

The Renaissance

35-59 81st Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

www.renaissancecharter.org • 718-803-0060 • 718-803-3785 (fax)

Charter School

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sandra Geyer

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Monte Joffe, Ed.D.

Vice Chairperson

Everett Boyd

Secretary

Stacey Gauthier

Chester Hicks

Raymond Johnson

Margaret Martinez-DeLuca

Francine Smith

AGENDA

October 7, 2015 – 6:45 PM

Public Meeting of The Board of Trustees

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1) Chairperson's Welcome | 2 minutes |
| 2) Pledge of Allegiance | 1 minute |
| 3) Roll Call | 2 minutes |
| 4) Approval of June 30, 2015 minutes | 5 minutes |
| 5) School Management Team Report | 15 minutes |
| a. Program Highlights and New Initiatives for 2015-2016 School Year | |
| b. Current School-wide Demographics | |
| 6) Consolidated Application Report | 5 minutes |
| 7) Charter Renewal Update | 15 minutes |
| 8) Charter Revisions | 15 minutes |
| 9) Board Members New Business | 5 minutes |
| 10) Public Speaking | TBD |
| <i>Public speaking time of three minutes per person will be permitted. All speakers should sign up with the Secretary prior to the meeting and state the topic they will be speaking on. Speakers may be grouped according to topic.</i> | |
| 11) Adjournment of Public Session | |
| 12) Executive Session | |

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

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Minutes of TRCS Board of Trustees

Meeting of October 7, 2015

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

Meeting convened at 7:02 PM

1. Chairperson's Welcome: Ms. Geyer welcomed Board Members and Public attendees. She expressed her gratitude for everyone's hard work through the charter renewal process. Ms. Geyer welcomed Raymond Johnson, Teacher Representative, as the newest member to The Board.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.
3. Roll Call was taken: All board members were present except Margaret Martinez-DeLuca, and Monte Joffe. Also present: Matthew Delforte, School Counsel.
4. Minutes of June 30, 2015 BOT Meeting were reviewed and approved, as amended.
5. School Management Team Report, presented by Stacey Gauthier, Principal –
 - a. Program Highlights and New Initiatives for 2015-2016 School Year -

Ms. Gauthier referred to several reports found in the packets presented at the meeting, including:

- The Data Dashboard Reports to Board of Trustees – 2015-2016

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

- Learning Environment Survey, found on The TRCS Website
- Program and Organizational Changes for the 2015-2016 School Year
- Letter to Staff regarding Achievement Network (ANet) partnership with TRCS to help promote successes in student learning through interim testing, data analysis, and professional development.

b. Current School-wide Demographics – See report included in the meeting packet.

6. Consolidated Application Report – See report included in the meeting packet.

7. Charter Renewal Update, Matthew Delforte –

We were granted a 4.2 year renewal, as reported in the minutes of June 30, 2015 meeting. We are continuing to work on issues with The Proportionate Shared Use Agreement, which has not been issued to TRCS. Previous mayoral administrations honored this agreement, but the current administration has yet to do so.

We are continuing to encounter issues with the our enrollment remuneration. We have consistently been remunerated for 550 students, except for this year. We have been encouraged to submit an application for a material revision to our charter, as outlined in item number 9 of the June 30, 2015 Minutes:

“(Agenda item 11) - Vote to Approve a Revision to our School’s Charter regarding Student Enrollment –TRCS submitted a revision to our charter with our charter renewal requesting an enrollment of 558 students, which has been our actual enrollment (including District 75 students) for the last several years. The DOE denied this request and approved an enrollment of 541 students, which the DOE based on our last charter’s enrollment numbers. TRCS disagrees with this decision and has submitted numerous correspondences and justifications for our position to DOE.

Motion made by Chester Hicks to resolve that the BOT delegates the authority to Stacey Gauthier, Principal, to request a material change of the charter to increase the student enrollment to 558 for the school year 2015-2016 and forward. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.”

We are continuing to contest a number of factual errors in the Charter Office’s Renewal Report.

We have delayed the issuance of any public statement regarding the inequities in the charter renewal process, as reported in the June 30, 2015 Minutes.

We are also continuing to discuss the issues surrounding our renewal with a member of the Board of Regents.

We may want to revisit our conversation about employing the services of a lobbyist, who can advocate for us in Albany, as our needs for advocacy and sustainability continue to pose challenges.

8. Charter Revisions –

We are submitting a revision to our charter to include an enrollment preference for children of staff members.

9. Board Members New Business –

Raymond Johnson will join the Audit and Finance Committee.

Stacey Gauthier extended a special thanks to Chester Hicks, Marlene Castro, and Peggy Heeney, who represented TRCS at the Families for Excellent Schools Rally, especially

10. Public Speaking – none

11. Adjournment of Public Session -

A motion was made to adjourn the Public Session. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously at 8:02PM.

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AGENDA

December 2, 2015 – 6:45 PM

Public Meeting of The Board of Trustees

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1) Chairperson's Welcome | 2 minutes |
| 2) Pledge of Allegiance | 1 minute |
| 3) Roll Call | 2 minutes |
| 4) Approval of October 7, 2015 minutes | 10 minutes |
| 5) Review and Approval of FY2015 Certified Financial Report | 30 minutes |
| 6) Report on Executive Compensation | 10 minutes |
| 7) School Management Team Report
Progress Towards Goals, Accountability Metrics | 30 minutes |
| 8) Board Members New Business | 10 minutes |
| 9) Public Speaking | TBD |
| <i>Public speaking time of three minutes per person will be permitted. All speakers should sign up with the Secretary prior to the meeting and state the topic they will be speaking on. Speakers may be grouped according to topic.</i> | |
| 10) Adjournment of Public Session | |
| 11) Executive Session | |

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Minutes of TRCS Board of Trustees

Meeting of December 2, 2015

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

Meeting convened at 6:50 PM

1. Chairperson's Welcome: Vice Chairperson, Monte Joffe, welcomed everyone on behalf of The Chairperson, Sandra Geyer, who was ill and sent her regards.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.
3. Roll Call was taken: All board members were present except for Sandra Geyer and Margaret Martinez-DeLuca. Also present: Denise Hur, Director of Operations and Finance; Julia Cohen, School Counsel; David Ashenfarb and Joseph Albano, representing Schall and Ashenfarb, CPA; and Rachel Mandel, M.D., a candidate for The Board of Trustees of TRCS.
4. Minutes of October 7, 2015 BOT meeting were reviewed and approved, as amended.
5. The Certified Financial Report (CFR) FY2015 was reviewed by The Board with David Ashenfarb and Joseph Albano representing Schall and Ashenfarb, CPA.

Mr. Ashenfarb provided some background information regarding the preparation of the report. He stated that because we receive federal funding we are required to conduct a financial audit under circular A133. Schall and Ashenfarb, CPA, was enlisted to conduct that audit, which should have been conducted and submitted by March, 31 2014 by our previous CPAs.

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

In the process of conducting the A133 audit, some errors and omissions were found that are attributed to the practices of our former CPAs. These were corrected by redoing and revising the FY2014 certified financial audit and resolved in the FY2015 audit.

Board Member Chester Hicks asked if there were any consequences from the errors and omissions discovered in the June 30, 2014 audit. Mr. Ashenfarb stated that he did not think there would be any problems, and that, based on the submission of the June 30, 2015 audit, he did not anticipate any since all issues were resolved. He stated that the federal website for submission has been down since July and has been recently reactivated in November. We have until Jan. 31, 2016 to address any issues through automatic extensions, should they be brought to our attention after federal review.

Joseph Albano proceeded to conduct a review of the CFR FY2015 for The Board. Mr. Albano stated that the CFR gives an accurate picture of the fiscal state of the school. He directed the Board to look at page 3 of the CFR, which provides a snapshot of Liabilities and Net Assets.

At a glance, our liabilities are approximately \$1.8 million in accounts payable and accrued expenses, which is a higher number than we have seen in previous years, reflective of the accrual of staff salaries that must be reported at the end of the fiscal year. This number compared to \$2.1 million in cash and equivalents would leave about \$300,000 in liquidity, which he advised the Board to keep an eye on as part of our fiduciary responsibility to manage our school's cash reserves for the year. This number is fairly common for charter schools like ours.

Page 4 shows the profit and loss for the year. There is an operating deficit for the year of around \$400,000 since we are now accruing summer payroll and listing CAR (Cumulative Account Reserve) day liability. This is additionally impacted by the issues surrounding our per-pupil allocation since the funding formula has been frozen for years.

Mr. Hicks asked, "How does our deficit effect our day-to-day operations?" Ms. Gauthier responded that it doesn't impact us negatively at this time. However, some people and entities, including the UFT, have been taken the position that we have a surplus of cash reserves. This is not the case. We spend most of our money on programming to educate our students and delivering necessary services. Mr. Albano pointed out that this fact is reflected in the items on page 5 of the CFR, which can be used as a point of reference when addressing outside sources of concern regarding our financial status.

Ms. Cohen stated that the original charter school act requires that every charter school have enough in its reserve fund in the event that the school should close. This

money (\$75,000) is legally encumbered. Mr. Ashenfarb cited this item as restricted cash under Assets on Page 3 of the CFR. Ms. Gauthier commented that should our school be closed, our reserves would cover our legal payroll obligations for July and August including the pay-out of CAR days. That is why we should not see this money as a “surplus”.

Mr. Hicks commented that the presentation of the CFR made everything perfectly clear.

Mr. Ashenfarb invited The Board to provide any feedback necessary as we move into the fiscal year 2016 audit.

Ms. Gauthier revisited the shortfall in our per-pupil allocation with regard to the state funding formula. She stated that if the formula was “turned back on” we would see substantial increases in the coming years due to the increased expenditures of the NYC DOE.

This would make up for our shortfall. The combined advocacy efforts of the big charter support organizations, other charter schools, including the 5 conversion charter schools, are designed to get the formula corrected and turned back on in our favor. TRCS and two other conversion charter schools, Wildcat and Future Leaders’ Institute, are subject to contracts that were negotiated between the unions and The NYC Office of Labor Relations without regard to whether or not we would be able to meet our increasing financial obligations to our unionized employees under the current funding formula. We have estimated that TRCS is obligated to pay out \$3.7 million over the next 5 years. Additionally, we anticipate a possible 4.5% increase in our pension costs for employees by the end of this year with further increases expected annually.

Ms. Gauthier stated that the CFR was reviewed and approved by The Finance and Audit Committee, but requested that the Board ratify the committee’s approval.

Mr. Hicks made a motion to approve the CFR FY2015. The motion was seconded and approved.

Dr. Joffe asked if it would be necessary for the Finance and Audit Committee to meet at some point to plan for contingencies should there be any new developments with the budget from Albany.

Ms. Gauthier stated that there is always a need for contingency planning, but that any anticipated shortfall or windfall would not occur until between March and June of 2016. Presently, TRCS is working with a conservative fiscal mindset with regard to not hiring any additional personnel and retaining staff positions at their current level.

6. Report on Executive Compensation:

Ms. Gauthier stated that she was informed that she had been advised by Mr. Albano that a best accounting practice for charter schools is that there should be a record in our proceedings that the Board is informed of the executive compensation of our School Management Team. Other boards set their executive compensation, but, TRCS follows the CSA contract salary structure for three levels of administrators, inclusive of the Principal, Assistant Principals, and Education Administrators. These salaries vary depending on years of service in those positions. Mr. Albano clarified that we should have this discussion on an annual basis, at the end of each school year, for the public record.

Ms. Cohen clarified that it would be sufficient for the Board to have the discussion as described annually and that our executive compensation follows the CSA salary schedule.

7. School Management Team Report:

Progress Towards Goals, Accountability Metrics

Ms. Gauthier delivered the report on behalf of the SMT. She referred The Board to materials that were provided before the meeting and posted on the school's website, including our CFR, Annual Report, and School Survey Report.

Ms. Gauthier referred to the documents provided in the meeting packet:

- A. "Progress Towards Charter Goals Summary – Annual Report
- B. Renaissance Charter School – 2015-2019 Charter Goals/Progress Toward Goals 2015-2016

The reports show progress toward achieving prescribed goals from our last charter in a number of areas. It's important to note how we are performing on our new goals, as these are the metrics we will be judged on. When the State standardized tests changed, the DOE did not change the metrics, therefore few schools have reached 75% proficiency. The new goals are comparative. With these new goals we are at 94.4% goal completion. One of the places TRCS fell short is in ELA, which has been a topic for discussion at previous board meetings. There are two goals which we are not required to meet until year 4 of our charter, but given our 4.2 year renewal, we may want to question whether and how these goals are applicable.

We've performed quite well toward meeting our passing rate of 75% for students taking a Math Regents. We are at 67%, which compares very favorably to other schools in NYC.

We also have a high passing rate on the ELA Regents at 65%. However, this does not yet meet the new benchmark of 75%. Our rates drop to 47% passing when our students are held to a standard to achieve a score of 75 or higher on Regents Exams. Therefore, we have our work cut out for us to move to a higher passing rate on ELA

Regents. Additionally during the period of our charter renewal, RCT exams were eliminated, thus all students have to take the same exam, meaning that struggling students who would have passed the RCTs and not the standard Regents have no alternative other than taking and passing the Regents.

We've included Value-Added Goals and Mission-Centered Goals, toward which we are making great progress.

Ms. Gauthier concluded the report by stating that our response rate on our school-wide survey was remarkably high, at 90%. This year, the DOE included the survey results in their evaluation of our school. Their evaluation states that compared to District 30 schools, TRCS did not rate as well in overall survey results even though the numbers are high. Unfortunately, this comparison does not take into consideration the response rates of other schools (which are lower) compared to TRCS.

8. Board Members New Business

A. Ms. Gauthier reported that The Friends of The Renaissance Charter School had officially launched, with an alumna, Connor McCoy, serving as its President. Ms. Gauthier reminded The Board that The Friends of Board is primarily a fund-raising component of The Board of Trustees of TRCS. Ms. Gauthier referred to the document entitled "The Friends of Renaissance Charter School", which included names and positions of board members and the bylaws.

A motion was made to approve the Bylaws of The Friends of The Renaissance Charter School, subject to review of past minutes, and a full review of those bylaws. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

An additional motion was made by Mr. Hicks to approve the members of The Friends of The Renaissance Charter School. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Ms. Gauthier introduced Dr. Rachel Mandel, new board member candidate, whose resume was presented at the Board meeting. Dr. Mandel has met with Ms. Gauthier, Mr. Boyd, and Rebekah Oakes, Director of Development and Partnerships; and has toured the school. She was nominated as a candidate by Justin Ginsburgh, a former board member.

Ms. Mandel introduced herself. She first learned about our school and the vacancy on our board from Mr. Ginsburgh. She works with Mr. Ginsburgh's wife at Bellevue Hospital, where Dr. Mandel works as a child psychiatrist in a specially designated section of the emergency room dedicated to children's

psychiatric emergencies. She believes that she can be an asset to the Board based on her expertise in areas of children's mental health, special education, and her desire to be of service outside of the hospital, especially in a school setting.

Ms. Gauthier added that TRCS is presently working under two grants directly related to mental health, Project Aware and a secondary age Counseling Grant. Having someone in these areas of expertise on our board would be an asset. Additionally, we are aligned with The Mayor's and The First Lady's (of NYC) initiatives on mental health and have garnered interest in The Mayor's office regarding our initiatives.

Dr. Joffe asked Dr. Mandel to share her personal pre-college educational experience. Dr. Mandel stated that she attended a Math and Science magnet school which shaped her philosophy regarding how schools prepare students to undertake academic and career challenges.

Mr. Hicks asked Dr. Mandel about her projected commitment to our school, if she were to be elected as a trustee. Dr. Mandel reiterated her desire to be of service to a school like ours and that she was impressed with our commitment to excellence in education.

Dr. Joffe shared his observation about some of the challenges that our students face with mounting expectations at home, in school, and in the society at large. He has observed that a large portion of our students come from homes of first generation Americans, many of whom have not gone to college. Quite a few of our students face emotional and psychological challenges which have an impact on their academic performance. Notably, many of our students who might perform well academically, are underachievers when it comes to their results on the SAT. Dr. Joffe asked Dr. Mandel if she could share some of her insights with regard to his observations.

Dr. Mandel shared that in her experience, the question as to why certain students excel and others do not is ongoing. Certainly, it has been widely accepted that some of the traditional standardized tests, e.g. the SAT, are racially and socially biased, impacted negatively on some immigrant populations.

Dr. Joffe asked Dr. Mandel if she had any questions for The Board. Dr. Mandel had no further questions.

Mr. Johnson asked if Dr. Mandel's interest in our school was piqued because we are a K-12 model. Dr. Mandel said that, yes that is one of the aspects that makes our school attractive to her, as well as the addition of our Pre-K program.

Mr. Boyd asked Dr. Mandel about her impressions of our school based on her tour during a school day. Dr. Mandel stated that she was impressed with our

open classrooms, relative order in the school, attentiveness to teaching and learning, and its relatively small size compared to other schools she has experienced.

Mr. Hicks asked Dr. Mandel if she had observed an increase in children presenting with mental disorders in recent years. Dr. Mandel stated that there may not have necessarily been an increase, but there may be more diagnostic tools and information that have made it possible to identify mental illness and distress in children with more specificity.

9. Public Speaking – None
10. Adjournment of Public Session - Mr. Boyd made a motion to adjourn the public session. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Adjournment of Public Session at 7:52PM.
11. The Board went into Executive Session.
12. The Board voted unanimously to approve Dr. Mandel’s candidacy as a board trustee. The Board granted Ms. Gauthier the authority to submit all required documents regarding Dr. Mandel to the NYC DOE for their review and final approval of her candidacy to the Board.

EXPENSES YTD AS COMPARED TO WORKING BUDGET

Expenses as of 12/31/15

Payroll and Taxes (@10%) Includes Per Session/Stipends/Consultants/Retro	\$6,718,349	2,573,975.66
Health Benefits	\$872,786	360,419.94
CSA Compensation Accrual Fund	\$5,000	-
DC 37 Health & Security and Education Fund	\$4,102	1,228.63
Health and Welfare	\$138,008	48,011.81
Pensions – TRS +Supplemental Contributions, BERS	\$850,000	258,166.94
Audit Fees/CSBM	\$69,500	32,615.00
Legal Fees	\$90,000	37,567.88
ADP Payroll & Other Payroll Expenses	\$17,000	10,324.60
Substitute Teachers	\$150,000	43,345.11
Teaching Support (Curriculum, PD, Teacher's Choice)	\$218,700	259,040.90
Administrative Expenses/Office Expenses/Technology Supplies/Marketing	\$50,000	67,500.55
Postage, Delivery and Freight	\$15,000	3,945.80
Meetings/Meals	\$15,000	6,994.32
Leased Equipment: Copiers/Laminators	\$30,000	11,520.07
Internet Service	\$15,000	17,283.27
Telephone	\$1,100	240.00
Insurance	\$100,000	69,751.04
Capital Expenditures (Fixed Assets on Balance Sheet)	\$35,000	19,754.07
PreK	\$180,000	68,225.44
School Food	\$437,000	196,963.88
Grant Expenses		115,580.03
<u>TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES</u>	\$10,011,545	4,202,454.94

NOTES:

Per Session includes the following: B/AS, PLCs, Coverages, PD, Mentoring, Stipends (T&L), General

Per Session, PICCS Contribution

Consultants include the following: Teaching Artists, Chess, TREA, Development

July and August expenses are charged to previous years budget

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The Renaissance Charter School Board of Trustees

February 3, 2016

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

1. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Dr. Monte Joffe, at 6:47 p.m. Stacey Gauthier assumed the role of secretary due to Everett Boyd's absence. The board members present introduced themselves to school lawyer, Jacob Claveloux.
2. Dr. Joffe delivered the Chairperson's Welcome. It is a tumultuous time in education. The common core is on shaky ground. Governor Cuomo has altered his previously firm position on the rating of teachers. Something is underfoot. Schools will need to be able to quickly respond and look deeply at all matters. At Renaissance, we have always had many discussions with all constituencies on important issues. This will support us in dealing with the tidal waves ahead. This will help us to stay together and hold on as a board.
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was waived since the flag was put away.
4. Roll Call was taken. Present: Stacey Gauthier, Chester Hicks, Raymond Johnson, Monte Joffe, Francine Smith. Absent: Everett Boyd, Sandra Geyer, Margaret Martinez-DeLuca. Also present: School Lawyer – Jacob Claveloux.
5. The minutes of the December 2, 2015 meeting were read. A motion was made by Mr. Hicks, seconded by Mrs. Smith and unanimously approved to accept the minutes.
6. The following reports were made to the board (see attachments) –
 - a. Mid-Year Academic Report

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

- b. Mid-Year Development Report (with advocacy summary)
 - c. Mid-Year Financial Report
-
- 7. Board Members' New Business – Dr. Joffe asked Mrs. Gauthier to report on The Teacher-Powered School Conference and the new format used by the School for Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences.
 - 8. Public Speaking – There was no public speaking.
 - 9. A motion was made by Mr. Hicks, seconded by Mr. Johnson and unanimously approved to adjourn the public session at 7:35 p.m.
 - 10. The board entered into executive session at 7:36 p.m.

Mid-Year Academic Update – February 3, 2016

- We have administered two ANET assessments and will be doing the third set next week. Teachers have met in pairs and groups, with and without administrators, to analyze the data and make instructional adjustments as needed. Our consultant has worked closely with us throughout this process.
- The State announced changes to this year's 3-8 standardized exams in ELA and Math including reducing the number of passages and questions and allowed for untimed administrations. Additional guidance concerning this is forthcoming.
- We administered January Regents to several students. A large change is that we are waiting until June to administer the ELA Regents to our 11th graders with the expectation that they will be able to reach the "college ready" score of 75.
- We have completed a second round of reading benchmarking in grades 1-6 and the first round of benchmarking for our kindergarten students. Working with our literacy consultant, we have established a three tier literacy intervention program which is as follows –
 - Tier 1 – Literacy Block and Guided Reading Groups in the Classroom
 - Tier 2 – Leveled Literacy Intervention Small Group Support (14-16 weeks)
 - Tier 3 – More Intensive and Rule-based Support (Orton-Gillingham / Wilson)
- DOE has instituted a new policy to track our enrollment targets for Free and Reduced Meal Students, ELLs and SWDs. We are now permitted to include students who have "tested out" or been decertified for 3 years as part of our counts. Additionally, identified Pre-K students, can also be included.
- Maura Callan, our elementary science teacher, has left on child care leave. Her position is being covered through the rest of the school year by two coverage teachers – Sarita Ramraj (K-2) and Evan Banks (3-4). Both teachers worked with Maura prior to her departure. Dan Fanelli, Administrator for STEM, will continue to support both teachers.
- We have a fully enrolled Saturday school program supporting students in 5-8 ELA, 6-8 Math, HS Homework Support and Regents' Support.

- The High School has also implemented a homework center and tutoring program. We are hoping to get additional math support by working with NYU.
- We are now utilizing two 3-D technologies –
 - STEAMtrax is an innovative new curriculum that integrates engineering and 3D printing technology with core academic knowledge in science, math, language arts, social studies. Soon, Renaissance students will engage in learning scenarios that encourage the essential skills of problem solving, collaboration, communication, and design; better preparing our students for 21st Century learning. Students will address real world problems and design solutions that can be printed on our new 3D printer. Our after-school program will be implementing a solar cell study where students will design and print a leaf model containing a solar cell and other forms of biomimicry. In the Spring, 6th grade students will design a construction crane that uses hydraulic force and electromagnetism to lift a load.
 - 3D Classroom is a teaching aid that enables students to easily visualize areas that can otherwise be too abstract for students to understand. The program allows teachers to showcase math and science concepts from a macro to micro level. Students will be able to see realistic and anatomically correct human anatomy from a heart beating, to gas exchange that happens in the lungs. All of this can be seen in real stereo 3D, much like going to see a movie in the theater 3D.
- **Thanks to our PTA for its financial support of these programs!**
- Suzanne Arnold, Administrator for School Culture and Student Support and Project Coordinator on our Project Aware Youth Mental Health Grant has trained 51 Renaissance staff and support personnel on identifying youth who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. By the end of the year, we expect to have all staff trained and open our day-long trainings to parents and community members.
- Our Drama Production, Fuddy Meers, is currently in production. More to come...

**Development Report to the
Board of Trustees
February 3, 2016**

2015-2016 Grant Update

(See attached sheet for more information.)

• **Direct Appeals**

These include checks and online donations received in response to Summer, Angel Fund, Garden Appeals – all direct donations to the school.

- Angel Fund – We started the year with a balance of \$1,679 in the school Angel account, and so far have deposited \$3,342 from various fundraisers during the course of the year. We have expended \$1,535 so far to provide support to:
 - 3 students to attend a Broadway play with their theatre class
 - 3 students for the 4th-6th grade Nature’s Classroom trip
 - 2 students for the MS trip
 - 5 CUNY application fees.

We expect several more Nature’s classroom and Middle School trip requests to come in over the next few weeks. We welcome donations!

- Learn 2 Earn – The K-4 cluster participated in an online project to benefit K-4 classrooms. Students pledged to read a certain amount of books and family members “paid them” by donating to the classroom online. After the online fees, we collected \$1,636 for the individual classes.
- Rensizzle Appeal – After deciding to include K-6 in our Rensizzle week this year, we expended a record amount of about \$24,000 on learning experiences during the last week of October, for classes K-12. We put out an online appeal to help us defray those costs, and raised \$1,071. We intend to keep this appeal going, in addition to the foundation grants we are pursuing now.

• **Pending grant applications:**

- We signed with an online Foundation Search firm, which promised our annual fee returned if we didn’t make that much in foundation grants the first year. Foundation support has always been weak, so we decided to take them at their word. So far, Peggy and I have sent letters of introduction, and letters of inquiry to ___ foundations identified through this new search engine as plausible, identifying certain pricey initiatives (College Bound and the Leadership program, Rensizzle Week, TREA, etc.)
- The city has opened up more funding streams for out-of-school-time programming, and 82nd Street Academics and Renaissance have applied to two of them.
 - COMPASS ([Comprehensive Afterschool System of NYC](#)) High – this grant is funding after-school, summer and weekend programming for 9th-10th grade students that has a strong mental-health awareness component. 82SA runs our 9-10 after-school program, and has applied for this grant on Renaissance’s behalf. Because of our participation in the Wildcat CS-led School Counseling Grant, we have hired a second social-worker, who has agreed to act as the “Counselor Advocate”—so that all students in this cohort will have individual access to social-emotional support in addition to targeted academic support.

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- COMPASS Explore – this grant is for highly focused, “deep-dive” learning experiences for co-horts of students. They specify a minimum of 150 hours of programming that can be delivered during after-school, summer or Saturdays. We have chosen to build on the successful Summer Agriculture Camp last year, combining the activities surrounding the roof-top garden with the popular “Urban Farming” Rensizzle. Our proposed “Urban Sustainability & Design Program” which utilizes the philosophy of “Permaculture” to engage students in interdisciplinary, solutions-based approaches to problem-solving.
- LRNG Innovators Challenge Grant (MacArthur Foundation supported) – The RFP called for inspiring proposals to expand the time and space youth people have for interest-driven learning in schools. We submitted our “Rensizzle” program.

• **Update on Grants Received during the 2014-15 school year:**

- Project BOOST – We were dropped from this CEI-sponsored funding stream.
- NYC Council Discretionary (Dromm) – We also did not receive a City Council Discretionary Fund grant to support TREA for the 2015-2016 school year. It looks like they lost our online application, and because of the strained relations with Danny Dromm, they did not alert us to the fact that they did not receive our application. We have made sure that we keep all online applications on paper from now on, and the confirmations we receive.
- NYS Charter School Dissemination - Despite the fact that our DOE partner-school (Truman HS) ended their participation on July 31, NYSED gave us permission to continue the work through January. We will continue to work with Phil and Carol Gersmehl throughout this year, and we have shared our model units and the geography and ‘Writing Like an Historian’ PD with our new partner: Math, Science Research & Technology Magnet HS in Cambria Heights, Queens.
- Special Legislative Grants – Our special legislative requests have gone in this year for TREA, in hopes that we can be reimbursed for some of the programming we supported during this un-funded year.
- Project Aware Mental Health First-Aid – Suzanne continues in training our community (teachers and others who work with youth) to “understand, recognize, and respond to signs of mental illness or substance abuse in children and youth.”
- Children’s Institute – Primary Project. The project to support ‘school readiness’ in our K-3 population was successful last year, and all targeted teachers have agreed to continue the one-on-one meetings with the Child Associate (Mark Ugalde, one of the 82SA after-school teachers). The program helps targeted students improve their focus and become more successful in school.
- Strebor Family Foundation – We received the small family foundation grant again, to support the production aspects of our spring drama production.

In-Kind Grants and Donations

- Federal Counseling grant, led by Wildcat Academy Charter School, pays for additional mental-health counselors at our school. The project has been stalled due to hiring concerns, and will begin in the fall.
- DYCD SONYC grant received by 82SA for our middle-schooler after-school program, continues this year. The program has been aided considerably by the addition of Dan

Fanelli as the Education Liaison, providing curricular ties to the after-school STEM activities, training 82SA teachers to lead the activities and following-up with teachers for additional curriculum ties and up-to-date homework assignments.

- CASA (NYC Council) after-school enrichment grant paid for a media arts class for our 5th graders.
- Urban Advantage (STEM Education), Little Kids Rock (Music Education) and Bubble Foundation (Nutrition Education) have all continued. The grants provide PD, musical instruments, supplies for the school and trips for families.

Friends of Renaissance

We met with the new FOR board in November, and identified a few areas of concentration, including alumni participation in fundraising events (both online and in person) to benefit Rensizzle and our Leadership program.

Renaissance’s political advocacy efforts continue to be the most successful way of bringing money to the school. We have joined the NYC and NYS Charter organizations, Families for Excellent Schools and the Coalition for Independent Charter schools in the fight to get our funding formula restored, or at the very least bringing us more in parity with the NYC DOE schools—who got a 6% increase in per-pupil compared with our 2%. In addition, as the board is aware, we are joining our lobbyists in Albany for meetings to gain support for a financial “carve-out” in the education budget to support conversion charter schools.

Please consider joining our advocacy efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebekah Oakes, Director of Development and Partnerships

Grants Awarded 2015-2016

Direct Appeals:

Summer Appeal Letter and other Unrestricted	\$1,221	
Angel Fund (SAF) - final June:	1,679	
Angel Fund collected 2015-2016	3,342	
Friends of Renaissance, Amalgamated Account	1,472	as of 1/31/16
	\$7,714	

Government/Corporate/Foundation Grants:

NYS Charter School Dissemination, 3 yrs: \$500K	75,350	Global Humanities/MSRT HS
Special Legislative Grant - Peralta		
Special Legislative Grant - DenDekker		
US Carol M. White Physical Education Grant	232,500	RO Salary offset + consortium expenses
US E-Rate Level-3 Communications Reimbursement:	25,959	Cable Internet reimbursement
US E-Rate Quality Ed Wiring/Cabling Reimbursement:	39,880	
US E-Rate CDW Cloud Control Reimbursement:	26,731	
US Project Aware Mental Health First Aid	33,550	(\$67,100 for 2015-2017 expenses)
Children's Institute - Primary Project	11,306	school readiness screenings
Patrina Foundation	7,500	4 year grant for 2016 cohort
Strebor Foundation	2,400	spring drama production
Emblem Health - partnership & building use	1,750	March - December, 2015
Grow to Learn	1,400	Rooftop Garden-Aeroponics program
	\$458,326	
TOTAL	\$466,040	

In-Kind Services Received 2014-2015

	Valued At	
Federal 2-Year Counseling Consortium Grant	53,000	Additional Mental Health Counselor(s)
TASC - 82SA CBO After School	60,000	funding for 5th, 9th and 10th
OST DYCD - 82SA 6th-8th grade program	273,000	middle school after-school program
CASA After-School Programming (Dromm)	20,000	CMA for after-school
Urban Advantage		STEM services, trips, supplies (\$450)
Little Kids Rock		Music Ed PD, instruments
Bubble Foundation		Nutrition; students and families

The Renaissance

35-59 81st Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

www.renaissancecharter.org • 718-803-0060 • 718-803-3785 (fax)

Charter School

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May 4, 2016

The Renaissance Charter School

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:48 PM.
2. Chairperson's Welcome – Chairperson Sandra Geyer opened the meeting with a moment of silence in recognition of the deaths of relatives of several members of the Renaissance faculty.

Ms. Geyer asked Dr. Joffe, vice-chairperson, to deliver the welcome remarks. Dr. Joffe offered a special welcome to Conor McCoy and Chelsea Reid, two graduates of TRCS, Aidan Sugrue, a senior at TRCS, and Emily Oliapuram, Social Studies Teacher. Dr. Joffe observed that No Child Left Behind was recently replaced by ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act). The new act promotes project-based learning, college and career readiness, and the teaching of common core curricula linked to community-based learning. Dr. Joffe said that this reaffirms the core values that formed the foundation of the original Renaissance School and now The Renaissance Charter School.

3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. Roll Call was taken by the Secretary, Everett Boyd.
Board Members Present: Ms. Geyer, Dr. Joffe, Ms. Gauthier, Mr. Hicks, Ms. Smith, Mr. Boyd; Late: Dr. Mandel.

Absent: Dr. Martinez – Deluca.

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Also present: Denise Hur, TRCS Director of Operations, Conor McCoy, Chelsea Reid, Aidan Sugrue, and Emily Oliapuram.

5. The Minutes of the February 3, 2016 BOT Meeting were approved.

*Agenda item 5) Review and Approval of FY 2017 Working Budget was moved by request of Ms. Gauthier to item 6) School Management Team Report.

6. School Management Team Report including staff assignments for 2017:

Ms. Gauthier introduced Chelsea Reid, Aidan Sugrue, and Emily Oliapuram, who presented a report on their recent trip to New Orleans. Ms. Gauthier framed the presentation as a great example of the kind of project-based learning that occurs at TRCS. Chelsea Reid contextualized the trip as an action research field trip, which was part of a year-long class about activism and The Black Lives Matter and All Lives Matter movements. Chelsea had made a similar trip, along with several other students and teachers, when she was a student at TRCS. Emily Oliapuram explained the significance of New Orleans in terms of its pivotal place in American History, as well as its contemporary significance socially, racially, and politically, in the post- Hurricane Katrina era.

Aidan Sugrue reported on the highlights of the trip from a student's perspective. Highlights included a tour of the city by a native of New Orleans, who chronicled the changes that have taken place before and after Hurricane Katrina. Students went to Treme, The Lower 9th Ward, historical sites and monuments, JazzFest; ate at traditional restaurants, and saw examples of New Orleans culture.

Chelsea stated that the class's goals are to share what participants learned from their trip with other students and to have a movie night, featuring a film about Black Lives Matter, followed by courageous conversations about the film and its implications related to the current topics.

Ms. Gauthier reported on several important updates:

- Monday, May 9 - Renaissance is a "Featured School" for our District 75 collaboration. We will have visitors from other schools who will tour TRCS and participate in a panel discussion which will include Ms. Gauthier and Liz Perez, Administrator for Special Education.
- Thursday, May 12 - Melissa Harris, the new Senior Executive Director, in the Office of Charter Partnerships will be visiting and touring the school. Melissa Harris has replaced Julian Cohen in that position.

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- David Franck has left The DOE for a position in the SED as a Charter School Authorizer.
 - Mayor de Blasio, The City of New York, and the custodial union have negotiated a new agreement which could have a major impact on our custodial services a TRCS. Under the new agreement, we would lose our service provider, ABM, we would be the ‘second school’ for another DOE custodian, and our current custodial staff would be demoted or assigned to other positions.
 - This year’s demand for seats at TRCS has surpassed 3,000 applicants.
 - Next month we will report on Social Justice Day which was held on April 22.
 - We are continuing our efforts to fight for our fair share of funding. Our lobbyists have assured us that there remains the possibility that we may see some financial relief in the period from now until the end of June, which is known in Albany as “the clean-up period” following the formal vote on the budget.
 - Ms. Gauthier gave a “shout out” to Ernest Logan, President of The Council of Supervisors & Administrators, NYC (CSA), for his leadership in advocating for fair funding for charter schools and especially for conversion charter schools. Mr. Logan has organized several meetings with school leaders and lobbyists at the CSA office to discuss coordinated strategies for advocating for fair funding for TRCS and several conversion charter schools. Mr. Logan recently delivered an informed and passionate presentation on the budget and fair funding for charter schools before the State Legislators in Albany.
 - Ms. Gauthier presented the staffing assignments for next year, referring to the following document included in board members’ packets: “The Renaissance Charter School Teaching: Teaching, Guidance and Social Work Position Assignments for 2016-2017 School Year.
7. The Renaissance Charter School Working Budget Fiscal Year 2017 was presented by Ms. Gauthier and Denise Hur, TRCS Director of Operations. The current projected expenses substantially exceed the previous projections, mainly reflecting an increase in the contribution TRCS must make to pensions, TRS, and BERS. A copy of the budget, which had been reviewed by The Finance Committee, was included in board members’ packets. A motion was made and seconded to approve the budget. The motion passed.
8. Board member and CSG Chair, Everett Boyd presented The TRCS CSG Activities Report for 2015-2016, which was included in board members’ packets.
9. The Board interviewed Conor McCoy, a candidate for trustee. Mr. McCoy is an alumnus of TRCS, who attended the school from 1996 until he graduated in 2002. Mr. McCoy was awarded a Posse Scholarship to attend DePauw University, where he earned a BA in

Sociology and Anthropology. He currently works as a Private Wealth Management Professional for UBS Financial Services, Inc.

Mr. McCoy contributes some of his resources to several organizations, including The Posse Foundation and Some Young Minds. When asked about his vision for service if he were to be selected as a Board of Trustee member, Mr. McCoy said that his desire was to give back to the school that had greatly contributed to his success by involving himself in school budgetary matters, speaking to high school students about finance, career choices, and anything that he can do to be beneficial to the sustainability of TRCS.

10. Board Members New Business – Mr. Joffe reported that his tour of the school with Touro College students left a great impression on them.

- A group of Chilean educators and civic leaders will visit the school at the end of May.
- We will also have a visit from an educator from South Korea, who is studying global education and its connections.

11. Public Speaking – None

12. Adjournment of Public Session – A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the Public Session. The public session was adjourned at 8:02PM.

13. The Executive Session was called to order at 8:10PM

14. Adjournment of Executive Session – A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the Executive Session. The Executive Session was adjourned at 8:37PM.

15. The Public Session reconvened and was called to order at 8:37PM.

16. The Board voted unanimously to approve Conor McCoy's candidacy as a Board trustee. The Board granted Ms. Gauthier the authority to submit all required documents regarding Conor McCoy to the New York City Department of Education for their review and final approval for his appointment to the Board.

17. Adjournment of the reconvened Public Session – A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the reconvened Public Session. The Public Session was adjourned at 8:38PM.

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Charter School

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-DRAFT-

June 1, 2016

The Renaissance Charter School

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

HONORARY MEMBERS

Hazel DuBois, Ph.D. 1937-2013

Hon. Rudolph Greco, Esq.

Meryl Thompson

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM.
2. Chairperson's Message – Chairperson Sandra Geyer welcomed members of The CSG who were present, Conor McCoy, alumni, Chair of Friends of Renaissance, pending member of The Board, and other presenters and guests. (See Guest at Board Meeting List.)
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.
4. Roll Call was taken by the Secretary, Everett Boyd
Board Members Present: Ms. Geyer, Ms. Gauthier, Mr. Hicks, Ms. Smith, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Johnson, Dr. Mandel
Absent: Dr. Joffe, Dr. Martinez-DelUCA
5. Presentation by 1st Grade – CMA Partnership - Leah Shanahan, Teacher and students Juliana, Matthew, and Johanna. Ms. Gauthier introduced Leah and her students, who presented an animation video produced by their class which demonstrated the successful and innovative work that has been accomplished at TRCS with a partnered organization.
6. Update on Albany Advocacy – Ms. Gauthier introduced Dwayne Andrews, Vice President – Patrick B. Jenkins and Associates and John Harrison York, Executive Director of Future Leaders' Institute Charter School.

Mr. Andrews outlined the advocacy efforts conducted by his firm on behalf of TRCS and several other conversion charter schools that began in December of 2015.

“Developing Leaders for the Renaissance of New York”

Initial advocacy efforts were focused on educating our legislators in Albany about conversion charter schools, like ours, and the difference between conversion charter schools and non-conversion charter schools.

Our initial ask of \$15M successfully made into the budget. Unfortunately, it was omitted when the budget was voted on at the beginning of April. Mr. Andrews stated that his firm continues to work on this issue, and that there is possibility that we may realize some financial relief by the end of June in the “cleanup period”, when the state legislature makes compensatory provisions for budget items that were left out or not addressed in the approval phase of the budget.

Conor McCoy, board candidate, asked is there anything that he or anyone can do to push this issue to a successful outcome. Ms. Gauthier said that our issues will be ongoing, especially due to rising pension costs, for which we have not seen sufficient relief.

John York stated that Future Leaders Institute (FLI) has experienced a similar increase in pension costs. Both Ms. Gauthier and Mr. York stated the potential for these increases, with regard to unionized charter schools, were not taken into account in the negotiating phase of contracts. This has placed a huge burden on each school to make up for the deficit, impacting funds that could be used to sustain teaching and learning.

Mr. Hicks asked if there is any alternative relief that can be sought if we do not receive the relief we are seeking by the end of June. Mr. Harrison stated that there may be some avenues between now and the new budget cycle, which begins in January.

7. School Management Team Report

- a. College Bound and Leadership Report – Two reports were included in the board packet: TRCS College Office Leadership Program Report Academic Year 2015-2016 and College Bound Program 2015-2016 Report to the TRCS Board of Trustees. College Bound Coordinator Ana Falla Riff introduced student presenters: Andres, Anlaika, Carlos, and 2 alumni, Ruhlaiah Taylor, Class of 2014, and Sabrina Gauthier, Class of 2010. Each student spoke very positively about the impact that The College Bound and Leadership programs have had on their lives.

Ms. Falla Riff stated that the climate for college admissions has changed dramatically over the last few years, reflective of the economic downturn. She further outlined the myriad activities that the college bound office offers to our students.

Parent workshops have been successfully offered and attended, including workshops on the college application process, scholarships, financial aid, and PSAT, SAT, and AP Exams. The office is working on meeting the rising needs of students and families.

Ms. Geyer thanked the College Bound presenters for their wonderful contribution to the school and their presentation at the meeting.

- b. Summary of School Partnerships – Rebekah Oakes, Director of Development and Partnerships

Ms. Oakes gave a summary of school partnerships found in the Development Report to the Board of Trustees, June 1, 2016 which was included in the board packet.

- c. Final Development Report – Rebekah Oakes, Director of Development and Partnerships
Ms. Oakes referred The Board to Development Report for review.

Ms. Oakes announced that there will be an alumni event in the fall as well as a cruise for alumni and Friends Of Renaissance. Ms. Gauthier thanked Ms. Oakes and Peggy Heeney for their efforts in working

- d. ANET Report – Dan Fanelli, Administrator for Middle School and STEM PK-12

Mr. Fanelli outlined the work being done with Achievement Network (ANET). This is the first year of involvement in the Network, which offers several assessment tools in ELA and Math. This allows our school to look at and evaluate the data gathered from the assessments and to manage adjustments in the classroom to promote better outcomes. More detail can be found in the report included in the board meeting packet: Performance Benchmarking Overview and Recommendations.

Ms. Gauthier offered praise to our teachers who embraced the new system with fidelity.

- e. Admissions Statistics – Spring 2016 Lottery
The Lottery for School Year 2016-2017 report was included in the board meeting packet.

- 8. Approval of May 4, 2016 Minutes - A motion was made and passed to approve the minutes.
- 9. Approval of 2016-2017 Board Meeting Calendar - A motion was made and passed to approve the minutes.
- 10. Board Members' New Business - Mr. Boyd announced the upcoming TRCS PTA Cabaret Night on Friday, June 3, 2106.
- 11. Public Speaking – There were no public speakers.
- 12. Adjournment of Public Session – A motion was made to adjourn the public session at 8:35PM.
- 13. Executive Session – The Executive Session was called to order at 8:40PM.