



TWO RIVERS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

November 9, 2021

Call to Order

The November 9th Meeting of the Two Rivers Board of Trustees started at 6:03 PM via Zoom. Chair Zachariah opened the meeting by explaining that the meeting will be held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and is being recorded.

Roll Call

Board Members

Aswathi Zachariah, Chair	Present
Malik Husser, Vice Chair	Present
Eli Schlam, Secretary	Present
Saumil Shah, Treasurer	Present
Jenny Bradbury, Trustee	Present
Kimberly Eddings, Trustee	Present
John Phillips, Trustee	Present
Derek Pierce, Trustee	Present
Nick Rodriguez, Trustee	Absent
Ahna Smith, Trustee	Present
Matthew Steenhoek, Trustee	Present
Penelope Talley Thornton, Trustee	Absent
Theo Thompson, Trustee	Absent
Kristina Kyles-Smith, Executive Director and Ex Officio	Present

Others Present

Gail Williams, Chief Operating Officer
Kenneth McCants-Pearsall, Chief Academic Officer
Aurora Steinle, Chief of Staff
Tricia Eisner, Senior Director of Development
Michelle Kimso, Executive Assistant
Muronji Inman-McCraw, Principal of Young Middle School
McKenzie Baecker, Assistant Principal of Culture InTraining of Young Middle School
Chelsea Dargba, 8th Grade Student at Young Middle School

Approval of Meeting Agenda

The Board unanimously approved the November 9th meeting agenda.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

The Board unanimously approved the October 12th Board meeting minutes.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Kyles-Smith introduced Principal Inman-McCraw and Assistant Principal of Culture in Training Baecker to report on the Middle School Students' recent trip to NorthBay. McKenzie Baecker shared that 120 students attended NorthBay this year. The annual trip got students out of their comfort zones as they experienced time away from families, access to outdoor activities, and grew together as a crew. It was reported that, unfortunately, some of our students faced incidents of overt racism from NorthBay staff. Yet, the staff were proud that students spoke up about what they saw and experienced, notified staff, and engaged with adult supported restoration with NorthBay staff. In the future, staff recommends that additional vendors are vetted for this outdoor experience.

Trustee Pierce suggested, given the tenured relationship with NorthBay, that a conversation be had about some of the things that students and schools are experiencing.

Trustee Eddings asked at what point does overt racism become a risk factor with external stakeholders and potential complaints with parents. Executive Director Kyles-Smith shared that is where Two Rivers is headed with the use of the diversity and anti-racist statement. This is a historic relationship and an unexpected outcome of a trip Two Rivers has taken many times.

Secretary Schlam asked about communication with parents. Assistant Principal of Culture in Training Baecker shared that all parents whose students went to NorthBay were notified. The network covid team and school leadership team made phone calls to individual families whose students experienced overt racism. Principal Inman-McCraw added that parents want to know how NorthBay will be vetted going forward and how the relationship will be revised.

Trustee Smith encouraged Two Rivers to continue building relationships with parents is the best practice for keeping families from reaching out to external partners.

Trustee Pierce asked if our Anti-Racism statement is part of the contract. Executive Director Kyles-Smith shared that Two Rivers has lifted the process and will work to continually improve it. The process currently ensures that Two Rivers has diverse contract providers. Secretary Schlam encouraged Two Rivers staff to have more robust Anti-Racist statements in the Board Memos. He also suggested that the staff and the finance committee consider ways to add an Anti-Racist statement to contracts. Treasurer Shah shared that Two Rivers could include a statement in which the Anti-Racist beliefs are stated and ask for alignment in partners' beliefs.

Executive Director Kyles-Smith read a letter signed on behalf of herself and Chair Zachariah to Assistant Principal of Culture in Training Baecker in appreciation of the hard work and dedication to lifting and supporting NorthBay.

Executive Director Kyles-Smith shared that 8th grader Chelsea Dargba was selected to EL Education's Student Advisory Board. Chelsea shared favorite part of Two Rivers is the community, and she enjoys advocating for others and her education. Chair Zachariah offered congratulations to Chelsea. Secretary Schlam invited Chelsea to come back in the future to share her thoughts about Two Rivers and EL Education with the Trustees.

Board Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Chair Zachariah introduced Vice Chair Husser to follow up to the Board's goals shared at the Board Retreat in September. Vice Chair Husser asked if the goals are still aligned after two Board Meetings or do they need to be better defined. The four themes from the September 11th Board Retreat are: finance, clearly defined support for the anti-racism work, staff support, and constructive visibility. Secretary Schlam suggested adding having a strong financial foundation for long term sustainability. He also suggested adding long term planning as a 5th goal. Trustee Eddings suggested a rephrase for a subset of the staff support goal in which to prioritizing accountability for leadership regarding physical and mental wellbeing of staff. Trustee Pierce suggested using language how the Board is investing in partners and vendors. Secretary Schlam suggested adding meeting obligations with finances and institutionalized professional development. Trustee Smith shared that clarity and elaboration around awareness and visibility of the role of the board. Trustee Phillips asked about creating action items with timelines. Vice Chair Husser suggested that they bring the goals back to the Executive Committee for action items. Trustee Bradbury asked to what degree the Board goals could be a role-up of the committee goals. Vice Chair Husser mentioned that the Executive committee would meet with committee chairs to ensure that goals are aligned. Chair Zachariah added that the goals will help to measure the Board see they did.

Finance Committee

Treasurer Shah shared that the Board is aligned with its Financial Goals. Two Rivers is opening up the position of Senior Director of Finance. Two Rivers is finishing its audit and beginning budget reforecasting. The board should anticipate some type of variance in the reforecasting.

Treasurer Shah presented the following Memo, which was shared with the Board in advance:

- **Chromebook Procurement for Early Childhood Education Program** - Two Rivers is seeking to purchase 160 Chromebooks. The acquisition of 110 touchscreen Chromebooks will provide age-appropriate devices to our earliest learners, preschool, and prekindergarten. For the early childhood program, they will use one device for every two students. Additionally, they will acquire 50 non-touchscreen Chromebooks to ensure we maintain a functional loaner fleet to manage remote instruction, lost devices, and repairs.

Two Rivers received proposals from nine vendors: Dynamic Network Solutions, MVation, W.B. Mason, ArchAngel Tablets, ICT Resources, DHE Computer Systems, Virtucom, Vivacity Tech, and Trafera. The proposals offered four different brands of Chromebooks. Based on the review, Two Rivers has determined that the Dell Chromebooks were a higher-quality device compared to the Samsung, HP, and Lenovo Chromebooks. The submitted proposal costs ranged from \$54,497 to \$70,578. Two Rivers issued a notice of intent to enter a contract on October 1, 2021, and placed advertisements in the DC Register, Washington Post, and Washington Informer. Two Rivers will acquire Chromebooks, including a 4-year warranty and the required Google management license per device.

- Recommendation - Two Rivers recommends contracting with ICT Resources. They scored highest on our rubric compared to vendors offering our preferred Dell Chromebook brand and offered the second-lowest overall price. The rubric considered price, product delivery, brand preference, and ICT Resources price is \$55,382 for the preferred Dell Chromebook.

Trustee Smith asked if there is any impact on Tech Support maintenance. Chief Operating Officer Williams shared that the chromebooks come with a four-year warranty. Dynamic Network Solutions provides onsite tech support. Executive Director Kyles-Smith shared that one of the Operations staff is a fleet manager for technology.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

Trustee Steenhoek presented the following Memo, which was shared with the Board in advance:

- HVAC Service Agreement Renewal- Since the initial HVAC system warranty expired, WL Gary has satisfactorily performed HVAC maintenance and service work at the Young elementary school campus. Due to the expansion of the middle school at Young, WL Gary's annual contract renewal exceeded \$25,000 and required that Two Rivers procure the preventative maintenance and service contract. Two Rivers issued a notice of intent to enter a contract on September 24, 2021, and subsequently placed advertisements in the DC Register, Washington Post, and Washington Informer. Two Rivers only received a proposal from our existing service provider W.L. Gary.
- Recommendation-Two Rivers recommends renewing our contract with WL Gary. The company has serviced the Young elementary school campus for over three years. WL Gary came highly recommended by the builder, MCN, and the HVAC system installer, HavTech. WL Gary's proposal offers a 2-year service agreement with an option for a 3rd and 4th-year extension. All subsequent contract years' prices have a fixed 3% increase. The first-year proposal to service both buildings is \$25,808.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

Trustee Eddings presented the following Memos, which were shared with the Board in advance:

- Employee Benefits Insurance Renewals for FY 22-For the FY21 School Year, Two Rivers used the companies listed below. Below is a summary of the details for each vendor, effective December 1, 2022. For Kaiser health insurance, the current budget is based on the costs from SY20-21 with a 6.5% increase. The Kaiser renewal is higher than budgeted due to particularly high claims this past year and overall increases in enrollment due to our continued expansion which creates uncertainty for incurred but not yet reported claims.

Contractor	Services	Rate Increase	Estimated Annual Cost
Aetna	employee dental	2.9%	Contract value depends on enrolled participants. The estimated annual cost is \$61,950. This benefit is 100% employee-paid.
Kaiser Permanente	health insurance	9%	Contract value depends on enrolled participants. The estimated annual cost is \$1,549,902. A portion of this benefit is employee-paid.
Reliance Standard	voluntary life insurance	No rate increase	Contract value depends on enrolled participants. The estimated annual cost is \$15,072. This benefit is 100% employee-paid.
Reliance Standard	short-term and long-term disability insurance	No rate increase	Contract value depends on enrolled participants. The estimated cost for STD is \$90,348 and LTD is \$19,872. This benefit is 100% employer-paid.

- Recommendation - Two Rivers recommends approval of these benefit renewals. Two Rivers will work with the finance committee to review the rates and determine if employee cost share needs to increase to help defray the cost increase for Kaiser Permanente.

Secretary Schlam asked if staff are ok with Kaiser. Senior Director of Human Resources Gornick replied that staff are very pleased with Kaiser.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

- Online Mental Health Services for FY 22 - Two Rivers has engaged with NFP to find providers to meet the need of mental health services, including examining other traditional EAP programs through different providers. Two Rivers narrowed down the search to two online platforms, Talkspace and Modern Health, which both provide online 1:1 mental health counseling or coaching, unlimited texting with providers, and access to self-care resources such as guided meditations and wellness kits.
- Recommendation - Two Rivers recommends contracting with Modern Health to expand our current benefit offerings and provide accessible and affordable mental health support for our employees.

Trustee Phillips asked what Modern Health is able to provide for services by adding the complement to the benefits. Senior Director of Human Resources Gornick replied staff would get 12 1:1 visits with an online platform within a day. They provide coaching, group therapy, and unlimited therapy. Trustee Eddings shared that a concern is usage of EAP as current utilization is less than 1% and with the addition of Modern Health, it parallels what is currently available. Senior Director of Human Resources Gornick replied that the current EAP relies on making a phone call, which is a challenge for teachers in the middle of the day. The Modern Health has an app which will allow usage in the middle of the day. Trustee Pierce suggested drawing a memo so staff are aware of the options available and are able to access services.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

Chief Operating Officer Williams presented two Memos of which Two Rivers is working to implement sustainable and quality options for students who require remote instruction due to short-term quarantine and due to medical exemptions. Trustee Schlam asked why we do not have one company to do both. Chief Academic Officer McCants-Pearsall responded that we already have an existing relationship with Educational Solutions yet they are struggling to find tutors and a partnership with iTutor would support what the needs are.

- Procurement of Tutoring Services - Two Rivers issued a request for proposals on September 17, 2021 and placed advertisements in the DC Register, Washington City Paper, and Washington Informer. We received responses from three vendors: Educational Solutions, iTutor, and Littera Education. After reviewing all three proposals, Two Rivers proposes to move forward with two providers for remote tutoring and more specifically: Educational Solutions for the tutorial services to

provide 1:1 or small group instruction to support our medically exempt students. The anticipated cost for Educational Solutions, based on roughly 10 hours per week per student at approximately \$65/hour, will be approximately \$175,000 for the remainder of the year.

- Recommendation - It is the recommendation of Two Rivers' staff that the Board of Trustees approve the Educational Solutions contract for remote instruction for medically exempt students.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

- Procurement of Tutoring Services - Two Rivers issued a request for proposals on September 17, 2021 and placed advertisements in the DC Register, Washington City Paper, and Washington Informer. We received responses from three vendors: Educational Solutions, iTutor, and Littera Education. After reviewing all three proposals, Two Rivers proposes to move forward with two providers: Educational Solutions and iTutor. Two Rivers would like to use Educational Solutions to provide 1:1 or small group instruction to support our medically exempt students and iTutor.com to provide on-demand virtual instruction for small groups of students on short-term quarantines due to COVID.
- Recommendation - It is the recommendation of Two Rivers' staff that the Board of Trustees approve the iTutor contract for remote instruction for quarantining students. The anticipated cost of the iTutor.com contract, based on roughly 10 hours per week per grade level at approximately \$140/hour, will be approximately \$308,000 for the remainder of the year.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.

Governance Committee

Secretary Schlam reminded Trustees to complete background checks. The governance committee is looking at BoardonTrack as a platform to assist with organizing Board documents. The committee is also working to revise goals.

Development Committee

Trustee Phillips shared that the development committee met to go over goals for the year. Senior Director of Development Eisner that the gala will be on March 19 at Dock 5 and will be in person with COVID protocols. Folger Pratt will be the giving partner for Giving Tuesday and will donate \$10,000 to be matched. Cassie Schupp and Sam Swiller will chair the gala again this year. Beyond the Basics has raised \$25,000 with \$30,000 in promised donations.

Chair Zachariah asked Trustees to think about what they can donate as an auction item to the Gala.

Academic Excellence

Trustee Pierce reported that the committee is in the process of updating their description. They will meet in December to align Board goals to committee goals. Chief Academic Officer McCants-Pearsall shared a high level overview of the beginning of year data. PARCC will be back for this year. For the last 4 years, Two Rivers is slightly below in MAP Math Proficiency. Two Rivers black students declined the most, which is in-line with national data in experiencing the most loss. Two Rivers SPED Students also had a decline in Math Proficiency. Trustee Phillips asked if there was a reason for the great decrease for black students in Math. Chief Academic Officer McCants-Pearsall noted anecdotally, black students experienced more struggles with the pandemic than other students. Two Rivers proficiency is higher in reading, though MAP scores dropped 6 points from last year to this year. There was a less steep decline in reading proficiency than in math. The same dips in reading are present with black and SPED students. Trustee Eddings wondered if there is a way to compare results across the district. Executive Director Kyles-Smith shared that EmpowerK-12 is the best bet for data comparison, however most LEA's data is spring-spring. Chief Academic Officer McCants-Pearsall shared that Instructional Guides were transitioned to content specific directors to provide strong Tier 1 supports. EL's K-2 skills block was implemented to support delivery of ELA. Grades 3-8 are using read-write-talk strategies to support comprehension and create high quality work. Treasurer Shah asked about what leading indicators the Board can be looking at when there's not other comparisons. Executive Director Kyles-Smith shared that the Academic Excellence Committee wanted to focus on the 3 dimensions of student achievement.

Adjournment

The Board meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Prepared by:
Michelle Kimso/s/
Executive Assistant

Submitted by:
Eli Schlam/s/
Secretary