RIVER SPRINGS CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

43448 BUSINESS PARK DRIVE • TEMECULA, CA 92590

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

May 28, 2015

4:00p.m. – 5:00p.m.

43448 Business Park Drive / Temecula, CA 92590

I. PRELIMINARY

Our mission is to empower students by fostering their innate curiosity, engaging their parents, and promoting optimum learning by collaboratively developing a personalized learning program for each student.

1. Action: **Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**
   a. Board Chair, Jennifer Mejares-Pham, called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance at 4:11 p.m.

PRESENT:

Jennifer Mejares-Pham, Chair Sheila Ryle, Secretary (via teleconference) Charles Vela, Treasurer Carl Burke, Director Stephen Darrow, Director Jessica Mercer, Director	Kathleen Hermsmeyer, Superintendent Debbie Daniel, Asst. Supt. Pupil Services Kathy Cox, Director of Special Education Natali South, Executive Assistant to the Board Linda Rhoads-Parks, Legal Counsel (via teleconference)

2. Action: **Approval of Agenda**
   a. **Mr. Vela moved to approve the agenda.**
   b. **Ms. Ryle seconded.**
   c. Discussion: None.
   d. **6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.**

3. Action: **Approval of Meeting Minutes – May 14, 2015**
   a. **Ms. Ryle moved to approve the May 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes.**
   b. **Mr. Darrow seconded.**
   c. Discussion: None
   d. **6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.**

III. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

This is an opportunity for community members to speak to any item on the agenda or regarding subjects or concerns that do not appear on the agenda. Any person wishing to speak is requested to complete the "Request to Speak" form found at the entrance to

the meeting and to bring it forward to the Board Secretary. Presentations are limited to five minutes. Government Code Section 54954.2 and Education Code Section 35145.5 prohibit the Board from discussing or acting upon matters not on the agenda.

4. Information: **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
   a. None
5. Information: **BOARD COMMENTS**
   a. Ms. Mejares-Pham: Since one of our Board members is absent today, I would like to request that we have thorough notes of today's meeting.

IV. OPEN SESSION

6. Action: **Adoption of RSCS SELPA Policies & Procedures**
   a. **Mr. Burke moved to approve the adoption of RSCS SELPA Policies & Procedures**
   b. **Mr. Vela seconded.**
   c. Discussion:
      - Dr. Hermsmeyer noted that our Board approved our application to SELPA, which included policies, procedures and assurances in 2006; however there have updates to the policies and procedures since that time. A link was provided for Board members to access the document.
      - Ms. Mejares-Pham requested an explanation of the term SELPA and the purpose behind belonging to a SELPA.
      - Kathy Cox provided an overview of SELPA and explained our participation. She explained that Special Education Directors meet to make recommendations in order to keep SELPA policies current with Special Education Law, which are then approved by the SELPA Board. Dr. Hermsmeyer is our representative on the SELPA Board.
   d. **6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.**

7. Action: **Adoption of the revised RSCS Special Education Handbook**
   a. **Mr. Vela moved to approve the adoption of the revised RSCS Special Education Handbook**
   b. **Mr. Darrow seconded.**
   c. Discussion:
      - Debbie Daniel explained that our Special Education Handbook has been revised to reflect our current policies and procedures.
      - Dr. Hermsmeyer indicated that typically we don't ask our Board to approve our internal documents such as handbooks. However, in light of our recent Notice of Violation, we have been asked to provide evidence that our Board has reviewed all documents related to Special Ed, including our handbooks, enrollment documents, etc.
      - Ms. Mejares-Pham asked if this meant that every time a change would be made to such a document, that it has to come before the Board.
      - Ms. Ryle suggested that at a future meeting, the Board could make a motion to authorize Leadership staff to make necessary changes to such documents without seeking Board approval every time.
      - Kathy Cox provided a brief overview of the updated language.
   d. **6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.**

8. Action: **Adoption of the revised RSCS Enrollment Handbook**
   a. **Mr. Vela moved to approve the adoption of the revised RSCS Enrollment Handbook**
   b. **Mr. Burke seconded.**
   c. Discussion:
      - Debbie Daniel provided an explanation of our previous enrollment procedures and explained how they have been adjusted. Previously, when a parent was enrolling a child with an IEP in our school, we would discuss the terms of the IEP with the parent in an attempt to find a suitable program for the child. In our audit, this gave the perception that we were discouraging parents from enrolling in our school. Therefore, we have modified the enrollment process to discuss IEP and Special Ed needs after the child is successfully enrolled in our school.
      - Mr. Burke noted that this could cause frustration for a parent who enrolls in our school, only to find out later that the program they selected may not be good match for their student's needs. Also, what if a parent wants to know this information prior to making their decision?
      - Kathy Cox explained that we will make every effort to make enrolling easy for our parents. We will discuss programs, opportunities and services, and answer parent's questions. The difference is that we will do so in general terms. We won't have the child's IEP in front of us; we won't discuss their specific circumstances. We will explain that their child is welcome to enroll.
      - Debbie Daniel added that we encourage parents to visit our programs and website prior to selecting a program. Often, a parent will think that they want their child to attend a day program, only to discover while visiting, that the noise of a large classroom may not be suitable for their child.
      - Mr. Vela noted that not every parent will have the dedication to tour our facilities in order to find the right program prior to enrolling.
      - Kathy Cox responded to say that we will guide the parent through the enrollment process in our school, and parents can request a preferred program. After enrollment is complete and it is appropriate to discuss their specific IEP, we can make recommendations at that time. That way, no one will feel discouraged from enrolling.
      - Ms. Mejares-Pham asked if it is legal to be enrolled in more than one school at a time. For example, if they are in a district school, but are considering us, do they have to dis-enroll their child in order to enroll in our school?
      - Debbie Daniel explained that we recommend to our parents that they keep their child enrolled until such time that they are ready to sign the student agreement. It's the signing of that document that signifies enrollment.
      - Ms. Mercer asked what we do when a parent enrolls a kindergartner, or a child without an IEP, but is requesting certain services.
      - Debbie Daniel explained that they would be enrolled the same as any child without an IEP, and we will assess them as the need arises.
      - Debbie Daniel also mentioned that even prior to the Notice of Violation, that Dr. Hermsmeyer had already begun working on changing our enrollment process.

- Dr. Hermsmeyer noted that our previous process could be quite time consuming because we would request the IEP first, and that can take some time. This adjustment will speed up our process significantly, and provide an easier transition for our parents.
- Mr. Darrow asked if the new handbook brings us into compliance.
- Debbie Daniel indicated that it does, and also noted that it has been reviewed or collaborated on by our SELPA, Lisa Corr, Sue Balt and our staff on several occasions.

e. **6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.**

9. Action: **Approval of the RSCS Special Education Documentation Report for RCOE**
   a. **Mr. Burke moved to approve the RSCS Special Education Documentation Report for RCOE**
   b. **Mr. Darrow seconded.**
   c. Discussion:
      - Dr. Hermsmeyer explained that the provided packet will be submitted to RCOE upon RSCS approval. It contains our response to the Notice of Violation and all supporting documents providing evidence of compliance or corrections.
      - Ms. Ryle asked if staff has been trained on the new policies.
      - Debbie Daniel indicated that the majority of staff has received the training, and that new employees or anyone who missed the training will have an opportunity to be trained at our annual CORE events.
      - Mr. Burke asked if we were audited, would we have evidence to prove that our staff has been trained.
      - Dr. Hermsmeyer indicated that HR keeps the sign-in sheet from every training, so yes. We are close to having a cloud system too, where we can monitor who is missing what training. A copy of a sign-in sheet is included in the packet.
      - Mr. Burke asked who monitors things that have deadlines. If we are supposed to respond to certain things with 24 or 48 hours, or 30 days, etc., who tracks that?
      - Dr. Hermsmeyer indicated that is a function of the Special Education Department, specifically, Kathy Cox.
      - Kathy Cox indicated that our SELPA is very pleased with our compliance in this area.
      - Mr. Vela asked if the SELPA is pleased, why we are facing a Notice of Violation.
      - Kathy Cox responded to say that there actually have been very few complaints made directly to River Springs' administration or the SELPA. However, often a parent will call the county directly. The perception is that if it has reached the level of a county complaint, it has gone through all of the channels here and still hasn't been addressed. The county has to follow up on any concern.
      - Ms. Mejares-Pham suggested that we do a better job of making it clear to parents what our chain of command is; make it easy for parents to know how to reach directors, assistant superintendents, the Special Ed Director, and others who may be able to handle concerns.
      - Dr. Hermsmeyer indicated that we will be providing this information in our parent-student handbook and sending out a mailer with this information to all of our families. It is important for us to be able to address any concerns as quickly and directly as possible.

- Debbie Daniel called the Board's attention to Item 2 in the Notice of Violation where it was alleged that RSCS failed to implement the services required by students' IEPs upon enrollment and transfer from another school. Debbie referenced the letter enclosed in the packet written by Christa Smith of the Riverside SELPA indicating that we are fully compliant in this matter, all IEP needs have been met, and no compensatory services are due to this family.

d. 6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.

10. Action: **Ratification of the Lease Contract for 43250 Business Park Dr., Temecula, 92590**

a. Mr. Burke moved to ratify the lease contract for 43250 Business Park Dr., Temecula, 92590

b. Ms. Ryle seconded.

c. Discussion:

- Dr. Hermsmeyer reviewed the lease and addressed questions from the Board.
- Linda Parks noted that she had not reviewed the lease and that there may be a conflict of interest with the broker.
- Dr. Hermsmeyer indicated her understanding is that real estate counsel reviewed the lease prior to signing.
- Stephen Darrow moved that ratification be tabled to the June meeting.
- Chuck Vela seconded the motion.
- A roll call vote was taken to table this item:
- **2 AYES (Darrow, Vela); 4 NOES (Ryle, Mercer, Burke, Mejares-Pham); 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion denied.**
- Dr. Hermsmeyer explained that the new building will house our Bookmart, and that the suite previously occupied by Bookmart will be occupied by our growing staff. The new warehouse space is much more affordable on a square foot basis, which is suitable for book and computer storage.
- Ms. Mejares-Pham requested that Dr. Hermsmeyer research and report back to confirm that there was no additional compensation or commission paid to the employee affiliated with the brokerage, and requested that the Board return to the original motion to:

  Ratify the lease contract for 43250 Business Park Dr., Temecula, 92590

d. 3 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Mercer); 3 ABSTAIN (Burke, Darrow, Vela); 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

11. Action: **Motion to Adjourn the Meeting**

a. Mr. Burke moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

b. Ms. Ryle seconded.

c. Discussion: None

d. 6 AYES (Mejares-Pham, Ryle, Vela, Burke, Darrow, Mercer); 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (Ponzio). Motion adopted.

IX. NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, June 11, 2015, 12:00p.m. – 4:00p.m.

Temecula Administrative Offices – Executive Conference Room – 43448 Business Park Drive / Temecula 92590

Sheila Ryle, Secretary

6/11/15
Date

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (AB3035; CH 300, Statutes of 2000), if you need special assistance, disability-related modifications or accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in the public meetings of the District's governing board, please contact the Administrative Office at (951) 252-8891. Notification by noon on Monday prior to the board meeting (48 hours) will enable the school to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting. Upon request, the school shall also make available this agenda and all other public records associated with this meeting in appropriate alternative formats for persons with a disability.