



# RISING LEADERS ACADEMY

## Governing Board Minutes – May 2, 2013

### CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

A public meeting of the Governing Board was called to order by Dr. Eren Ozgen, President, at 12:05 p.m.

Other Board members present included: Mr. Tarone Watley (Vice-President), Mr. Osama Albibi (Treasurer), Dr. Ahmed Baker (Secretary), and Dr. Hatem Murad.

Administrative staff present: Mrs. Suha Jaber, Principal

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of Feb 20, 2013 were unanimously approved by the Board.

### NEW BOARD MEMBERS:

Two new board members were elected into the Board: Dr. Ahmed Rezk and Mr. Todd Zaborski

### PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Mrs. Suha Jaber presented a powerpoint with the following information:

#### Board Suggestions during 2/20/2013 meeting:

*1. The Board suggested to contact the fire and police departments and ask if they can provide advice on how to increase security at the school.*

#### **Outcome:**

Police Chief, Mr. Mike Jones, provided a security workshop and advised getting an intercom system.

*2. The President of the Board, Dr. Eren Ozgen, requested specific, measurable and quantifiable objectives for the long-term goals to be presented during the next meeting.*

## **Outcome:**

The school is committed to attaining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement. RLA will meet or exceed federal AYP (79% in reading and 80% in mathematics) as measured by the Florida State Accountability Program each year of the school's operation. RLA's goal is that 100% of RLA students will become proficient in reading and math by the third year of operation. During the first year, RLA has 95% proficiency. Mrs. Jaber presented data to prove it, using baseline and midterm evaluations to assess progress.

### School Improvement Plan (SIP)/Strategic Achievement Plan (SAC)

Mrs. Jaber presented a SIP/SAC based on the things that went well and things that need improvement. Mrs. Jaber suggested the following:

- RLA will continue to use the Pearson Common Core curriculum
- Continue Expeditionary Learning
- RLA is expecting more public speaking opportunities for students to develop stronger interpersonal skills in 2013 – 2014
- Character education and community service are integral parts of the educational model
- Opportunity to learn both Arabic and Spanish during school hours in which Spanish will replace Chinese
- The school hours shall be modified to the following: Monday through Thursday 7:45 a.m.- 3:15 p.m. and Fridays 7:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

The SIP/SAC was unanimously approved by all Board Members.

### NEW POLICIES

The Board approved the following new RLA policies:

#### **RLA Dress Code Policy**

The parents/guardians have the primary responsibility to ensure the students are following the RLA dress code. Students who are not following the dress code will not be allowed in the classroom. The student will remain in the main office until the parents/guardians are called to bring the student the appropriate school attire.

#### Top:

Students must wear the school shirt, which is green with the school logo. The shirts are sold through the school. Students cannot wear a different color shirt under the school shirt, except for solid white, beige, black, or green (same as uniform). The undershirt should be tucked in and should not exceed the bottom of

the uniform shirt. Every student should have at least one collared shirt. RLA short and long sleeve tee shirts, sweaters, and hoodies are also available at the RLA for purchase.

#### Bottom:

The bottoms must be khaki color that can be pants, caprice, or short/skorts (knee height or below), purchased from anywhere. With shorts or skorts, the stockings or socks must be solid white, black, or beige without any designs or holes. No large pocket style pants, cargo pants, bell bottoms, or overalls of any kind are allowed.

#### Shoes:

On Mondays – Thursdays, all students must wear closed toed and closed backed shoes for PE. No flip-flops or slippers are allowed. Students may wear sandals on Fridays with back or back straps. Shoes above the ankle must be a solid color. Shoes cannot be flashy or have lights.

#### Outwear:

Students may wear jackets to school, but must remove them in class. Inside the classroom, the students must be in their RLA school shirt, which can be a short or long shirt, sweater, or hoodie all sold at RLA. Nothing should be cover the uniform during school hours.

#### Hair:

Students cannot come to school with any chemicals or unnatural coloring in the hair. Hair under the shoulder must be tied at all time. No headwear except for simple headbands and bows for girls or religious purposes. No shaved heads with designs.

#### Jewelry:

Students cannot wear any flashy or heavy jewelry that might create a hazard to a student's safety. Light, small necklaces and bracelets are permissible. Students may not have any body piercing other than small stud earring in the earlobes for girls, which can be gold or silver. No colorful beaded earrings that hang below the ear lop.

#### Make-up:

Students cannot come to school with any make-up on the face.

### **RLA Celebrations/Parties Policy**

The mission of RLA is to provide academic excellence in a nurturing environment. The reason for any celebration or party at RLA must be aligned with the mission and related to learning. RLA values students' and staff's time, and therefore the celebrations/parties are meant for meaning fun that is directly related to the learning and will further enhance the learning and environment, such as the Community Circles, which are celebrations of learning. All other celebrations/parties must have administrative approval.

### **RLA Drop-off/Pick-up Policy**

RLA hours are Mondays – Thursdays from 7:45 – 3:15 and on Fridays from 7:45 – 11:45. Parents can drop the students off from 7:30 – 7:45. A staff member will be outside to bring the students to the cafeteria.

Parents/guardians are not permitted inside the facility during drop-off/pick-up. Students must be picked up on time. Students who are not picked up on time will be charged a late-fee. Parents must leave immediately after pick-up and can not remained parked in the school parking. Other than the Childcare Network bus, no cars are to park

directly in front of the school on the school property. There are parking spots on the sides of the facility, as well as across the street.

### **Contribution to Professional Learning Community Policy**

Researchers have shown that Professional Learning Communities (PLC) improve the schools for both student and adult learning. RLA is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) where the staff, parents, and students share the school's vision, mission, values, goals, and principles. They reinforce the moral purpose and collective responsibility of learning and following the code of conduct and school policies. At RLA, the staff, parents, and students have a commitment towards the mission of the school and promoting a positive learning climate for all. Every member of the RLA community must contribute to a strong collaborative culture with a focus on learning and high moral character. Any staff, parent, or student working against the PLC at RLA may be dismissed from the school.

### **RLA-Parents Partnership Policy**

RLA and Parents are partners in educating our children. Therefore, RLA has the following expectations for Parents that are aligned with our character education program for the students:

- To talk with your child about school and his/her academic and behavioral goals. (Character Traits: Integrity; Passion; Collaboration)
- To model our character traits for RLA students. (Character Traits: Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Trustworthiness, Citizenship)
- To ensure that your child is at school on time and ready to learn. (Character Traits: Self-Discipline; Integrity)
- To ensure that your child gets 8-10 hours of sleep, minimum. (Character Traits: Self-Discipline; Integrity)
- To ensure that your child eats a healthy breakfast. (Character Traits: Self-Discipline; Integrity)
- To get to know your child's teacher and communicate respectfully on a regular basis. (Character Traits: Collaboration; Passion)
- To engage in the life of the school. (Character Traits: Collaboration; Passion)
- To attend school events: Parent meeting, Community Circles, Expeditionary Learning Gallery Night, Presentation of Learning, etc. (Character Traits: Integrity; Passion; Collaboration)
- To be good stewards of our school and community. (Character Traits: Integrity; Passion; Collaboration; Integrity; Self-Discipline)
- Learn with us. Grow with us. Celebrate with us. (Character Traits: Collaboration; Passion)
- To believe that your child can do more than you ever imagined possible. (Character Trait: Passion)

In addition, families are required to volunteer 20 hours per year.

### **RLA Dismissal Policy**

All parents will receive a copy of the Bay District Schools Code of Conduct, as well as the RLA Parent/Student Handbook, with the RLA policies. RLA follows all the Bay District Code of Conduct policies and will take action in accordance to the Bay District Schools policies. In addition, all parents must sign the Parent Contract form, which states the expectations and policies for being an RLA member. RLA will strive to keep the school environment safe and nurturing for all staff and students. If a child or parent/guardian interferes with the educational environment in a disruptive or disrespectful manner towards any student or staff, the parents will be notified of such behavior. If such behavior continues after such notification, the child may be dismissed from the

school. RLA has the right to dismiss a student if the student or parent/guardian has continuous disruptive or disrespectful behavior towards any student or staff. The parent will receive a dismissal letter and the student will be dropped from all RLA program and not permitted to return back to school. The student's spot will be filled with another student on the waiting list. This action is to preserve the positive energy at RLA.

### **RLA Donation Policy**

All donations to RLA or individual classes must be given to the RLA office. The donor will be given a donation letter. If the donation is for a specific class or expedition, the office will then forward the donation to the specific class. All donations must be recorded and then forwarded to the accountant.

### **RLA Student Lunch Policy**

RLA has partnered with Subway to provide a healthy lunch for students, with a variety of choices. Students may choose to bring their own lunch, but it must be a healthy meal. Students are not allow to bring soft drink, such as Coke. For safety purposes, students are not permitted to use the microwave, nor should a staff member microwave the meals for the students.

### **RLA Absences Policy**

Parents are expected to notify the school the day of the absence. Parents must provide school personnel with accurate telephone contact numbers (home, cell, and work for parents or legal guardians) and ensure the number(s) are correct if there is a change during the school year. As an Expeditionary Learning School, with foreign languages, RLA provides students with an advanced curriculum, which contains a larger amount information than other schools. Students who are absent frequently miss this information and have difficulty making up all the subject and activities. Therefore, students who accumulate 10 unexcused absences throughout the year will be dismissed from RLA.

#### An excused absence includes:

- illness;
- medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required);
- automobile accident;
- deaths or funerals;
- emergency situations acceptable to the Principal or designee;
- required court appearance (subpoena required);
- established religion observance;
- severe weather

### **RLA Tardy/Early Pick-Up Policy**

A student is tardy when the student arrives after the beginning of the school day or when he/she is not in his/her assigned seat or station right after the Pledge of Allegiance. A student's tardiness shall be excused when the reason given is acceptable to the principal or teacher. **In the event students do arrive late, the office will issue excused tardies for physician/dentist appointments with a doctor's note. All other tardies are unexcused.** Your child should attend school every day on time. Teachers cannot provide an effective instructional program for children who are frequently absent or tardy. Students who arrive tardy for class disrupt the other students who are engaged in learning. Three tardies constitute one absence. If a student has ten unexcused absences, they may be

dismissed from the school and/or retention. Therefore, excessive tardies can cause expulsion from school. Early pick-up is when the student is picked up before the end of the school day. An unexcused early pick-up counts like a tardy.

The policies were unanimously approved by the Board.

### **SUGGESTIONS and QUESTIONS FROM BOARD:**

President Ozgen suggested that:

- Goals must be quantifiable, measurable, and with a time limit.
- Less is more!
- Write down what you need to do and prioritize them. Then align them to budget it and do one at a time.
- Give quantifiable number for the goals set. For example: how many computers you need?

### **More suggestions:**

- Come up with a solution for parking and the parents whose children are performing to attend the Community Circle instead of opening it for the whole school
- Come up with a solution for the computer.

### **Questions from Dr. Ozgen:**

- How are you going to measure the character education?
- How is professional development of teachers measured?

### **PUBLIC QUESTION/COMMENTS**

An opportunity was provided for parents to ask questions and make comments and suggestions. No comments required any action.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.