RLOACS Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes January 19, 2016

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| Present:   Absent: | Dr. Rob McBrayer, Chair; Eunice Spilliards, Vice-Chair; Sheree Darien, Treasurer; Amleht Alston; Anne Bridgers; Gregory Chambers; Sergio Nuno; Dr. Karen Wicks, Executive Director; Les Wicks, Facilities Development; Bill Moser, Kelly-Moser Consulting (phone), Dr. LaQuandra Stevenson, Assistant Principal; Brian Morse, Assistant Principal; Ryan Floyd, STEM/PBL Coordinator  Brandi Freeman, Secretary; Pershawn Patterson |
| Venue: | Student Dining Hall |
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A quorum was present.

* **Old business:** 
  + **Open Meeting** - Chair

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Sheree Darien made a motion to start the meeting; Eunice Spilliards seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

* + **Approval of Minutes of November 17, 2015 Board Meeting**  – A motion was made by by Eunice Spilliards and seconded by Anne Bridgers to accept the minutes of the November 17th Board Meeting, and the motion carried.
* **New business:** 
  + **RLOA New Mission Statement** - The Chair read the mission statement.
* **Finance Report for November/December 2015** – Bill Moser, discussed at length changes in the November Finance Report via phone. Gregory Chambers questioned the logic of adjusting the approved budget throughout the school year. Bill explained that the budget is a living document which requires significant updating within the first 2-3 years until things stabilize, noting plans to overspend the current budget by $93k pending reimbursements inclusive of construction costs. Adjustments allow the board to see the actual major changes as they occur as well as the real time budget and fund balance. For example, Title I reimbursements are expected as early as next month. Gregory Chambers questioned the fact that the Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet do not reflect Title I and IDEA assets. Eunice Spilliards made a motion to approve the November/December budget pending an amended December P&L and Balance Sheet to reflect Title I and IDEA assets, and Amleht Alston seconded the motion. The motion carried.
  + **Update on Building, Finance, and Architectural Work** – 1) Modular Buildings: Inspection is set for this Friday, January 22, 2016. 2) New Campus: The Anticipation Bonds timeline was issued to the board members. $300k is currently being sought to make progressive payments to architects and engineers to complete pre-construction obligations. This is a time-sensitive component to be in alignment with the proposed 2017 opening date. Les reported confidently all funding sources would be approached until secured.
  + **Election of Officers –** Board officers were nominated and elected as follows: Sheree Darien nominated Rob McBrayer as Chair; seconded by Amleht Alston. Rob McBrayer nominated Eunice Spilliards as Vice-Chair, seconded by Anne Bridgers, Anne Bridgers nominated Sheree Darien as Secretary; seconded by Eunice Spilliards, and Sheree Darien nominated Greg Chambers as Treasurer; seconded by Anne Bridgers. All motions carried unanimously.

**School Updates -**

* **Enrollment:** As of January 19th, 551 students are enrolled with a goal of 600.
* **2016-17 School Calendar:** The board reviewed and approved the 2016-17 School Calendar as submitted. Gregory Chambers made a motion to approve the calendar and it was seconded by Sergio Nuno. The motion carried.

* **Marketing:** RLOACS will be hosting a men’s breakfast on February 17th. Food is being provided by Randy Horton. Coffee with the Principal will also be held on Wednesday, February 24th, 8:30-10:30am. Board members were invited to attend.
* **Literacy:** Dr. Wicks provided the board with a copy of the Student Treasure Books which was a publication of 5th graders’ writing and full color illustrations. Student Treasures consist of poems students have written and illustrated in the form of a class book. K-6 classes participated in creating their own class books.
* **The board was provided a handout listing additional school updates (see below). The meeting was concluded with a presentation made by the attending school officials Dr. LaQuandra Stevenson, Brian Morse and Ryan Floyd.**
* **New Modular Buildings:** Delisa Clark, Office of School Facilities (OSF) Director, is doing the final inspection on the two new modular buildings on Friday, January 22nd, 10:30am.
* **State Testing Schedule:** We received an assessment schedule on January 12th. All state testing will be administered online. We did a trial run on January 13th for grades 3-8 of all students doing a mock test of SC READY online and had no technological glitches, so that’s promising!
  + End of course exams in English I, Algebra I, Biology, and History for high school students were administered the week of January 11th.
  + The English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS) will be administered February 2 – March 18.
  + ACT WorkKeys (grade 11) will be administered March 2-16.
  + SC College and Career READY Assessments (SC READY) in English Language Arts and Mathematics (new test for grades 3-8) will be administered April 26 through May 6.
  + SC Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) tests for science and social studies (grades 4-8) will be administered May 11-19.
* **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Formative Assessments in Reading and Math:** Spring administration will be in March through the first week of April. The district will review our students’ scores on this administration and compare them to Spring 2015. My understanding is that the district is expecting *a minimum of one to one and-a-half year’s growth*. Our focus is to exceed this growth goal, knowing that for students to achieve more than one year’s growth in a single year when they are 2-3 years behind is extremely challenging. The leadership team’s mantra is *personal excellence every day, support, and accountability*.
* **2014-15 Annual Report** was submitted to the district in mid-December 2015. A copy is in the Board’s packet. The information in this report will appear in the school’s State Report Card.
* **Status of Charter Amendments:** The district has not yet provided feedback on the amendments (revised enrollment numbers, new campus location, revised Educational Program). I understand from other school leaders that they have not received feedback on their amendments either. The district’s timeline of school reviews appears to have been abandoned. The new superintendent has hired a national expert consultant to critique the district staff and Board. School leaders believe no decisions will be made on amendments until after that review has been completed.
* **Performance Framework—Financial Rating:** In a phone conversation with Dr. Wicks, Bobby Rykard, the district’s Director of Performance Management, said that we have met every indicator in the financial section of the performance rating for FY2015.
* **January Edition of the Student Newspaper:** A copy is in the Board packet.
* **2016-17 School Calendar:** A draft of the 2016-17 School Calendar is in the Board packet for review.
* **Spring Talent Show:** Students are already preparing for the Spring Talent Show, which will be held on Thursday, May 19th, 6:00-8:30pm.
* **Elementary School:** Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Meeting focus is on the usage of Imagine Learning for literacy, upcoming award ceremonies for achievement during the first semester, and lesson planning. The instructional support team is working closely with teacher to ensure that they are using best practices for planning and instruction.
* **Middle-High School:** 
  + ***Testing:*** Students participated in State End of Course (EOC) Test Blitz for 3 weeks. Extra teachers were in classrooms to assist students in better preparing for EOC exams in English, Algebra I, History, and Biology, which were administered the week of January 11th. Middle school teachers are working with administration to prepare a standardized test prep plan of action. Professor Lauren Rotella from USCB completed an “Expectations for Entry-Level College Math” talk with Algebra II students. The children were surprised by the level of math required on day one; however, the “pre-test” included lessons that Mrs. Vasiu and Dr. Adesso taught during the year. It might be wise to do this earlier in the semester, as it seemed to have a profound effect on how students viewed the relevance of Algebra instruction.
  + ***Athletics:*** Three basketball teams (a boys’ middle school team, boys’ and girls’ varsity teams, and cheerleaders are competing with schools around the state. The athletic department is working on plans for soccer, track and field, and softball for the spring.
* **Literacy:** The literacy team, led Mrs. Moss, is providing individualized coaching for instructors based on professional development needs. Ms. Jones is focusing on guided reading procedures in K-6, which will allow teachers to meet the needs of students in small group and centers settings. Ms. Ager is focusing on providing writing support in preparation for end-of-year writing assessments. Mrs. Moss is focusing on data-based curriculum development in 7-12. As a team, they are planning and working together to meet the needs of teachers so that they will be better prepared to meet the diverse needs of our students. They do not make the assumption that certified English teachers have been trained to teach reading and writing. They are constantly looking for practical ways to provide on-the-job training in this delicate and difficult area.
* **Professional Development:** January 15th professional development sessions addressed the most pressing needs of instructional staff.

Royal Live Oaks Academy

Professional Development January 15, 2015

1:30pm-3:30pm

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| GRADE LEVELS | TOPIC | FACILITATOR | ROOM | What to Bring |
| K-6 | Guided Reading/Small Group Instruction | Jennifer Schoenherr  Angela Mason  Buffie Rigdon  Amanda Gunderson  Doris Jones | 2A | Student Groupings  Notebook  POSITIVE ATTITUDE |
| 7-8 | Academic Enhancement | Latasha Blathers | 8B | Action Plan  Content Standards  Workbooks |
| 9-11 | Parent-Teacher Relations  Long Range Planning | Brian  Morse | Computer | Grade Book  Parent Communication Logs  Course Syllabus/Letters |
| Interventionists | RtI Data  MAP Training  Individual Goal Setting  Continuum of Learning | Amy Kaufman | SPED Room | Bring Laptops  Chromebook |
| ESOL | ACCESS | Kattia Chaves | ESOL Room |  |
| Paraprofessionals | SPED/ Behavior Monitoring | Precious Barr  Jan Lee | 6A | YOU |

* **Young Scholars and ESOL Programs:** 
  + ***High School Young Scholars*** will be participating in the High School Model United Nations February 4-6.  Eight students will be representing Hungary, El Salvador, and Kenya in the General Assembly and Human Rights Council.  Intense country studies and protocol practices have been prepared in the Young Scholars class.   Mr. Dixon has established high expectations for RLOA to receive a second award for participation in this important event for high-level thinkers.
  + ***ESOL*** students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their language growth in the areas of Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening on the ACCESS 2016 test, which will be administered February 2-12.  The ESOL team has been working diligently targeting each area as needed to ensure more students’ success.  Our goal is to exit more students from the program this year and promote more students to the monitoring status.
* **Project Lead the Way/Science Technology Engineering Arts Math/Problem-Based Learning:**
  + ***TransformSC:*** Betty Bagley, District Board member and one of the founders of ***TransformSC***, visited us on Friday, January 8th, to discuss our application. She praised the quality and thoroughness of the application and suggested that we highlight how we implement problem-based learning more than how we implement the Project Lead the Way program and shared the specific goals we should include in the application. Mr. Floyd and Ms. Blathers are revising the application, which will be submitted later this month. Mrs. Bagley will return for a follow-up visit on February 24th, the day that we have the community tour. TransformSC, an education initiative of the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness, is a collaboration of business leaders, educators, students, parents and policy makers transforming the public education system so that every student graduates prepared for careers, college, and citizenship. TransformSC schools and districts are designing, launching, promoting and proving transformative practices in the classroom. Currently there are 37 schools and 3 districts in the TransformSC network.
  + ***Field Trip:*** Twenty students grades 8-11 interested in engineering will be going with Mr. Floyd and Mr. Vasiu on a field trip to our first company on Jan. 28th to Mitsubishi-Hitachi Power Systems. Our second field trip to a company will be Gulfstream in March.
  + The ***Science Fair*** is planned for March.
  + ***Robotics Clubs:*** The robotics team competed at Bluffton High School on January 9th before losing in the finals to West Ashley High School. The robotics team won both the programming and driver control skills challenge over 18 teams from schools such as Wando, Sumter, Goose Creek, West Ashley, Beaufort, and Bluffton, among others. The team is now in the top 5 teams in the state in both skills competition categories. The team has events in Sumter and Charleston planned for February, Lexington in March for the State Championship, and Charlotte in April for an event for teams from both South Carolina and North Carolina. Starting second semester robotics clubs will start in middle school under the supervision of Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Fisher, and in upper elementary school under the supervision of Mrs. Morgan. We are also planning robotics summer camps for our robotics team members to serve as leaders and teach other students.
  + ***Physics:*** We plan to implement a Physics curriculum next semester for high school students.
  + ***Planning for 2016-17 SY:*** For next year we have narrowed our list of course offerings to Computer Science and Software Engineering or Aerospace in high school and Flight and Space in middle school.
  + ***AdvanceEd STEM Certification:*** We are also planning to apply for AdvancED STEM Certification since what they are looking for is very close to our TransformSC application.
* **Special Education:** Teachers assisted general education teachers in preparation for end of semester activities that included exam prep, completing missing work, etc. All reporting to the district has met all timelines. The district-wide coordinators meeting will be held in Columbia on January 19th. We currently have 40 special education students and three are in the referral process.
* **Response to Intervention (RtI):** The RtI team has compiled MAP data on all students and has distributed caseloads to reading and math interventionists.  Next week we will be meeting with teachers to gather their input, share concerns and data.  The second round of RtI meetings will begin on January 21st with Kindergarten-2nd grade. Several staff members are looking at data in different ways to determine how best to use it to address the needs of our students, both long term and short term.
* **Beta Club**: Field trips have been halted to avoid interference with instruction/Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)/required attendance days. Beta meetings will be conducted after school on Fridays. The first meeting will be on Friday, January 15, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Completed Service Activities: The Beta Club has completed one group service activity. A small group went to National Healthcare Bluffton for a Thanksgiving program. Beta Officers: There has never been an official Beta election, and that will be the goal of our first two meetings.
* **Technology (IT):** We have had some technical challenges with Imagine Learning that are being addressed. Ms. Moore has begun work on the school technology plan required by the district and state later this month. It is time to evaluate our bids for ERATE. Ms. Moore and Mrs. Anderson are coordinating this work. Mr. Floyd and Ms. Moore are analyzing the IT budget for the new campus from both a programmatic standpoint and cost savings analysis.
* **Recent Field Trips:** 
  + ***November 2015:*** 2nd graders visited the Savannah Children’s Museum. Middle School Young Scholars attended the Model United Nations at Georgia Southern University; they also visited the Charleston Aquarium and Sea Turtle Museum and Technical College of the Lowcountry. High school engineering students visited USC. 5th graders visited the Confederate Museum. 4th graders visited the SC Aquarium. Kindergarteners visited the Jacksonville Zoo. 6th graders visited Palmetto Electric.
  + ***December 2015:*** 1st graders went to the SC Aquarium. Diamond Gem Mining presentation was made to elementary students. 11th graders visited Technical College of the Lowcountry. Young Scholars visited the Morris Center. Ms. Ager took 6 drama students with their parents to see *Mary Poppins* at the Art Center of Coastal Carolina. Dr. Wicks received letters from the students thanking me for this wonderful opportunity and describing what they enjoyed in the show.
  + ***Close-Up Washington:*** High school students are currently finding sponsors and raising funds for their June 2016 educational trip to Washington, D.C. Mr. Williams, high school history teacher, has set up a GoFundMe account for donors to contribute. Interested donors should make their contribution at  <https://www.gofundme.com/hp8j7ufw>.
* **Playground:** The playground building initiative has taken a number of interesting turns. A generous playground donation (full play structure and swing set) has been offered to us in exchange for a donation receipt, and as a result Mrs. Moss is in the process of soliciting remaining funds for the installation (which still comes to about $15,000). Thanks to wise thinking on the part of the Assistant Principals, we will be installing the unit on the playing field instead of between the buildings (which will make that learning area quieter for instruction and safer for passersby). Mrs. Moss attended the Hardeeville City Council meeting on January 7th to give a 3-minute spiel about our initiative and anticipates follow-up from the Jasper County Rotary on January 12th. City Council Visit: Mayor Bostick and City Councilman Harry Williams visited with Grade 5 on January 11th. Students made their case for a playground and both officials were impressed. Mayor Bostick will follow-up with Chairman Martin Sauls of the Jasper County Council to determine an appropriate funding amount. We asked for between $3,000 and $14,000. If we get to $7,000, Dr. Wicks has agreed to help us make this playground happen. We are currently at $4,000 and awaiting follow-up from Jasper Rotary. If needed, Mrs. Moss will also attend the January 21st City Council meeting to give a 10-minute presentation on the relevance of play in school-aged children’s lives (particularly our children). The children are writing a letter expressing the need. She is prepared to take a number of them with her on January 21st.
* **Staffing and Culture:** We have secured certified teachers for 1B and for 4B. The school culture is upbeat and positive—a great improvement.
* **Enrollment:** As of January 15th enrollment continues to hover around 550.
* **Marketing:** 
  + ***Community Coffee with the Principal:*** We are hosting a Community Coffee with the Principal for Wednesday, February 24th, 8:30-10:30, to help the community see the great learning going on at RLOA. Invitations were sent to community, business, and political leaders and a half-page ad is running in *Jasper Sun Times.*
  + ***Social Media:*** We are continuing to promote our social media presence through Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We are encouraging students, parents, and friends to like and follow the pages so they can keep up-to-date on RLOA happenings.
  + ***Billboards:***We are adding a 5th billboard at the corner of Levy Road and Rt. 17 and have moved the billboard from Rt. 462 Ridgeland to the Rt. 336 coming into Ridgeland from that direction since the bridge work on Rt. 462 prevented drivers from seeing our sign. The billboard on Rt. 170 Okatie was partially hidden by trees, so it was moved to a more visible location. The message rotation has been changed to alternate each month between *Because INNOVATION Is the Future* and *Because BREAKTHROUGHS Happen.* The billboard will also include the words *A* ***Free,*** *Public Charter Option Serving Beaufort and Jasper Counties* and *A* ***Project Lead the Way*** *School* besides our phone number and web address.
  + ***Newspaper/TV/Radio Ads:*** Mrs. Moss gave an interview on Talk of the Town, which is aired throughout our area. We are continuing the weekly newspaper and Radio Sol ads. Within the last few weeks several articles promoting our school have appeared in *Jasper Sun Times.*
* **STEM/PBL Update and Presentation of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP K-6) –**

Per Ryan Floyd, the Biology class has a passing rate of 87%. Only four students will require remediation via credit recovery. The robotics team is ranked #5 in the state. Additional events are scheduled through April. Robotic camps are planned throughout the summer. Kids are currently visiting local businesses to showcase and demonstrate robots in an effort to solicit sponsorship’s. Rob McBrayer requested student demonstrations be made at the next board meeting as well as the upcoming men’s breakfast and county council meeting. The board supported the request. Computer software engineering and aeronautics course offerings are planned for next year. Dr. Stevenson and Brian Morse presented a thorough explanation of RLOACS Fall and Winter MAP results. The data included the gains and/or opportunities for improvements in math and reading. The board saw graphs ranking each grade (K-6) at or above, near or below standard performance levels. Reading was the central improvement area among all grades. Dr. Stevenson emphasized their awareness of student progress and highly encourages small group instruction to enhance individual student growth. In closing, the board was informed of a new teacher evaluation model in ADEPT based on student performance effective 2015-16.

* **Public Comment** – No public comment.
* **Executive Session**- None
* **Motion to Adjourn** – With no further business to discuss, at 8:33pm Anne Bridgers made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Eunice Spilliards. The motion carried.