

APPROVED



The Riveredge Outdoor Learning Elementary School

Minutes

ROLES Governance Council Meeting - May 21

Date and Time

Thursday May 21, 2020 at 4:00 PM

Location

<http://meet.google.com/ohi-augp-zpb>

Directors Present

Ami Rosengren (remote), Amy Levash (remote), Becky Wollner (remote), Cecilia Guajardo (remote), Dan Davis (remote), Mary Ann Christopher (remote), Mia Arter (remote)

Directors Absent

None

I. Opening Items**A. Welcome, Record Attendance**

Also in Attendance Virtually: Tera Rogers, Christina Knoske, Laura Wollersheim, Courtney Finn, Sarah Neumann, Brian & Sarah Fortney, Paul & Greta Malek, Laura Jach Smith, Taylor Hoge, Monica Skwierawski, Sheri Lieftring, Moriah Butler, Angela Berend, Jennifer Sapiro, Korrine Petersen, Elizabeth Clark, Laura Ripple, Sunny Knuston

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Mia Arter called a meeting of the board of directors of The Riveredge Outdoor Learning Elementary School to order on Thursday May 21, 2020 @ 4:07 PM at <http://meet.google.com/ohi-augp-zpb>

Mia introduces herself and her vision as the President of the Governance Council moving forward.

C. Agenda Overview, Opportunities for Public Comment

4:11 No Comments

D. Approve April 24, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Amy Levash made a motion to approve the minutes from April 24, 2020.

Cecilia Guajardo seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Governance Council Updates

A. ROLES Stakeholder Team Proposal

- Mia Arter - The Stakeholder Group would consist of enhanced stakeholder engagement between key school stakeholders - ROLES Governance Council, school staff, parents, and Riveredge Nature Center.
- Cecilia Guajardo agrees that this is a good step to move forward.
- No comments were made to disagree with the proposal.
- Dan Davis agrees that this is a great step moving forward.
- Mia Arter requests for a kick off meeting before summer begins and is hoping each group will use a democratic process to pick one or two people from each group to represent their group. Each group should identify their representatives in the next week or two.
- Mary Ann Christopher further describes the representatives role as one that needs to make sure they represent all the viewpoints of their group.

B. ROLES Staff Structure Team

- Mia Arter explains the team's purpose as a group that is exploring the options for filling the gaps of the Staff Structure.
- Amy Levash gives an update that the work has evolved since receiving proposals for a Principal, Dean of Students, and a Shared Leadership model. The team is creating a new proposal now. The team is using a collaborative process to include everyone's point of view and needs.
- Kayla Buser agrees all the stakeholders are being supported in this decision making process. In the next two weeks, we will have a firmer proposal moving forward.
- Christine Knoske asks what is the proposal. Amy Levash responds that we are moving toward having an Administrator that also helps the teachers, but clarifies that it still very early stages. Over the next couple weeks there will be a definitive decision for the future.
- Christine Knoske asks if there money for a full time Administrative Assistant? Mia Arter responds that we do not know the answer to that yet, since we do not have our state funding totals yet. Dan Davis also responds that the Finance Committee is working towards a goal of having a full time Administrative Assistant.

C. ROLES Budget Team

- Mia Arter notes budget will be adopted in early June.
- Becky Wollner - Team has been meeting, lots of moving parts that determine our budget. We are budgeting for 87-90 students. Looking at 3 different budget models, these include, funding going down, funding staying the same, funding going up. Extra money from this year will be rolled over into next year. Staff budget is still an unknown. Once it's finalized it will be sent to NOSD.
- Tera Rogers - How much money is not being spent due to Distance Learning? Will we get money back from Riveredge for not being on site? Becky Wollner responds that we don't have the numbers for the money not spent on distance learning. Dan Davis - Currently talking with Riveredge regarding not having students on site. The Nature Center lease states 180 days/price per student.

D. ROLES Facilities Team

- Dan Davis gives an update on Riveredge Nature Center Education Building. Hopefully construction will begin next fall in 2021 to be ready for 2022 school year. Will be built to the west of the barn.
- Dan Davis reviews current classrooms, noting that high speed internet is coming to the center, so internet will be faster in fall.
- Current issues update:
 - Adding toilet facilities by the farm at the new maintenance facilities. Currently pricing permanent structures with running water and flush toilets to be put near yurts.
 - Cleaning budget was not enough the first year, looking for an agreement change with the center for improved processes.
 - Adding another classroom for fall - possibilities include the Facilities Office or Outdoor Classroom with a 17 foot addition including a mudroom. Riveredge is responsible for the front end cost for the classroom.
- Upcoming Facility Issues:
 - New school guidelines for fall due to Coronavirus.
 - Lease updates includes cleaning and how the land gets used.
 - Safety plan needs to get updated due to the nature of our spread out campus.
- Ashley Gauger - Has concerns about health and safety concerns and regulations regarding the facilities and what the schools rights are. Also, if the new space will be ready to be used. Dan Davis will email Ashley.

E. ROLES Mission Alignment Team

- Mia Arter notes that a Team has been formed to discuss inclusivity, inquiry led learning, evaluation and child development and how we are achieving our vision. Beginning phases of a much larger project.
- Cecilia Guajardo - Nick Pretasky at the Wisconsin Resource Center for Charter Schools is assisting and is an extremely valuable resource for us.

III. Parent Feedback and Response

A. Overview of Early May Engagement with Parents

- Mia Arter - ROLES Governance Council hosted a "listening session" for families but was unable to respond in real time, which follows open meeting laws. Most comments in the meeting regarded concerns with school structure as well as the emails and calls outside of the meeting. Looking for reaction from the summary Mia Arter put together regarding the comments and perspectives.

B. Approve May 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes and Summary of Parent Feedback

Dan Davis made a motion to approve the minutes from May 12, 2020.

Amy Levash seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Discuss Proposed ROLES Governance Council Response

- Mia Arter asked for feedback on if this is a complete list of concerns to respond to
- Cecilia Guajardo - Yes, but call and email format was not the best way to gather information

- Ashley Gauger - Add weight to items that were mentioned more than once. Mia Arter noted it was a struggle to quantify the concerns due to the different formats people responded.
- Mia Arter asked for parent responses regarding the issues laid out.
- Laura Wollershiem - Parent info sessions and follow-up will be beneficial. Apologizes for hectic nature of the meeting.
- Mia Arter & Dan Davis - Reiterate that we are committed to creating new avenues of communications.
- 3 Governance Council members needed to form a team to respond the the concerns - Mia Arter, Amy Levash, Cecilia Guajardo will form the team.

IV. School Management Updates

A. Lead Teacher Update

- Mia Arter introduced Lead Teacher update. Lead Teacher opted out of meeting. Staff is on call.
- Mia Arter - How will grading, testing be communicated to parents for the third trimester? Ashley Gauger - planning to communicate with parents tomorrow. They have decided to forgo grading for the third trimester. They are offering conferences for parent feedback. More focused on well being and connection that does not provide a grade of progress. The staff is unified on this, as well as local schools and the DPI recommendations.
- Cecilia Guajardo - Enjoyed the end of year projects.
- Sarah Barron gives an update on the hiring process for next year. They have soft offers to top 2 candidates, and they have accepted as long as background checks and paperwork goes well.

B. 2020-2021 Enrollment Process - Class Capacities and Lottery

- Sarah Barron reviews proposed Class Structure - 36 spots in 3-5, 36 spots 1-2, 18 in K. Lottery for Kindergarten and 1st grade range. Lottery process language was changed to "levels" instead of grades for flexibility in the future.
- Ashley Gauger - Lottery will keep the same process, a date has been set, we feel comfortable doing partial digital and partial in person. Will use ping pong balls again and are hoping to use the River Outpost. It will be broadcast digitally. The date is June 9th at 9:00 am.
- Two more Governance Council Members needed for Lottery - Dan Davis, Cecilia Guajardo, & Becky Wollner are available. Sunny Knuston will also be available. Mia Arter will be available virtually. We will be pulling for 3 levels.
- Cecilia Guajardo - \$250 spent on Ad campaign. 528 clicks (\$.48 per click) will stop running ad on May 28th or 29th.
- Tera Rogers - Confused about the levels. What is the definition of levels? Sarah Barron - Levels are just for the lottery. Tera Rogers - Will there be combined classes? Sarah Barron noted that is currently undecided.

C. 2020-2021 School Calendar

- Kayla Buser noted the calendar is ready to be presented to the Governance Council, using the same breaks as NOSD and same start and end date as NOSD.
- Kayla Buser introduces a new proposal is one Friday a month off for teachers instead of early release on Wednesdays. This will impact the number of student days, but these days will be Student Field experience days which students can participate. Looking to partner with the Nature Center to provide a program for children on those days.
 - Ashley Gauger - the Nature Center would be the first choice, but could look into the Kettle Moraine YMCA.

- Mia Arter - Is this included in the budget? Ashley Gauger notes this would be a family cost, as with Nature Club this past year.
- Cecilia Guajardo - An option could be contract specialized instruction for those days.
- Ashley Gauger - PTO fundraising would be beneficial.
- Sarah Barron - These would be professional development and work days. Valuable time for teachers. We understand it is disruptive to parents, but felt it was less disruptive than early release days. No solid plan of what these Fridays would look like.
- Ashley Gauger - There isn't a formal plan laid out. Field experience can be attendance credit. A student could bring a record of the completing the task. Theoretically if the task isn't completed it could be considered absent. Legally this day doesn't need to be considered student hours because there is no minimum hours of instruction requirement for charter schools.
- Laura Wollershiem - Is one Friday a month enough time for the new structure? Is there a way the Governance Council or Staff could look into attendance leniency regarding the nature of the school? Ashley Gauger - Will look into it.
- Ami Rosengren - Has contacted Nick Pretasky from WRCCS regarding attendance and there are some creative options that could be explored.

V. Other Business

A. Public Comment

- Sarah Neumann - Is there a timeline for a response to parents? Mia Arter - we will commit to a date soon.
- Amy Pollard - What would student contact hours look like? Kayla Buser - As a charter school we do not need to stick to a specified number of hours or days, but we try to keep aligned with NOSD. We would be 10 days short of NOSD.
- Greta Malek - Concerned parents will not be able to afford to find a place for students for a full day. Ashley Gauger - We are sensitive to these issues, but the teachers need more large chunks of time to prepare to properly serve the students. Authentic Inquiry based learning that is driven by students needs uninterrupted chunks of preparation time.

B. Transcript of the Virtual Chat function

Greta Malek

4:03 PM

People seem to have problems logging in

Laura Wollersheim

4:04 PM

Greta could you please send the link to the PTO list?

Tera Rogers

4:13 PM

Tera Rogers

Harrison Knoske

4:13 PM

Christina Knoske

Laura Wollersheim

4:13 PM

Laura Wollersheim

Courtney Finn

4:13 PM

Courtney Finn

Sarah Neumann

4:13 PM

Sarah Neumann

Brian Fortney

4:13 PM

Brian and Sarah Fortney

Greta Malek

4:13 PM

Paul and Greta Malek

Laura C Smith

4:13 PM

Laura Jach Smith

Taylor Hoge

4:13 PM

Taylor Hoge

Monica Skwierawski

4:14 PM

Monica Skwierawski

Harrison Knoske

4:14 PM

questions that might have not been address is next year how school will look are we preparing ??

Sunny Knutson

4:17 PM

Can everyone please mute so we can hear Mia? Thanks!

Sheri Lieffring

4:38 PM

Sheri Lieffring

Eric Butler

4:38 PM

Moriah Butler

Angela Berend

4:38 PM

Angela Berend

Jennifer Sapiro

4:38 PM

Jennifer Sapiro

Tera Rogers

4:44 PM

I have another budget question. :)

Harrison Knoske

4:44 PM

I have a question

Harrison Knoske

4:51 PM

my question was answered

Tera Rogers

5:28 PM

I have a question regarding levels.

Harrison Knoske

5:28 PM

levels are just for lottery

Greta Malek

5:30 PM

how would the break-up with 5 teachers would look like?

Greta Malek

5:34 PM

Who would supervise the kids on those days?

Greta Malek

5:35 PM

would that mean extra costs for parents to the RNC to give teachers PD days?

Tera Rogers

5:36 PM

No group of teachers get that much PD. And how would PD be defined? Is it a work day I. Your classroom or are you growing professionally outside of your cohort?

Harrison Knoske

5:36 PM

question about attendance with the current virus

Brian Fortney

5:37 PM

I completely support a day a month of staff development, but adding a day of a "field investigation" to a program based on being in the field doesn't really add any benefit to the student learners.

Laura Wollersheim

5:37 PM

Question about attendance

Sarah Neumann

5:38 PM

So since parents are paying for those Fridays, would that attendance on that day be optional?

Tera Rogers

5:40 PM

I don't need to be called on. :)

Laura Wollersheim

5:41 PM

I have a different attendance question

Greta Malek

5:41 PM

It a different for parents to arrange something for one hour early release vs. arrange something for a full day.

Harrison Knoske

5:42 PM

question

Greta Malek

5:42 PM

What is with families that cant effort the extra costs?

Miranda Petersen

5:42 PM

Clarification: So the Friday's for PD need some sort of participation to meet the state required count of days?

Greta Malek

5:42 PM

What is with families that cant effort the extra costs?

Miranda Petersen

5:42 PM

Clarification: So the Friday's for PD need some sort of participation to meet the state required count of days?

Miranda Petersen

5:46 PM

I agree with Laura's comments about some sort of accommodation for recovery time after illness.

Brian Fortney

5:46 PM

Not only is it physically taxing, but hygiene is a struggle with these age groups and the facilities provided.

Elizabeth Clark

5:46 PM

Especially with the fact that we're all distance learning "pros" now. Recovery days could come with home learning activities for when kids are ready for learning but not ready for the intensity of outdoor education.

Harrison Knoske

5:46 PM

the second part of the Laura questions was my questions too kids not feeling 100%

Miranda Petersen

5:47 PM

I have concerns about hygiene and regular access to hand washing and such in general but especially under current circumstances.

Greta Malek

5:48 PM

I think there would need to be a survey reg. parents choice for PDs.

Brian Fortney

5:50 PM

While reading through the comments from the last meeting, I got the sense that there was little confidence in the Governance Council, but having attended this meeting in person, I am convinced that those feelings are unfounded or I simply misunderstood. I think you all are doing a great job and I am certain that your actions put the needs of the students first. I fully support your decision to hire an administrator to round out the ROLES team. I feel very strongly that the teachers should not be burdened with administrative duties. This is a new school with new curricula and different challenges from a mainstream school. I feel their energies are better spent developing those facets of the program and leave administrative tasks to a full-time administrator. I do, however, share concerns stated about turnover should the position be part-time. The proposal of shared leadership provided by the teachers suggested that each teacher would assume different administrative duties and be provided an hour a day to execute these tasks, yet they aren't provided daily time to prepare curriculum under the current model. It just doesn't make sense to me.

Greta Malek

5:53 PM

agree with you, Brian.

Cecilia Guajardo

5:53 PM

Thank you

Laura C Smith

5:53 PM

Comment: A regular day at school should not be physically taxing for students. If students cannot attend a regular day because the days are too taxing, then perhaps the kids are being too physically taxed for a school environment. Outside exploration, fresh air, nature-based, all yes, but hiking for the sake of tiring the kids out is not what a regular school day should look like. In that case, there should be no need or concern for "recovery" days

Brian Fortney

5:54 PM

I agree, Laura!

Laura Wollersheim

5:55 PM

They are doing a great job responding to the questions and concerns. As parents we don't know the behind the scenes. I think this shows everyone's willingness to work together!

Miranda Petersen

5:57 PM

Do the additional fees for those PD Friday's need to be covered by parents? Can they be grant funded?

Laura Wollersheim

5:55 PM

They are doing a great job responding to the questions and concerns. As parents we don't know the behind the scenes. I think this shows everyone's willingness to work together!

Miranda Petersen

5:57 PM

Do the additional fees for those PD Friday's need to be covered by parents? Can they be grant funded?

Cecilia Guajardo

5:59 PM

Thank you Brian! We all want the best for ROLES and we work hard and put in many hours. We heard your feedback and we're working in collaboration with the teachers & staff to build a better version of ROLES.

Brian Fortney

5:59 PM

Thank you, Cecilia.

Greta Malek

5:59 PM

I do see a problem with Discipline during the PD Fridays if some other staff personnel has to work with the kids full day other than the teachers. there were problems during Wednesday one hour already.

Laura Ripple

6:00 PM

Thank you GC, you guys are all doing a great job of getting all of the issues addressed!

Brian Fortney

6:00 PM

It reads like a sub-day once a month. I think it will be difficult to execute effectively.

Harrison Knoske

6:00 PM

when is the next meeting? are we invited?

Laura Wollersheim

6:01 PM

They are public

Harrison Knoske

6:01 PM

Thank you GC and teachers and parents!

Laura Wollersheim

6:01 PM

Thank you!

Amy Levash

6:01 PM

Thank you everyone!

Sarah Neumann

6:01 PM

Thanks! :)

Greta Malek

6:01 PM

thanks!!

Miranda Petersen

6:01 PM

Thanks

Taylor Hoge

6:02 PM

Thank you

VI. Closing Items

A. Thank You and Conclusion

Next steps include:

- Calendar Team could have another update with discussion at the next meeting.
- Team work on Staff Structure, Lottery Process, Written Response to the Parent Meeting.
- A call of action to create the Stakeholder Team.
- Attendance Policy.

Thank you to everyone for your time & participation.

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mia Arter

Dan Davis made a motion to Adjourn.

Cecilia Guajardo seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.