

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

April 9, 2024  
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

## Attendance Summary

Of 57 Total Members, as of April 9, 2024

- 23 Attended
- 5 Represented by Proxy

Non-Members in attendance

- 7 RisingOaks' Parents
- 34 RisingOaks' Employees
- 3 Guests

Total Attendees/Proxies: 72

Per the RisingOaks Early Learning by-laws, a quorum of 20 members is required to transact business. The official attendance report is filed with these minutes.

## 1. Welcome

- Lori Prospero, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), welcomed members and guests to the Annual General Meeting for the period ending December 31, 2023.
- A land acknowledgement was offered acknowledging that RisingOaks Early Learning programs and services are located within the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Chonnonton and Haudenosaunee peoples.
- Reviewed the meeting's agenda and the meeting tools for the webinar format.

## 2. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

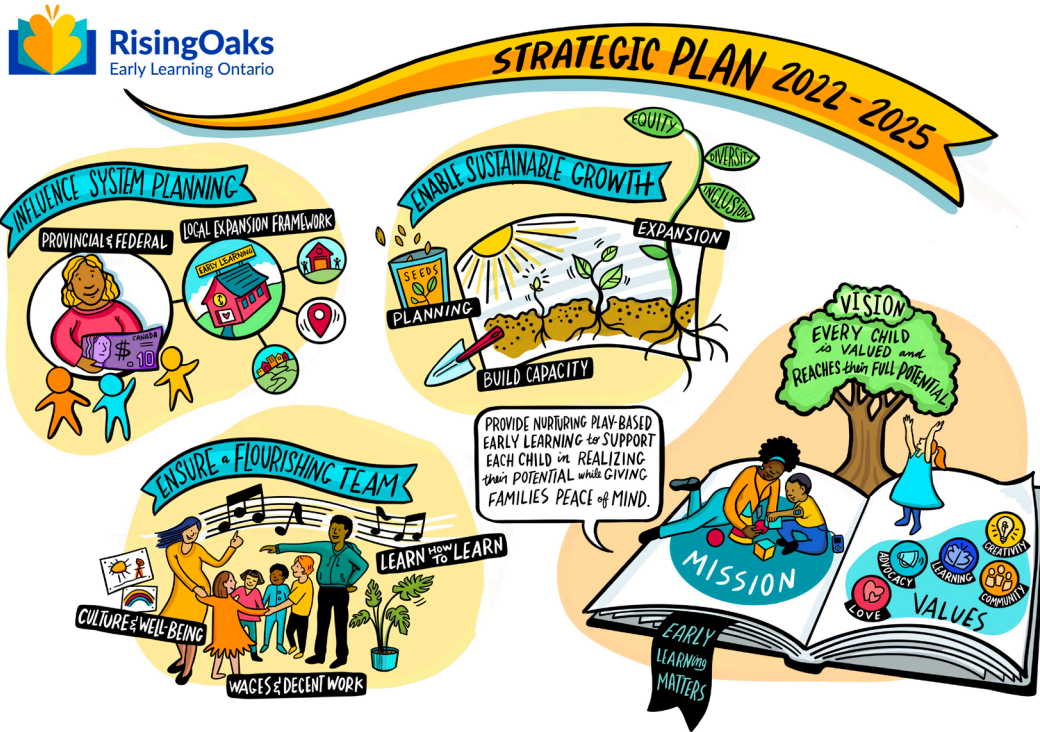
- There being a quorum of members present for the transaction of business, and members having been giving adequate and proper notice of the meeting, the meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm. Alisha Michiels served as Chair of the proceedings.
- Lori Prospero, board secretary, with support from executive assistant Susie Draper, was confirmed to record of the minutes.
- Approval of the Agenda
  - **Motion:** It was moved, seconded and carried that the agenda for this annual general meeting of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario be approved as presented.

## 3. Joint Report on Governance and Operations

- The board chair and CEO provided a joint report on governance and operational achievements in 2023.
- The 2022-25 Strategic Plan was reviewed, and progress was shared. Some key highlights include:
  - RisingOaks Early Learning continues to influence system planning across multiple levels of government with a 22% increase in our government relations

activities. From meetings with various service system managers to hosting consultations with ministers, a podium announcement, and our work with partners and allies, we've actively shaped the landscape of child care.

- Regarding expansion, RisingOaks has successfully secured the role of a child care operator for a new school in development. Construction for our 10<sup>th</sup> location, RisingOaks Early Learning | St. Patrick, is set to begin any day now with the new centre scheduled to open in September 2025.
- Regarding sustainability, 2 playground projects were completed in 2023. This completes our transition to natural playgrounds – a project which began in 2017.
- The organization continues its work to ensure a flourishing team through a workplace wellness, leadership and capacity building, training, continued work on our diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism (DEIA) action plan, and continuing to progress towards professional pay & decent work for employees.



#### 4. Long-service Awards Recognition

- Kristine Parsons, Director of Operations, presented long-service awards to 19 deserving employees:
  - **5 years:**
    - Aly Smith | St. Brigid
    - Carmen Rusu | Admin
    - Kelsey Woodstock | St. Matthew
    - Nayoung Mia | St. Nicholas
    - Sarah Beluzic | Oak Creek
    - Shahzad Alia | Our Lady of Fatima
    - Vanessa Meal | John Sweeney
    - Wendy Hu | Oak Creek
    - Youngran Kim | St. Nicholas

- **10 years:**
  - Celine Burley | Lincoln Road
  - Nidya Oosterveld | Lincoln Road
  - Tracey Ruppenthal | Our Lady of Fatima
- **15 years:**
  - Barbara Florencki | St. Luke
- **20 years:**
  - Mary Klug | Lincoln Road
  - Marianne McKinnon | St. Luke
  - Gerri MacMillan | St. Nicholas
  - Shannon Swanson | Lincoln Road
  - Heather Bonnett-Culberson | St. Matthew
- **25 years:**
  - Denise Acton | St. Luke

## 5. Treasurer’s Report

- Jen Tieu, Treasurer, provided an overview of the financial statements from 2023.
- The treasurer reviewed the *statement of operations* – revenue and expenses, highlighting key points from the [audited financial statements](#) and [2023 Annual Report](#).
- RisingOaks closed out December 2023 with a surplus of \$310,884, compared to the \$202,184 budgeted deficit, due to unexpected funding and stronger than expected enrolment.
- The *statement of changes in net assets* was reviewed, representing the Member’s Equity in the corporation. Inter-fund transfers were also reviewed.



- Questions were solicited from attendees; none arose.

### 5.1 Approval of the 2023 Audited Financial Statements

- **Motion:** It was moved, seconded, and carried that the Members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario approve the audited financial statements for the year ending on December 31, 2023, as presented.

### 5.2 Appointment of the Auditors

- **Motion:** It was moved, seconded, and carried that the Members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario appoint Hilborn LLP as its' auditors for the fiscal year ending on December 31, 2024.

## 6. Report of the Nominating Committee

- Amanda Stevens, chair of the nominating committee, presented the committee's report. The recruitment and selection process for directors, as outlined in the by-laws, was reviewed.
- The nominees were introduced as their biographies were read.
- **Motion:** It was moved, seconded and carried that the members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario elect the Board Recommended Slate of Nominees, as presented, to serve as directors for a 2-year term.
- Congratulations were offered to newly elected, and re-elected directors: Alex Zhou, Alisha Michiels, Bernard Crawford, Cindy Ofunne, Christel Wu and Julia Bloom.
- The full board of directors for the 2024-25 term was introduced: : Alex Zhou, Alisha Michiels, Bernard Crawford, Cindy Ofunne, Christel Wu, Julia Bloom, Stephen Brown, Robert MacDonald, Jessica Ronzio, Jennifer Tieu and Katherine Walsh.

## 7. Board Appreciation

- The board also recognized four directors who have completed their terms: Amanda Stevens, Blessing Akpan, Karen McIlroy and Paul Okoye. Each were presented with a small token of appreciation prior to the meeting.
- Alisha Michiels was inducted into the prestigious *Chairs' Circle of Excellence*. This award was introduced in 2013 to recognize a director's sustained commitment and outstanding contribution to RisingOaks Early Learning for a minimum of four-years. Recipients have provided effective leadership and demonstrated growth in governance, mentoring future leaders. Julia, on behalf of the board, thanked Alisha for her exemplary leadership and contributions to our development.

## 8. Closing Remarks

- Alisha thanked the members, staff, and RisingOaks Early Learning families for attending and for being engaged in the work of the organization.
- There being no further business, the Annual General Meeting concluded at 7:29 pm.

---

## DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting. These minutes were approved by the board of directors on May 7, 2024 and now form part of the Public Record for RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario.

Original copy signed by:

---

Julia Bloom  
Board Chair

---

Lori Prospero  
Corporate Secretary