



RCMA Regular School Board Meeting
June 3, 2024
UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research & Education Center
Wimauma, FL
12:30PM – 2PM



Virtual:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81591515799?pwd=S0RacWxzZXpHT11YOFNHbDJlZ0wzUT09>

Meeting ID: 815 9151 5799 Passcode: June2024

By phone: (929) 436 2866; Passcode: 87403337

MINUTES

Attendance				
	Board Members-At-Large	Present	Absent	Staff Present In-Person
1.	Bayer, Michael T.	In-person		Brown, Juana
2.	Dowling, Aedan J.	Online		Garcia, Isabel
3.	Gaffney, Donna		X	Gomez, Alberto – <i>IT Support</i>
4.	Hightower, Sandra		X	Johnson, Ashley
5.	Hinson, Al. J.		X	Maldonado, Elizabeth
6.	Miles, Linda A.	In-person		Moorman, Gloria
7.	Negrini, Mirta		X	Sepulveda, Catalina
8.	Perez, Joaquin		X	Vega, Kathy
9.	Pringle, Richard	Online		Villanueva, Lourdes
10.	Robles de Melendez, Wilma	Online		
11.	Rollason, Barbara Mainster	Online		
12.	Salustro, Larry	In-person		Guest Present
13.	Tighe, Sonia	In-person		Bosek, Janelle
14.	Vallejo, Ansberto		X	Phillips, Lindsay
15.	Weisinger, Jaime	In-person		Cuellar, Lucy - <i>interpreter</i>

1) Meeting Opening

a. **Roll Call**

The roll call was conducted by Elizabeth Maldonado. A quorum was reached.

b. **Call to Order/Opening Remarks**

Linda A. Miles, President, called the meeting to order. The meeting began at 12:37 p.m.

c. **Call For Public Comment**

Linda A. Miles made a call for public comment. No public comments were made.

d. **Changes to the Agenda**

Barbara Mainster Rollason pulled item 3.c. Personnel Policy Manual – Updates on the Grievance Policy for review under New Business.

2) Consent Agenda – Meeting Minutes

a. School Board Meeting Minutes – April 2024

b. Charter Committee Meeting Minutes

- i. Wimauma + Mulberry Community Academy
- ii. Immokalee Community Academy
- iii. Special School Board – May 9, 2024

3) Consent Agenda – Academic

- a. 2024-2025 Mulberry Community Academy Revised School Calendars
- b. Academic Dashboards with FAST results

- c. Personnel Policy Manual – Updates on the Grievance Policy

4) Consent Agenda – Finance

- a. Charter Academies Financial Statements
 - i. Immokalee Community Academy
 - ii. Wimauma Community Academy
 - iii. Mulberry Community Academy
- b. 2023-2024 School Budget Adjustments
- c. Charter School Outline of Capital Outlay
- d. 2023-2024 Amended Lease Agreements
 - i. Immokalee Community Academy
 - ii. Wimauma Community Academy
- e. 2024-2025 Charter Academies Lease Agreements
 - i. Immokalee Community Academy
 - ii. Wimauma Community Academy
 - iii. Mulberry Community Academy

5) Consent Agenda Approval

- a. Approval of the Full Consent Agenda
Linda A. Miles asked if there was any interest in withdrawing Consent Agenda items. Barbara Mainster Rollason pulled item 3.c. Personnel Policy Manual – Updates on the Grievance Policy for discussion under New Business.

Motion: Larry Salustro made a motion to approve the Full Consent Agenda. Sonia Tighe seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

6) Leadership Report

- a. Charter School Committee Chair
Linda A. Miles highlighted recent public relations achievements in Polk County, showcasing the significant impact on student opportunities. She shared a compelling success story from Mulberry Community Academy, where students are actively breaking the cycle of poverty through education. Additionally, Linda underscored the notable progress in RCMA Academies, particularly in reading scores. Barbara Mainster Rollason also contributed by sharing a success story aligned with RCMA's mission.

Furthermore, Linda discussed ongoing efforts regarding Charter LLCs with Phillips Advisory, the Finance Committee, and RCMA staff, exploring various strategic options. She also provided insights into the Spurlino Family Foundation's matching initiatives and expressed optimism regarding the Governor's Budgets. The Charter Growth Fund has been pivotal in bolstering infrastructure and providing essential guidance and resources to replicate and sustain the Charter model.
- b. Director of Charter Schools
Juana Brown covered various report topics, highlighting leadership successes and a noteworthy moment from the Charter model during Principal Higgins' recent visit to Superintendent Heid's office. Discussions also included updates on Charter lease payment increases and recent market appraisals. Further appraisal details will be presented at the upcoming finance committee meetings. Overall, Charters continue to operate independently and sustainably.
- c. Charter Academy Principals
Mark Hagggett delivered a thorough overview of Wimauma Community Academy's academic progress, highlighting key areas, including enrollment trends, strong reading performance across multiple grade levels, achievements in science and civics, and optimistic projections for this year's school grades. He also noted today's senior graduation trip and ongoing support for graduates from 8th grade onwards. Mark officially announced his transition from WCA

Principal to Charter Director of Operations, with Cristina Vega set to assume the role of incoming Principal.

Zulaika Quintero provided an overview of Immokalee Community Academy's academic dashboard, discussing various topics, including incoming enrollments with support from Ms. Carolina, proactive family outreach efforts, strong attendance at on-campus parent involvement meetings, notable achievements in FAST reading scores across multiple grade levels, and ongoing strategies to enhance the new Science curriculum based on identified needs.

Dani Higgins conveyed enthusiasm about the successful school year at Mulberry Community Academy. The school saw 18 enrollments from child development centers (CDC) and 20 non-CDC enrollments, including a notable increase in registrations from the Haitian population. Discussions focused on the robust reading proficiency data and efforts to enhance Math professional development through collaboration with instructional teams. The summer program, temporarily relocated off-campus due to construction, is being conducted in partnership with local churches. Currently, operations are based out of a church for the summer, with recent opportunities for collaborative partnerships also highlighted.

- d. SAC Presidents
No reports were shared.

7) Old Business

- a. Other
None.

8) New Business

- a. Building Hope Loan
The topic was moved to general discussion per the Board Chair.
- b. Other
The Personnel Policy Manual underwent updates, particularly regarding the Grievance Policy, which was moved from the consent agenda for detailed discussion. Isabel Garcia led the presentation of two proposed options for updating the policy. The discussion highlighted challenges in filling vacancies at schools and child development centers, emphasizing incorporating feedback and performance improvement within the grievance process to streamline it. A board committee, in collaboration with RCMA's attorney, meticulously reviewed these updates to enhance efficiency. Consequently, certain grievance steps were identified for elimination to expedite the process, clarifying what issues can and cannot be grieved. Barbara Mainster Rollason, Jaime Weisinger, Larry Salustro, Michael T. Bayer, Richard Pringle, and Linda A. Miles commented, and a discussion ensued.

Motion: Jaime Weisinger made the motion to approve Version 2 of the Combined Charter Academies and RCMA Grievance Policy (where the grievance process stops with the Executive Director's decision) with added communication created and shared with the Board Chair, then the Board Chair to update the board members at large. Michael T. Bayer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

9) General Discussion

- a. Mulberry Academy Financing Plan Update and Building Hope Loan
Linda A. Miles introduced Lindsay Phillips from Phillips Advisory, LLC, who presented an overview of the Mulberry Academy financing plan and explained RCMA's rationale for creating LLCs. The presentation covered operational considerations related to LLC formation, loan exploration to address financing gaps, and strategies to streamline processes.

During the meeting, slides from the May 9th session were reviewed, focusing on updates regarding the MCA Budget and Financing, the Building Hope loan, and the predevelopment loan. These updates are exclusive to RCMA due to their participation in the Schools of Hope

initiative. Currently, the State of Florida is awaiting approval of the final loan documents, which have been reviewed by RCMA's attorney and are expected to close by the end of this month. The primary lender targeted is the Charter School Growth Fund, with other lenders as backup options.

The discussion then centered on the proposed new structure to house both RCMA Charter Property LLC and RCMA Charter LLCs moving forward. While remaining under a single 501c3 umbrella, the goal is to segregate activities to mitigate risks effectively. Lenders prefer this structure, which allows separate meetings without requiring everyone to be involved in both while adhering to all sunshine requirements. At a later stage, board members will decide whether to continue serving on both boards or to step down from one. Board members provided comments, leading to a productive discussion.

The meeting recessed at 1:56 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 2:26 p.m.

Linda A. Miles extended an invitation to all School Board members to join the RCMA Governance Committee, which currently includes Larry Salustro, Barbara Mainster Rollason, and Sonia Tighe. Richard Pringle expressed interest in becoming a member of the committee.

Motion: Larry Salustro Motion to approve Certificate of Corporate Resolutions of RCMA Charter Schools, LLC, relating to the School of Hope Loan for the Mulberry Community Academy Campus and Mulberry School of Hope Agreement. Jaime Weisinger seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- b. Other
None.

10) Closing

- a. Adjournment

The school board meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Motion: Jaime Weisinger made the motion to adjourn the School Board meeting. Michael T. Bayer seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Maldonado
Elizabeth Maldonado
Executive Administrative Manager