



## TWO RIVERS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

November 14, 2022

### **Call to Order**

Chair Zachariah called the November 14th Meeting of the Two Rivers Board of Trustees to order at 6:04 PM. Chair Zachariah opened the meeting by explaining that the meeting would be held per the Open Meetings Act and recorded.

### **Roll Call**

#### **Board Members**

Aswathi Zachariah, Chair	Present
Malik Husser, Vice Chair	Present
Eli Schlam, Secretary	Absent
Gregg Treml, Treasurer	Present
Jenny Bradbury, Trustee	Present
Kimberly Eddings, Trustee	Present
Lauren Hamilton-Edward, Trustee	Present
Alvincent Hutson, Trustee	Present
John Phillips, Trustee	Present
Derek Pierce, Trustee	Absent
Michael Murphy, Trustee	Present
Ben Robins, Trustee	Present
Ahnna Smith, Trustee	Present
Matthew Steenhoek, Trustee	Absent
Penelope Thornton Talley, Trustee	Absent
Aurora Steinle, Interim Executive Director and Ex Officio	Present

#### **Others Present**

Kenneth McCants-Pearsall, Chief Academic Officer  
Michelle Kimso, Executive Assistant  
Khizer Husain, Senior Director of External Relations  
Aziza Temple, Development Manager  
Mary Gornick, Senior Director of Human Resources  
Katona Johnson, Middle School Academic Counselor  
Beth Calano, Middle School Special Education Teacher  
Cristian Canales, Middle School Spanish Teacher  
Fatima Graham, Student and Family Empowerment Coordinator  
Jeff Heyck-Williams, Former TR Staff  
Elaine Hou, Former TR Staff  
Anya Stockburger, TR 4th Street PSA President

Cara Williams, TR 4th Street PSA Secretary  
Welton Chang, TR PSA Treasurer-Elect  
Devin Turner, TR Middle School FSA President  
Maya Chaplin-Glover, TR Young Elementary School PSA President  
Ian Walton, TR Middle School and Young Elementary School Parent  
Amy Vruno, Young Elementary School Parent  
Holly Malone, Young Elementary School Parent

### **Approval of Meeting Agenda**

The Board voted to add an item under the closed meeting regarding D.C. Code Section 2-575(b)(4)(A) to consult with counsel and obtain legal advice. The amended November 14th agenda was passed with one Trustee, Trustee Hamilton-Edward abstaining.

### **Reading of Resolutions**

Three resolutions were read into the minutes honoring former Two Rivers staff.

Dr. Kristina Kyles-Smith, Executive Director as read by Ashwathi Zachariah

## **IN RECOGNITION OF EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF TWO RIVERS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PRESENTS THIS RESOLUTION IN HONOR OF DR. KRISTINA KYLES-SMITH**

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina served as Two Rivers' second Executive Director from June 2020 through October 2022;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina took the helm of Two Rivers during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and effectively led Two Rivers during this incredibly challenging time by prioritizing safety, student enrichment, and Two Rivers' mission and culture;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina was a careful steward of Two Rivers' expeditions, the Gala, NorthBay, Showcases, the Middle School Musical and many other critical traditions during the pandemic, taking innovative approaches to continue them remotely where possible and championing a return to in-person experiences when safe;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina led an organizational restructuring to promote equity and better support Two Rivers staff and students;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina led Two Rivers as it opened its new middle school in the Fall of 2020 at the Young Campus and worked steadily with middle school leadership during a period of growth and change;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina elevated the work of race and equity by introducing language, goals and metrics, to support honest, and courageous conversations throughout the Two Rivers community and institutionalized key components of this ongoing work into Two Rivers processes and procedures;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina built connections with the Two Rivers parent and family community by prioritizing the reimagining of Parent School Associations and thoughtfully engaged with families in small groups settings in order to elicit candid insights and feedback;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina streamlined elements involving the Board of Trustees in a manner that amplified engagement between the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees;

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Kristina led Two Rivers with empathy, grace, kindness, humor, and inclusiveness;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board expresses its utmost gratitude and deepest appreciation to Dr. Kristina for her immeasurable contributions, service, and dedication to Two Rivers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be permanently entered into the minutes of the November 14, 2022 meeting of the Two Rivers Board of Trustees.

Elaine Hou, Director of Literacy as read by Jenny Bradbury

**IN RECOGNITION OF EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF TWO RIVERS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
PRESENTS THIS RESOLUTION IN HONOR OF  
ELAINE HOU**

**WHEREAS**, Elaine is a founding teacher of Two Rivers and served as a teacher, instructional guide, middle school principal, and content director;

**WHEREAS**, as Elaine has served in more roles across the organization than any other Two Rivers staff member;

**WHEREAS**, in all of her roles, Elaine built relationships with students and teachers and excelled at helping others grapple with complex work and resolve conflict;

**WHEREAS**, Elaine is an exceptional peer, mentor, leader, and coach because she excels at seeing, building, and strengthening connections, be they connections across content areas in interdisciplinary learning expeditions, connections between students and staff, connections to deeper learning, and most importantly connections between people.

**WHEREAS**, Elaine ensured that the traditions that make Two Rivers special were maintained and valued. She was also the architect of one of those traditions: the Vocabulary Fashion Show, a long-running Two Rivers tradition that melded passions for literacy and creative expression;

**WHEREAS**, Elaine spearheaded Two Rivers' first AAPI affinity group and created a whole curriculum to introduce students to AAPI culture during AAPI Awareness Month;

**WHEREAS,** Elaine championed Two Rivers' efforts during Better World Day, helping Two Rivers share with the entire EL Education community across the nation our students' impact, whether it was to curb gun violence or improve mental health during the peak of the pandemic;

**WHEREAS,** Elaine has been instrumental in shaping Two Rivers and creating a learning environment where students can learn, grow, and become active, lifelong participants in their own education;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board expresses its utmost gratitude and deepest appreciation to Elaine for her immeasurable contributions and many years of service and dedication to Two Rivers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be permanently entered into the minutes of the November 14, 2022 meeting of the Two Rivers Board of Trustees.

Jeff Heyck-Williams, Director of Two Rivers Learning Institute as read by Malik Husser

**IN RECOGNITION OF EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF TWO RIVERS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
PRESENTS THIS RESOLUTION IN HONOR OF  
JEFF HEYCK-WILLIAMS**

**WHEREAS,** Jeff is a founder of Two Rivers and served as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and, since 2020, the Director of the Two Rivers Learning Institute;

**WHEREAS,** as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Jeff was the chief architect of adult learning at Two Rivers and invested in building adult crew. Because of Jeff's work, adults at TR formed bonds of support and challenge that then fostered an entire school culture with the same ingredients;

**WHEREAS,** as the Director of the Two Rivers Learning Institute, Jeff led and championed Two Rivers' "beyond the walls" efforts to share its instructional practices. This included Jeff's pioneering work in developing a system of assessments for deeper learning which has been recognized as one of the 100 top global innovations in education and the Evening of Learning Seminars, an annual free symposium where Two Rivers and area educators shared instructional practices that inspire students;

**WHEREAS,** Jeff not only opened Two Rivers' doors to thousands of visitors so they could witness Two Rivers in action but also spent time debriefing and working with guests so that they would be positioned to adapt our model in their own environments;

**WHEREAS,** Jeff helped create a professional development practice called DAS-Loop that guides staff to learn, try, collect data about, and revise their instructional practice. DAS-Loop was spotlighted in a Harvard Education Press publication;

**WHEREAS,** Jeff was involved in planning the arc of each expedition creating a sense of real-world learning for every child at Two Rivers;

**WHEREAS,** Jeff revolutionized the teaching of math at Two Rivers by first creating a positive math culture. Perhaps the most beloved math innovations introduced by Jeff is the Math Wizard and his mathematical wizardry prize, a weekly opportunity for the community to grapple with math;

**WHEREAS,** Jeff understands the power of jokes and humor to engage with each member of the organization and build a sense of crew;

**WHEREAS,** Jeff passionately believes that with the proper engaging environment all children can learn. This unshakeable belief undergirds Two Rivers' mission and has been critical to its success as a school;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board expresses its utmost gratitude and deepest appreciation to Jeff for his immeasurable contributions and many years of service and dedication to Two Rivers; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be permanently entered into the minutes of the November 14, 2022 meeting of the Two Rivers Board of Trustees.

### **Interim Executive Director Report**

Interim Executive Director Steinle started the Interim Executive Director report by inviting Chief Academic Officer McCants-Pearsall to share an update from the Academic Excellence Committee. Regarding PARCC data, math showed improvements across subgroups, cohorts, and grade data. There were also increases in SPED and Free and Reduced data. The ELA data has declined. Two Rivers is continuing to use Skills Block and provide differentiated instruction.

Interim Executive Director Steinle shared Two Rivers continues to backfill open seats until March. With regards to staffing, Middle School has a number of unfilled positions with admin and teachers filling in. The result is the admin being pulled from coaching. In addition to open teaching positions, Two Rivers is interviewing for student support assistants to help with behavior management. She also shared that Race and Equity planning is continuing with a new task force forming which includes Assistant Principals of Culture. Two Rivers is also launching a culture and climate task-force which will bring recommendations to leadership and assist in forming next steps.

### **Public Comment**

Chair Zachariah opened the meeting for public comment. Spanish Teacher Canales began the public comment section by sharing concerns about shortage of teachers and the ramifications that has on teachers and students. He asked the board for support in benefits, salary increases, and consistent substitute teachers. He also presented a letter to Chair Zachariah with 18 teachers' signatures. Special Education Teacher Calano shared that she feels Two Rivers is no longer a sustainable place to work and teachers are expected to do more with less. She shared that she feels Two Rivers is no longer aligned to prioritizing staff and staff has become divisive and faced retribution. FSA President Turner asked the board if they had done assessments at the Middle School or visited/considered what support staff needs. Academic Counselor Johnson emphasized that she feels the Middle School is in dire need of help and she is concerned teachers will leave. Parent Walton shared that he feels there is a similar feeling of crisis at Young Elementary School with staff leaving. Parent Malone encouraged the school to allocate funds appropriately. Chair Zachariah thanked those who shared and added that the Board has been in an ongoing conversation about the Middle School and are working with leadership to be part of the solution.

### **Board Committee Reports**

#### **Governance Committee**

Trustee Robins shared that the board is working on ways to collaborate more with PSA/FSA.

Time was also provided for PSA/FSA leadership to provide an update on their activities. Middle School FSA President Turner shared that Middle School is holding their first meeting on Monday November 21st and will be working to support leadership and teachers. 4th Street ES Chair Stockburger shared that there are 125 room parents across 4th Street and Young Campuses and that There is an upcoming fundraising activity with Nando's for community showcases. 4th Street Secretary shared on behalf of Young ES PSA, that they are having morning coffees at community meetings and kickstarting parent engagement.

#### Finance Committee

Treasurer Trembl presented the following Memos, which was shared with the Board in advance:

- Employee Benefits Insurance Renewals for FY 23 - For the FY22 School Year, Two Rivers used the benefits companies listed below. Two Rivers is recommending renewals with all current benefits providers.

Contractor	Services	Rate Increase	Estimated Annual Cost
Aetna	employee dental	3.1%	Contract value depends on enrolled participants. The estimated annual cost is \$63,870. This benefit is 100% employee-paid.
Kaiser Permanente	health insurance	3.7%	Contract value depends on enrolled participants. The estimated annual cost is \$1,582,251. 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 \$16,000. 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 \$90,000 and LTD is \$20,000. This benefit is 100% employer-paid.
Modern Health	online mental health services	No rate increase	The total cost will be \$42,187.20. This benefit is 100% employer-paid.

- Recommendation - Two Rivers recommends approval of these benefit renewals.
- HVAC Service Agreement Renewal for FY 23 - In FY22, Two Rivers acquired a multi-year service agreement for Young Elementary School and Middle School to secure fixed pricing and ensure a continuity of service. On December 1, 2022, Two Rivers will be entering the second year of the four-year auto-renew agreement. Each subsequent years' prices have a fixed 3% increase. The SY21-22 (year #1) cost was \$25,808; the SY22-23 (Year #2) cost will be \$26,582.
- Recommendation - Two Rivers recommends renewing the contract with WL Gary.

- FY 23 Substitute Contracting Services - Two Rivers is seeking to obtain the services of three additional staffing companies in order to maximize our ability to address teacher absences and vacancies. After running the PCSB-required procurement process, Two Rivers recommends contracting with Teachers on Demand, Enriched Schools, and Midtown Group for substitute teaching services to ensure we are able to maximize our ability to fill daily and long-term absences. For two of the three companies (Enriched Schools and Teachers on Demand), there is a per campus set up fee of \$1,000, which equates to a \$6,000 start-up cost for both companies. Because Two Rivers already has a budgeted amount for substitute teachers, adding these additional vendors can be absorbed without impacting the overall budget.
- Recommendation - Two Rivers requests recommends contracting with Teachers on Demand, Enriched Schools, and Midtown Group for substitute teaching services.

The board unanimously approved all three memos.

#### Development

Development Chair Phillips shared that the Beyond the Basics Campaign has raised close to \$6,000. He also reported that Target is donating gift cards for families for winter clothing. Along with Senior Director of External Relations Hussain, they are beginning to think about Two Rivers 20th anniversary gala.

#### Closed Session

The Board of Trustees unanimously voted to move to Closed Session under Open Meetings Act D.C. Code Section 2-575 under section (b)(10) to discuss personnel matters, (4) to consult with an attorney on a legal matter (15) to discuss personal identifying information of a student matter.

Secretary Schlam joined the meeting during closed session.

The Board of Trustees unanimously voted to move to Open Session.

#### Adjournment

The Board meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 PM.

Prepared by:  
Michelle Kimso/s/  
Executive Assistant

Submitted by:  
Eli Schlam/s/  
Secretary