



Mission Statement: The mission of The RISE Schools is to provide a rigorous and holistic education that develops the minds and character of scholars to be catalysts for social change

**The RISE Schools**  
**Governing Board Meeting Minutes**  
**January 15, 2025 at 6 PM**

*The minutes of Sunshine Law meetings need not be verbatim transcripts of the meeting. These minutes are a brief summary of the events of the meeting.*

| Date:   | Start   | End   | Next Meeting: | Next time: | Prepared by: |
|---|---------|---|---------------|------------|--------------|
| 1/15/25                                       | 6:13 PM | 8:05PM  | 2/19/25       | 6:00PM     | Lyn Carden   |
| Meeting Location:                             |         |   |               |            |              |
| Rise  |         |   |               |            |              |
| Attended by:                                  |         |   |               |            |              |
| Lara Sterling<br>Demond Hary<br>Tanisha Jones |         | Zedric Cross<br>Christian Harden<br>Dr. Camelle Simmons<br>Rick Kempf<br>Terrence Washington<br>Ms. Garrett<br>Ty Harrison<br>Jasmine Fischer<br>Danny Brewington<br>Lyn Carden |               |            |              |
| Highlights:                                   |         |   |               |            |              |

**I. Administrative Functions**

- Motion to call to order made by Ms. Jones, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Hardy, unanimous at 6:13 PM. Ms. Sterling notified the board that she would like to amend the agenda to move the consent agenda to item “B” and remove the financial report approval from the consent agenda to item “F.”
  - i. Mr. Hardy made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, Ms. Jones 2<sup>nd</sup>, unanimous.

**A. Board Chair Report**

- a. Ms. Sterling notified the board that EIP would be conducting required governance training during the month of January. She reported that they would be reaching out for possible dates.
- b. Construction Update – Rick Kempf presented – He attended the OEC meeting last week. The permit had to be reissued and crews returned to work last Monday and demo has been competed.
  - i. They had to relocate a gas line and provided a revised schedule.

- ii. Mr. Kempf outlined the work that has been completed and what is immediately ahead and well as the inspection schedule.
- iii. He notified the board that the revised scheduled has the substantial completion (punch list items) date for August 29<sup>th</sup> and final completion September 19<sup>th</sup> and noted the construction team will try to move faster. They discussed the delay of the schedule due to the permitting issue, which would have had an end of July project completion date.
- iv. Mr. Kempf reviewed change orders and new expenses due to the change orders.
- v. Mr. Kempf discussed city requirements.
- vi. Mr. Kempf discussed an issue that was identified earlier in the day and its solution.
- vii. Ms. Sterling asked about issues with previously completed work. Mr. Kempf told the board he would research and provide an update.

**B. Action/Consent Agenda Items**

- a. Forum Marketing Proposal –The board discussed whether they needed more time to consider the proposal.
  - i. Ms. Jones noted she was concerned about the direct mail part, the board discussed other ways to spend the money allotted for direct mail.
  - ii. Ms. Sterling recommended that the board approve the spending allotment but reassign the funds.
  - iii. Mr. Washington recommended spending more money.
  - iv. Mr. Brewington recommended reviewing the scope and structure of the Forum agreement and how it aligns to Mr. Washington’s recommendation.
  - v. The board discussed affordability.
  - vi. The board agreed on a motion to the amount requested be approved, but the funds be reassigned. Mr. Cross was asked to work with Forum on other options.
- b. Student Handbook – The board discussed the revised handbook.
  - i. Ms. Carden reported that it appeared edits had been provided prior to the latest revision and that Mr. Cross indicated a need to get the current version of the handbook completed and then provide an overhaul for the next school year.
  - ii. Ms. Carden pointed out some revisions may be necessary to ensure compliance.
  - iii. Mr. Cross reviewed changes the school had made and outlined a parent communication plan to ensure handbook review and agreement.
- c. Employee Handbook – Ms. Sterling noted this handbook revisions had taken place last year and the board approved those but it had never been completed. The board reviewed additional changes they would like to see in the handbook.
- d. Financial Handbook – Mr. Washington reviewed the handbook as well as a recommended change to the finance policy. Ms. Sterling requested the change be held until stabilization.
- e. Proposed Bylaw Revisions – The board requested the minimum board membership be changed to three (3).
- f. Ratify Letter for Bank Account Closure – The board reviewed the resolution.
- g. Ratify Mr. Cross as Signatory – The board reviewed the resolution.
- h. Mr. Hardy made a motion to approve items on the consent agenda pending requested changes, Ms. Jones 2<sup>nd</sup>, unanimous.

**C. Principal /Federal Programs Report – Mr. Cross presented**

- a. Mr. Cross provided the enrollment report.
  - i. He noted that the students who have unenrolled since Christmas have moved out of the area, but that some former students have returned to the school.
- b. Mr. Cross provided a staffing update.
- c. Mr. Cross reported on school events since the previous board meeting.
- d. Mr. Cross reviewed the I-Ready benchmarking data for ELA and Math
  - i. He provided a report on the plan to improve results
  - ii. He told the board that they had moved grades 3-5 into departmentalization to better serve struggling and excelling students.
- e. Mr. Cross told the board about plans for a Saturday Academy to help students better prepare for Milestones testing.
  - i. He told the board the Saturday Academy was to be a virtual biweekly offering.
  - ii. He outlined the structure.
- f. Mr. Cross reported on new grading requirements and academic reporting requirements for the teaching staff.
- g. Mr. Cross discussed the schools MTSS process.
- h. Mr. Cross discussed his plans to ensure the school is compliant with Special Education law.
- i. The board discussed compliance of uniform policies.
- j. Mr. Cross discussed strategies for keeping students in their classroom.
- k. Mr. Cross reviewed offerings for culture and climate improvements.
- l. Mr. Cross reported on weekly parent newsletters through school form.
- m. Mr. Harrison reported that the school held its first PTA meeting and now officially has a PTA
- n. Mr. Cross reported on plans for a new teacher meeting brief via zoom with parents and a community caucus
  - i. He told the board the school was launching a program called Dean's List which would give parents retine data regarding student behavior and grades
- o. Mr. Cross reported on events for Black History Month.
- p. Mr. Cross reported that school leadership was working on creating processes and procedures for staff and well as creating school communities to improve staff culture
- q. Mr. Cross discussed the FY26 enrollment plan
- r. The board discussed the teacher contracts to be approved.
- s. Academic Deliverables of the CAP – Ms. Sterling requested that Mr. Cross provide the power point presented to the board for the authorizer corrective action plan
- t. SPED Compliance Update – Discussed earlier

**D. Business Office Report**

- a. New Employee Review - tabled

**E. Finance Report** – Mr. Washington presented the Financial Dashboard

- a. He reported that it will provide the schools financial picture in real time and be available at any time.
  - i. The board discussed additional information they would like on the dashboard.
  - ii. The board thanked Mr. Washington and complimented the dashboard.
- b. Mr. Washington reviewed the financial report.
  - i. He discussed federal grant draw downs.
  - ii. He discussed uncategorized revenue and expense.

- iii. He discussed grant tracker.
- iv. He reviewed Monthly summary.
- v. The board discussed bond payments.
- vi. The board discussed debt pay off.
- vii. Mr. Washington reported on meetings held with Mobile Modular and the school's insurance company.
- viii. The board discussed outstanding invoices and directed Mr. Washington to pay them.
- ix. Mr. Washington reviewed the balance sheet and recommendations from the financial team.
- x. Mr. Washington notified the board that that authorizer has requested banking statements for review.
- xi. Mr. Washington reported on the DE046.
- xii. Mr. Washington reviewed budget vs. actuals
  - 1. Mr. Washington told the board he is working on an amended budget and would be ready for the first budget hearing in February as outlined in the budget schedule provided to the board.
- xiii. Mr. Washington reviewed the Cash flow report.
  - 1. He discussed the budget forecast.
  - 2. He discussed credit card and debt service expenses
- xiv. Mr. Washington reviewed current debt.
- xv. Mr. Washington reviewed unrestricted days cash on hand.
- xvi. The board discussed HR & Payroll.
- xvii. Mr. Harrison noted the struggles the school is having getting accurate data from the insurance company due to staff turnover.
- xviii. The board reviewed efficiency trends.
- xix. Mr. Washington provided CPF projections.
- xx. Mr. Washington reviewed projected days cash on hand.
- xxi. The Board discussed the upcoming finance committee.
- c. Ms. Sterling reported that the approval of the December financials would need to be tabled until next month.

#### **F. New Business**

- a. Enrollment and Application Window - tabled
- b. SCSC Monitoring Report – Ms. Sterling reported that the board and school team would need a separate meeting to review and discuss the authorizer's findings and corrective action plan.

#### **G. Old Business**

- a. Project Management Services - Tabled
- b. Saturday School – Discussed earlier

#### **H. Reporting Requirements**

- a. Ms. Carden provided a review of upcoming reporting requirements.
  - i. Title I Report
  - ii. School Climate Survey
  - iii. Pre-ID submission (Grades 3-8)

## **II. OPEN FORUM – No public comment**

**Next Meeting Date** – February 19, 2025 at 6pm

Adjournment Motion to adjourn Desmond, Lara 2<sup>nd</sup> 8:05pm

**ADJOURNMENT** Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Hardy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Sterling, unanimous at 8:05pm