

**RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Minutes**

Thursday, May 29, 2025
5:30 pm

Board members present: Mr. Emre Mese, Dr. Sakhat Mammadov, Mr. Fatih Kurt, Mr. Serkan Dogan

Staff members present: Dr. Dogan Tozoglu, Executive Director; Jason Kurt, Business Manager; Adrina Winter, Parent Representative; Alisher Kuvatov, Director of Academics; Chris Klotz, Summit Construction Group

1. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Mese at 5:30 pm.

2. Public Remarks

There were no public remarks physically or remotely

3. Approval of agenda items

Motion to approve agenda items by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Dogan. Approved unanimously.

4. Approval of last board meeting minutes

Mr. Mese informed the Board that the minutes from the previous meeting had been shared in advance and invited members to provide any corrections or amendments.

Motion to approve the last board meeting minutes by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Kurt. Approved unanimously.

5. High School project update and approval to authorize the board chair and Dr. T. to finalize the lease agreement with FSCJ

Dr. T. and Chris Klotz from Summit Construction Group presented most recent updates on the project. The site plan, preliminary building designs, challenges with the site and recreation fields have been reviewed. Dr. T. provided insights on the projected enrollment capacity of the new facility. Regarding the lease agreement, Dr. T. informed the board that meetings have taken place between the legal teams representing the college, our team, and Summit representatives to finalize the initial draft. While there has been significant progress, the process is moving slowly. Our legal team anticipates that the agreement should be ready by the end of this month.

Given the scope of the building, the need for construction permits, securing financing, and completing all other legal requirements to initiate the project, both the RCSA leadership team and Summit representatives agree that aiming for a completion date of August 2026 would be risky. Therefore, we agreed to defer the opening to August 2027 to avoid unnecessary pressure on the project timeline.

Once the lease agreement is finalized, it will need to be signed by RCSA representatives. Additionally, a pre-construction agreement with the developer will be executed to begin all engineering and architectural drawings.

Motion to approve to authorize the board chair and Dr. T. to finalize the lease agreement with FSCJ by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Dogan. Approved unanimously

**RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Minutes**

Thursday, May 29, 2025
5:30 pm

6. Approval to hire an owner's representative and include in the project budget to oversee the high school construction project on behalf of RCSA

Mr. Mese recommended that the school hire an owner's representative for the high school project with FCSJ to oversee construction progress and approve payment applications. An owner's representative would serve as a dedicated advocate for the school's interests throughout the construction process. This role ensures that the project stays on schedule, within budget, and aligned with the school's expectations and verifies the accuracy of payment applications before approval. By adding this position to the project budget, the school gains an added layer of quality control, accountability, and professional coordination, helping to safeguard the overall success of the project.

Motion to approve hiring an owner's representative and include in the project budget to oversee the high school construction project on behalf of RCSA by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Dogan. Approved unanimously.

7. Approval of Reading Plans (CERP)

Dr. T. and Mr. K. presented the proposed reading plans for all RCSA campuses to both the district and the state, incorporating reflection tools to support instructional improvement. The submission process closely mirrors last year's approach. The plans will be reviewed by the district, and if any feedback is received, the RCSA leadership team will promptly make the necessary adjustments. This collaborative and responsive process helps ensure that our reading plans meet all expectations while continuing to support literacy growth across campuses.

Motion to approve Reading Plans (CERP) by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Dogan. Approved unanimously.

8. Approval of Dismissal Policy

Dr. T. presented the proposed dismissal policy, prepared by the RCSA legal team, which would allow schools to dismiss students under specific conditions. The policy grants the authority to involuntarily withdraw a student for non-minor infractions of the School's Code of Conduct, including intermediate, major, and zero-tolerance violations. The RCSA leadership team has also reviewed the policy to ensure it aligns with organizational standards and is implemented consistently and fairly across all campuses.

Motion to approve Dismissal Policy by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Kurt. Approved unanimously.

9. Approval of the finance committee

The finance committee is composed of the board chair, executive director, business manager, and other relevant members of the RCSA leadership team. A meeting is scheduled for the first week of July. Mr. Mese invited any additional board members who wish to participate to join the meeting. The meeting will be publicly announced, and the minutes will be shared with the full board to ensure transparency and collective awareness of the discussions and decisions.

Motion to approve the finance committee by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Dogan. Approved unanimously.

**RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Minutes**

Thursday, May 29, 2025
5:30 pm

10. Approval of asset disposal

Dr. T. shared the list of asset disposal items, primarily from the middle-high and elementary campus, which consisted mainly of broken student desks, chairs, and tables.

Motion to approve asset disposal by Mr. Mese and seconded by Mr. Kurt. Approved unanimously.

11. Review of school financials and audit engagement letters

Dr. T. informed the Board that there have been no significant updates since the last meeting. He presented the current financial reports, highlighting a comparison between the budget and actual expenditures. All schools are performing well financially and are projected to close the fiscal year with a positive balance. There are no anticipated cash flow concerns or outstanding obligations.

The school budgets for the upcoming year are in progress and will be finalized by the end of the fiscal year. The financial team has been working closely with school principals to prepare these budgets, which will be reviewed and finalized during the finance committee meeting once the state budget is released.

Additionally, Dr. T. presented the annual audit engagement letters for each RCSA campus. The yearly audits are scheduled to begin after the close of the current fiscal year.

12. Organizing team-building events involving the leadership team and board members

Mr. Mese suggested organizing a series of team-building events to strengthen relationships and collaboration between the RCSA leadership teams and board members. These events could take various forms, including national or international trips, luncheons, board retreats, and professional development workshops. The goal of these activities would be to foster a sense of unity, improve communication, and enhance shared vision and strategic alignment across the organization. By investing in team-building opportunities, RCSA can promote a more cohesive leadership culture and support long-term institutional success.

13. Academic updates

Mr. K., RCSA's Director of Academics, presented a comprehensive summary of each school's performance on the final state assessments. The presentation included a detailed comparison of RCSA scores alongside state and district averages across all subject areas and grade levels. The data demonstrated that RCSA schools are performing and progressing significantly above both district and state benchmarks.

This consistent academic excellence reflects the strength of RCSA's instructional strategies, staff commitment, and student achievement. Based on the preliminary results and internal projections, all RCSA campuses are expected to once again receive an "A" grade. These outcomes not only validate the effectiveness of RCSA's academic programs but also serve as a testament to the collaborative efforts of educators, students, and families throughout the school year.

14. RCSA Southeast CSP update

Dr. T. informed the board that RCSA Southeast has been awarded an additional \$800,000 startup grant by the Florida Department of Education. This is excellent news and a strong vote of confidence in the school's mission and growth. The grant funding will be used to

**RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Minutes**

Thursday, May 29, 2025
5:30 pm

support the school's immediate needs, including essential resources, equipment, and operational setup to ensure a strong foundation for success. The RCSA leadership team has already begun working closely with both the state and district to complete the necessary paperwork and compliance steps to secure and implement the grant effectively. This funding will provide valuable support as RCSA Southeast continues to expand and serve its students and community.

15. DCPS site visits

All RCSA campuses successfully completed the annual charter site visit conducted by Duval County Public Schools (DCPS). This comprehensive review included evaluations by the district's charter office as well as representatives from key departments such as Finance, ESE (Exceptional Student Education), and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).

The visiting teams were highly impressed with the performance, organization, and overall operations of each campus. Importantly, all RCSA schools were found to be in full compliance, with no non-compliance issues reported—a strong testament to the schools' commitment to excellence and accountability. The site visits were a resounding success, and we extend our congratulations and sincere appreciation to the leadership teams, teachers, and staff at all campuses for their hard work and dedication.

16. Title I and PFEP updates

Dr. T. informed the Board that all compliance items for the current school year have been successfully completed, with 100% of requirements finalized. As part of preparations for the upcoming academic year, the school has already conducted its annual development meetings to review priorities, set goals, and align planning efforts across all campuses.

In addition, the Parent and Family Engagement Plan (PFEP) and the Title I budget for the upcoming school year have been submitted to the district for approval. These documents outline how the school will continue to engage families and allocate federal funding to support student success. Both the PFEP and Title I budget were also presented to the Board for transparency and input.

17. Charter School Growth Fund update

Dr. T. informed the Board that, as a final step in the process, the Charter Growth Fund board has officially approved RCSA's inclusion in its portfolio and accepted RCSA as one of its member organizations. This marks a significant milestone and a major accomplishment for RCSA, reflecting its strong track record of academic success, operational excellence, and growth potential. As part of the agreement, there will be specific milestones to track progress throughout the partnership. Additionally, monthly check-ins will be held between Charter Growth Fund and RCSA leadership teams to review updates, assess progress toward growth goals, and ensure continued alignment with strategic priorities.

This achievement brings valuable resources, guidance, and recognition to RCSA's ongoing expansion efforts. Congratulations to the entire RCSA community on this important and well-earned accomplishment.

**RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Minutes**

Thursday, May 29, 2025
5:30 pm

18. Closure of the Meeting

Mr. Mese moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Kurt seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. KURT', written over a horizontal line.

Mr. Fatih Kurt, Board Secretary