Minutes - November 28th, 2016



Minutes of the Royal West Academy Governing Board meeting held on **Monday, November 28th, 2016** at 7:00 pm in the library of Royal West Academy, 189 Easton Avenue, Montreal West (Québec).

	MEMBERS PRESENT	
Lori Rinaldi (Parent / Chairperson)	Ryan Ortiz (Parent)	Michal Wineberg (Guidance Dept.)
Michael Delis (Parent / Vice Chair)		Patricia Taylor (Support Staff)
Arzine Brochu (Parent / Secretary)	Anjali Abraham (Teacher)	Sam Galler (Student Representative)
Anne Monereau (Parent / Treasurer / Parent Alternate Delegate)	Daniel Dupuis (Teacher)	Jennifer Lynch (Student Rep.)
Norm Gharibian (Parent / Parent Delegate)	Gloria Koyounian (Teacher)	
Deidre Dimock (Parent)	Marie-Alessia Zuccaro (Teacher)	Elysia Bryan-Baynes (Community Rep.)
Michael Mendelson (Parent)	Sheila Macleod (Teacher)	Dr. Sharma (Community Rep.)
	ALSO PRESENT	
Tony Pita (Principal)	Steven Manstavich (Vice-Principal)	
	REGRETS / ABSENT	
Andrea Dillon (Teacher)	Dimitra Dimopoulos (will split meetings with Guidance Dept.; Michal Wineberg)	Chantal Juhasz (Vice-Principal)
Joseph Lalla (Commissioner)		

1. Welcome

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Lori Rinaldi.

Michal Weinberg was welcomed; she will split the guidance counsellor representation with Dimitra Dimopoulos

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion to adopt the Agenda with the following changes:

Instances in the agenda of the year 2015 should be replaced with 2016

Moved by: G. Koyounian; seconded by N. Gharibian

VOTE RESULT: 17-0-0 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes of October 19th, 2016

Motion to adopt the October 19th, 2016 meeting minutes with the following changes:

7. Internal Rules of Operation. Remove last bullet completely: After the meeting...elected by a general assembly.

6.1. Schoology: Next Steps/objective... to be moved to 4.2.

Moved by: M. Mendelson; seconded by D. Dupuis

VOTE RESULT: 15-0-2 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); MOTION CARRIED

4. Business arising from the minutes

4.1. Welcome/Introduction of Community Representatives

- 4.1.1. Dr. Mahesh Sharma was welcomed back to RWA
- 4.1.2. Ms. Elysia Bryan-Baynes was welcomed back to RWA GB in absentia.

4.2. Schoology: Next Steps/Cost Implications & Impact to Student Fees for 2017-2018

RWA began by using the EMSB portal and then went on to EDMODO.

Options were looked into by GB Portal subcommittee regarding a portal for students, teachers, parents.

Free version of Schoology was implemented last year and was well received.

Softwares that offer portal services were examined.

Schoology was chosen, minus the Enterprise version, as the Enterprise version will incur costs.

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Recommendation was made to have a permanent RWA resource assigned to the Schoology portal to offer tutorials, show the system, etc. As such, Mr. Andre Vamvakas offered to evaluate the current Schoology version versus the Enterprise version. He presented a slide show detailing all that is offered with the ENTERPRISE version and shared his comments/feedback at the meeting. Below is an overview of his observations and his recommendations that are also shared with Staff Council:

- Schoology ENTERPRISE VERSION should be considered. Why? More detailed, more features, more comprehensive, greater functionality and possibilities with the Enterprise version.
- Allows to create an intuitive work space for educators and students (remains RWA property)
 - O Students can access their work after graduation, etc.
- Would be ready in August for teachers to be able to kick off the school year;
- Allows integrating all; can incorporate different apps google drive, one drive, etc.;
- Parents home page is comprehensive they can see all but cannot post anything;
- Principal has administrative rights can see everything;
- Student Home page would be much more user friendly;
- Rich text editor;
- · Rubrics can be shared;
- Allows for discussions by students; all monitored by teachers;
- Assessments are easier to create, E.g. tests, can create data banks for practice tests, etc.;
- Will help teachers to work in collaboration;
- Teachers may verify the Mastery of any given topic, analytics of student progress, etc.;
- Groups can be created;
- Unlimited storage to archive resources (for both students and teachers);
- Google SSS (Single Sign On) integration;
- Students can save all their work on Schoology;
- Schoology Enterprise implementation and training available to students and staff, as per pricing below:

Implementation Fee (one-time)	\$2,500 USD
Professional Development Fee	\$1,500 USD
(for up to 6 people @ \$250/person)	
Integration Fee (\$10 cost/student X 850	\$8,500 USD
students)	· · ·
Premium Support Fee (annual cost)	\$3,000 USD

GB Q&A Session following Mr. Vamvakas' presentation:

I. QUESTIONS:

Q: Will all teachers use it?

A: Mr. Pita responded that he could not impose the tool as a mandatory communication/working tool by staff. Making mandatory can cause resentment (antipathy). RWA policy is more to show the features and entice potentials to join. Use can be gaged and ongoing assessments will be constant. The fact that all do not currently use it is not policy; it's just a reality. In time we must accommodate easing people in. Although desirable, it is not likely that will have a 100% participation rate by staff.

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Question: Does Enterprise version allow students to create groups (E.g. for projects)? A: Possibly

Q: How will parents access? Will we have to register per class as we do now?

A: All will become part of the network.

Q: Is purchase/adoption of the Enterprise version of Schoology something that must go through EMSB? Will the EMSB resist to adoption of this enhanced tool?

A (T.Pita): Yes, absolutely nothing can be signed, paid for, before going through EMSB. Not likely to resist the adoption of the tool since GB has power to approve implementation of this type of tool.

Q: Where will funds come from? Do we have a fund? Can other entities be considered to pitch in to cover costs of Enterprise version of Schoology?

A: Initial fees can come from School's Operating Budget. Per student fee will have to come from student fees. Support can also be squeezed into School Budget; at least for year 1.

Q: Is there a trial version? We can do it for 6 months? 1-year? with no binding agreement? A: Unsure. This needs to be evaluated further.

Q: Can we get feedback from other schools?

A: Although Schoology reps are always ready to meet with us and provide this kind of information, we do not know at this time if other schools are using this version of the Schoology tool.

Q: Is there any other software, technology that could be terminated to offset the costs of this. A: No.

Q: How many teachers use it now?

A: Have not confirmed usage for this year. Yet, Staff Council has recommended the Schoology Enterprise version.

Q: Is the GB in a position to vote on adoption of the Enterprise version of Schoology tonight?

A: No, as there are still some unanswered questions that need to be validated and due diligence is still required.

Q: Are the costs shared by Schoology fixed costs? If so, for how long? Can we expect price per student to be revised in subsequent contractual years?

A: This must be validated.

Q: Was adoption of the Enterprise version of Schoology a GB priority?

A: No. However request for a portal solution was listed. It is important to note that GRICS-Bricks is trying to create something similar that could potentially compete with the tool being discussed.

Q: Can SLA representatives poll students to evaluate perceived value-added of the Enterprise version of Schoology?

A: This may be premature. Do you have enough information to explain it properly to student?

Q: Can we invite Schoology Rep to GB via skype, webex?

A: The Sub-portal Committee would have to see if this is possible.

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Q: If use a sample group to test this solution further, will we incur the same fees? A: Yes.

II. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

A lengthy discussion ensued that included additional comments:

- Schoology as is, is a good tool that does what it is intended to do. The Enterprise version may have perks, but is the incremental cost of roughly \$10/student justified?
- It is important to consider that once Schoology Enterprise is purchased and is adopted as the school's choice, the whole privacy laws issue must be worked out in detail with Schoology.
- Must also consider things like the ECA fees do all teachers participate equally? Global picture must be considered. It will be very difficult to accommodate everyone's pace, needs at the same time.
- Subcommittee will not make any decision without GB approval.
- Some teachers use the tool a lot. Right now it complements teaching but is not a substitute to teaching. Concern was raised that the objective may be lost (E.g. focussing on the subject and not the wow of the site). Enterprise is not an assessment based tool.
- If teachers recommend it, we should consider it.
- Would like to poll the room to see how GB feels?
- Schools like RWA & LHA are way ahead of the curve with regards to this kind of software. It's in our Mission Statement to be technological advanced/up-to-date. The main question to ask will it enhance student learning?
- As a parent, we thought this was a GB initiative.
- Admin. can grant funds for a facilitator

Motion to mandate the RWA GB Portal subcommittee to validate missing information (timeline, references, costs) associated with the transition from our current free version of Schoology to the Enterprise version of Schoology.

Moved by: M. Mendelson; seconded by N. Gharibian

VOTE RESULT: 16-0-1 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); MOTION CARRIED

8:10 pm: Elysia Brian Baynes arrived.

4.3. Update: Internal Rules of Operation / Conflict of Interest Form

N. Gharibian reported that the current wording in the GB manual is taken directly from article 70 of the Education Act. There is no specific procedure described in the law with regards to expulsion of a member. The Ministry has explained that a procedure will be followed if needed. EMSB provided a standard form - that is used throughout all governance levels: **DECLARATION OF A POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS.** The form was distributed to RWA GB members to sign at their discretion.

4.4. Update: History Program (Sec III)

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Information has been gathered and is supposed to go to staff council. They did meet at an informal information session. GB will get feedback after next staff council meeting.

4.5. GB Correspondence e-mail

EMSB advised Mr. Pita that it is not possible to have an *emsb.qc.ca account*. RWA GB will therefore create a generic email account (Lori will work with Ryan on this).

5. Reports

5.1. Principal

- i. Bardolators performance of Romeo and Juliet took place from Nov. 1st Nov. 4th; well-attended and well-received. A special thanks to Ms. Koyounian, Ms. Kuch, & Mr. Floen for their hard work in helping to prepare students for this event.
- ii. On Tuesday, November 1st, Royal West Academy was honored to have a very special guest at our school. Marc Hall, whose real life experience fighting for his right to have his boyfriend attend Prom with him, which is the subject of a critically acclaimed musical performed at the Segal Centre called 'Prom Queen: The Musical'. Mr. Hall's appearance was seen on both CTV and Global News. Thank you goes out to the RWA Foundation especially Mr. Mitchell White & Ms. Carol Shemie.
- iii. On November 3rd our Mindfulness program was the subject of a report by CBC Radio. Both Mr. Mateus and Ms. Almeida, along with students Alex Rona and Alexandra Harboun were interviewed to discuss their feeling about the Mindfulness program at our school. CBC was very excited to both learn about and share with their listeners some of the great initiatives that we have begun implementing at our school to help combat issues of anxiety with our student body.
- iv. On November 8th, Royal West Academy hosted its second Secondary I Parent Seminar of the year. The topic during this seminar, entitled "Keeping your Child Safe in the Digital World", dealt with the very relevant theme of digital technology and how it affects the lives of teenagers. It also dealt with how parents can be an active participant in helping to guide and inform their child concerning the dangers of digital presence. The presentation was hosted by Ms. Daphna Leibovici, who works in the Student Services department of the EMSB. Our next Parent Seminar will take place on Wednesday, January 25th and will deal with the topic of preparing your child for exams.
- v. On November 9th, our school demonstrated respect to those who have served our country in Remembrance Day ceremonies, led by our Spiritual Animator, Ms. Jagdeep Trehin. Our guests all made a powerful impression upon our students as we remembered those who fought for our freedom over the years.
- vi. During this past month, Ms. Trehin, our Spiritual and Community Animator, along with Ms. Smiley, who also coordinates our Social Justice committee, helped spearhead an amazing initiative with the NDG Food Depot. Thanks to their work and the cooperation of our teaching staff and students, RWA collected over 1,980 lbs. of food over the course of the month. That is, quite literally, a ton of food!!!
- vii. On November 11th November 26th, twenty-two Secondary III students travelled to Taiwan as part of a cultural exchange. This year's trip was reported to be a life changing experience for many of the students and staff. We would like to thank our chaperones, Ms. Westlake, Mr. Diacoumacos, Ms. Belina, & Mr. Scrivener for their participation.

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- viii. On Monday, November 14th, RWA students who are part of the Junior Debate Team participated in a tournament at Loyola High School. Asghar Taqvi & Keith Moussa finished in 1st place in the team section of the tournament, while Asghar and Keith also finished 1st and 3rd respectively in the individual portion of the tournament. Congratulations to both boys and a thank you to Ms. Holloway for helping to prepare our students so thoroughly.
- ix. On the weekend of Nov. 19 20, a number of parents gave their time to improve the physical appearance of our school. Led by Mr. Michael Mendelson and Ms. Kathleen Cawthorn, volunteers helped to repaint our computer labs, Library, as well as third floor classrooms 301 & 305, along with some touch-ups to the hallways. This year marked our best turnout yet; over 80 parents volunteered throughout the weekend. Thanks to all the parent volunteers for their continued support of RWA.
- x. In an effort to ensure the best level of comfort possible for our students, our Home and School Association recently agreed to finance the installation of air conditioning units in our Computer labs. This initiative, which will cost close to 12,000\$ in total. Thank you to our Home & School Association for their generosity and willingness to help improve our school environment.
- xi. On November 18th, members of the RWA Glee Club, in preparation for their performance on Sunday, November 20th, were interviewed by CTV News. Students then participated in a tournament on the November 20th which they found to be very rewarding.
- xii. We are very proud of two students, Kainaat Khan (Sec 4) and Shayaan Khan (Sec 2) who both participated, from Nov. 18 20, in the Montreal UpStarts program. Montreal UpStarts is a free, youth-oriented entrepreneurship camp that gives youth training in regards to how to start up a business or develop a business idea. Kainaat & Shayaan both received certificates for 1st and 2nd place respectively for their proposals. Kainaat's proposal, which centered on the creation of an app to help students deal with the issue of procrastination, earned her the opportunity to visit Google's head office here in Montreal. Congratulations to both students!!
- xiii. On Saturday, November 5th, members of our Midget and Juvenile Girls Volleyball teams participated in the Finals of their respective leagues. Our Juvenile Girls team took top spot, while our Midget Girls team came in 2nd. A thank you goes out to Mr. Mateus (Juvenile Girls) & Ms. Leech-Pepin (Midget Girls) for all of their time and dedication in helping to coach our girls this year.

Mr. Pita further communicated that the EMSB has confirmed that RWA will receive \$15,000 out of their \$1M surplus. Staff Council proposed the following recommendations (in priority):

- Improved security system involving cards, for staff, to access through entrance doors.
- Repairs to improve the 'all gender' washrooms involving stalls.
- Painting of West Wing stair well (not safe for parents to do this)
- PED materials for Social Studies dept. (French, Math, Science have all received literature funding previously)

Comment/Q: All seem very viable but will cost more than \$15K. Mr. Pita will approach other avenues only after GB approves.

Motion to approve using the EMSB surplus to fund the above-mentioned (prioritized) RWA recommendations *Moved by D. Dupuis; seconded by: A. Monereau*

VOTE RESULT: 16-0-1 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); MOTION CARRIED

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5.2. Regional Delegate

i. October 26th EMSB Council of Commissioners Meeting

- N. Gharibian was not a sitting member yet as the date by law is 1st Sunday in November. (This year November 6th 2016)
- This is the meeting that gave us the bill 105 council resolution.
- This meeting also generated a great deal of news that did not cast the EMSB in a good light.
 Topics related to the change order procedure draw attention from many directions and the tone of the relationship between Administration and the Council was called into question.

ii. November 3rd CPC Meeting

- Both FCPQ and EPCA presented to the CPC to help us make a decision on our continuing affiliation with one group or the other. After long deliberation the EMSB CPC has chosen to affiliate with EPCA. We also selected our delegates to EPCA, Suzanne de Jonge (Voting member) and Isabelle Baas. Suzanne has gone on to be a member of the executive of EPCA.
- Adopted dates are included with the RPC West section of this report. Locations will change through the year. Publish on EMSB Website.
- The CPC Social media is becoming a focal point for disseminating the bright side of education. We are trying to make our Facebook and Twitter less political and more about celebrating educational success.
- The rest is mostly housekeeping stuff. Review the minutes for more details
- NEXT CPC Meeting is December 1st 2016 at the EMSB HQ

iii. November 14th RPC West Meeting

- RPC and CPC structures where again a big topic. Although this will continue for a time it is Norm's hope it will not impede the real work of either body.
- Calendar of meeting dates for CPC and Both RPCs are attached below. RPC West has
 elected to keep the full schedule of meetings and may opt to cancel meetings based on
 content. Alternates are encouraged to participate.
- RPC West spoke about Parent outreach through workshop(s). This may be enlarged to an EMSB wide affair through the CPC. Discussion to be had at next CPC Meeting.
- The RPC West has once again allocated funds for a Scholarship Prize for a student who
 exemplified growth in leadership (this may only apply to elementary schools depending of
 funds)
- Construction to start on the new MacKay / Philip E. Layton facility in October 2016
- ACSES is working on improving their web site.
- All present gave highlights from their schools' activities and events. Details will be included
 in the minutes once approved at the following meeting. School reports will be moved up in
 future agendas.
- We will be holding a social in conjunction with our December meeting. (December 12th 2016)

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- Voted meeting dates for RPC and CPC (confirmed what was proposed at last meeting):

CPC - 7PM	RPC WEST - 7PM @ EMSB	RPC EAST - 7PM
Nov 3	Nov 14	
Dec 1	Dec 12	Dec 13
Jan 12	Jan 9	
FEB 2	Feb 13	Feb 14
Mar 2	Mar 13	
Apr 6	Apr 10	
May 4	May 8	May 9
Jun 1	Jun 12	

iv. November 16th EMSB Council of Commissioners Special Meeting

- The focus of this meeting was for the most part about the \$27 million project of the MacKay / Philip E. Layton facility

v. November 23rd EMSB Council of Commissioners Meeting

- Parent Commissioners Representation on the Executive and Advisory Committees
- Agreement for Police Presence in Educational Institutions
- Change Order Process

vi. Notes on Bill 105:

- The bill was adopted by the NAT at 10:55am November 17th 2016 by a vote of : **80** in favour, **16** against, **0** Abstain.
- The final version of the new law is under review by all the stake holders. Most of the changes will take effect in July of 2017 and some in 2018. One notable change that comes into effect on December 17th is the right to vote for Parent-Commissioners.

Related article by Jennifer Maccarone, president of QESBA: Special to Montreal Gazette Opinion: Newly passed Quebec education law infringes on English-minority rights http://montrealgazette.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-newly-passed-quebec-education-law-infringes-on-english-minority-rights

5.3. Student Life Association

- i. SLA has participated in the following events:
 - Oct. 31: \$2 Dress Down Day. \$1600 was raised for "Medecins sans frontiers".
 - November 14th: MISO Monday
 - November 15th: Taco Tuesday
 - November 18th: first RWA dance with very good attendance of approximately 300 students.
- ~ \$1600 was raised during the November events.

ii. Upcoming Events include:

- Week of Dec. 19th: Would like to create a holiday themed week
 - o Will sell hot chocolate after school, etc.
 - o More ideas are being considered
 - o SLA will discuss details with Admin.
- Feb. 7th: formal dance

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5.4. Commissioner

No report. Mr. Lalla sent his regrets for not being able to attend the meeting.

5.5. RWA Foundation

PROM QUEEN: 150 tickets were sold

5.6. Home and School

Completed / Ongoing Events

- Convocation (June 2, 2016)
- Used Uniform Sale (June 14, 2016)
- Uniform Sale (June 15 & 16, 2016)
- Uniform Sale (August 25, 2016)
- TGIF (Sept. 2016 June 2017)
- Open House (Sept. 19, 2016)
- Lost and Found (Oct. 2016 June 2017)
- Painting (November 19 & 20, 2016)
- Used Uniform Sale (Dec. 1, 2016) not this year

Upcoming Events

- Holiday Treats to Entire Staff (Dec. 2016)
- Staff & Teacher Appreciation (Feb. 20-23, 2017)
- Science Fair Judges Lunch (Feb. 23, 2017)
- Painting (April, 2017) Kathleen & Michael
- Administrative Professional's Day (April 27, 2016)
- Book Fair (May 2 & 3, 2017)
- Convocation (June 1, 2017)
- Uniform Sale :

Used :Tue. June 13, 2017 (7-8 pm)
New :Wed. June 14, 2017 (2pm-8pm)
Thu. June 15, 2017 (3pm-8pm)

9 pm: Suggestion was made for Sam & Jennifer to leave as it was a school night.

SLA Representatives were excused and left the meeting.

6. New Business

6.1. Expectations / objectives of GB members for 2016-2017

Motion to table this item to the next meeting Moved by L. Rinaldi; Seconded by A. Monereau

VOTE RESULT: 15-0-0 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED

6.2. Bill 105 (Resolution Request by EMSB)

See **Regional Delegate Report 5.2(vi.)** This Bill affects many aspects including funding, principal selection, teaching licenses, etc. All future governments will have a heavy hand in budget decision making. More examination will be required.

9:30 pm Dr. Sharma excused himself to prepare for an overseas trip the next day

6.3 Criteria Selection for Appointment of Principal 2016-2017 (Deadline February 23, 2016)

Motion to keep the Criteria Selection letter as is and submit with the new date. L. Rinaldi will submit to the EMSB on behalf of RWA GB.

Moved by A. Monereau; seconded by D. Dupuis

VOTE RESULT: 15-0-0 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED

6.4 Allocation of Governing Board Budget

Annual Governing Board budget is \$250. At RWA, this amount has been used to honor volunteers with a reception in June. For the last 2 years, suggestion has been made to consider using some of the budget for Science Fair prizes (Eg. \$60+\$60=\$120).

Comments:

- Maybe we can pick another group (athletics, ECA, musician, etc.)
- Do staff members agree with this suggestion? Can they think of another deserving group?
- Volunteer appreciation costs more than \$250. If we don't use it there, where will funds come

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from for that?

- If opt for GB Award, it can be a prize related to something in accordance with the mission statement.
- In Education Act, GB Budget is specifically to facilitate the functioning of the GB (E.g. babysitting, transport, etc.)

Motion to use all or the bulk of the GB budget to fund the Volunteer Appreciation event in June 2017. *Moved by N. Gharibian; seconded by M. Mendelson*

VOTE RESULT: 14-0-1 (format: IN FAVOUR-AGAINST-ABSTENTION); UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED

6.5 Code of Conduct Uniforms

Q: Are there any concerns currently?

A: None at the moment.

Recommendations are submitted in March / April so staff can be advised.

Concern: Very hard to implement regulatory skirt length. Issue is similar in all schools.

Last year, the school agenda was modified. School Admin. is now permitted to mandate a parent to buy a new skirt. This seems to be working for now. Situation will continue to be monitored.

7 Correspondence

7.4 Annual Volunteer Event (April 4, 2017): List Update

- Various RWA Groups have been requested to provide feedback. Is a work in progress.

8 Question Period

No questions

9 Varia

9.4 Dec. 19th GB meeting

- For now, a December meeting is not needed. If something comes up, Lori will advise 5 GB days before.
- Next approvals will be needed by Jan. 30th. Our next meeting is on Jan. 23rd, 2017.

10 Adjournment

Motioned by N. Gharibian at 9:25 pm

The next Governing Board meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday, January 23rd, 2017 @ 7 pm at the school library.

Lori Rinaldi

Chairperson, RWA Governing Board

Tony Pita

Principal, Royal West Academy