforms
3. Reaching students who are virtual
4. Reaching students who may be struggling or missed something during the school week
5. Re-teaching opportunities
6. Small group learning opportunities
7. Time to focus on creating high quality virtual lessons and record lessons
8. Time to provide valuable feedback on various assignments for both virtual and onsite students; essentially time to grade assignments and maintain course work for students
9. The current model allows for optimal cohorting; we have some employees who are 4 day week employees and we are able to maintain a tight schedule keeping students in small groups and teachers in as minimal exposure as possible
10. It allows for the current 4 week specials rotation

Questions for Mrs. Cox- Lauren Kelly asked if we could send a mid year climate survey to the faculty and staff.

**Chairman's report:**

Chair Reece Bertholf updated the board on a board retreat date. He decided to send the group a google poll to nail down a date in February. He would also like to add additional committees to the board: Bylaws, personnel policy, leadership structure and operations.

Chairman Bertholf opened discussion on ½ day learning for upcoming Friday's and coming up with an alternative to the full 5 day model which is supposed to start on 2/8/21.

Interim Director Cox recommends reconsidering that model (as stated in directors report and voting to remain on a 4 day hybrid model until 3/11/21.)

Mary Jordan Lempesis asked about keeping Friday's virtual instead of going back full time F2F or ½ day Friday's. At this moment DHEC COVID numbers are still very high.

Director Cox goes back over number of virtual students in each grade (listed in report above.)

Chairman Bertholf states this trimester ends March 11<sup>th</sup> and if we did move forward with ½ day school Friday learning would be from 8:30-11:30 or 12:00. This would be changing December motion of going F2F all 5 days.

Mary Jordan Lempesis makes a motion to remain in our current hybrid (4 days on site and Friday virtual) until the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester March 11<sup>th</sup>. Trey Rivers seconds the motion.

**Public Comment:**

Amelyah Ezra Israel-Dad

Joanna McKnight

Shannon Duffy

Public comments closed and board discussion is opened:

Lamarr Cooler asks Sarah Cox if we could reach out to parents moving forward. Lauren Kelly requests teachers receive a survey also.

Chairman Bertholf calls for a vote on Mary Jordan Lempesis' motion. Board vote is unanimous for extending virtual Friday's with no action on the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester until we have further information from staff and parents.

**Minutes from the 1/11/2021 board meeting are reviewed.** Carol Smalls-Jenkins makes a motion to approve the minutes. Mary Jordan Lempesis seconds.

**Next Board Meeting**

February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 6pm

**Executive Session**

Personnel Discussion

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.