

Great Expectations School
Growing Hearts and Minds, One Child at a Time

Regular School Board Meeting at Great Expectations School
Tuesday, March 18, 2014, 4:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Welcome New Member & Introductions

Sara called the meeting to order at 4:07. Present: Sara Hingos, Jackie Dillenbeck, Allison Plummer, Jeff Kern. Also present: Amy Henrikson, Clara Weitz, Peter James, Patty Nordahl at 5:05, Sue Butter from 5:19-5:24. Absent: Jeanne Smith, Mary Haussner

2. Reading of the Mission: Sara read the mission.

The mission of the school is to develop in each child: a love of learning; critical and creative thinking skills; mastery of the academic building blocks; the ability to nurture family, friends and self; a strong commitment to being a contributing member of a community; open-heartedness toward others; and a passion for life-long learning.

3. Approval of Agenda: **Motion** by Allison, seconded by Jeff, to approve the agenda. Ayes all.

4. Consent Agenda: **Motion** by Sara, seconded by Allison, to approve the consent agenda. Ayes all.

4.1 Approve Minutes from February 18, 2014 Meeting

4.2 Review Expenditures and Fund Transfers

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Financial Policy and Procedure Review 1st

Allison reported that the finance committee met last week and is presenting the final draft of the financial policy. The revisions clarify which staff person is assigned to complete each task. The business manager was added as a person authorized to approve purchase orders. The limit has increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 as the amount director can spend without board approval. Items must already be in the budget. Jeff raised concern that the budget is currently not detailed enough to identify specific purchases. Sara suggested that items purchased over \$1,000 should be noted in board materials, by highlighting them in expenditure list. Suggestion was made to compromise at \$2,500. There will be further discussion at next meeting; send feedback to Pete or Amy.

5.2 ACNW Financial Performance Evaluation

The finance committee also discussed the ACNW evaluation and the two areas that did not meet standards: fund balance percentage and cash available. They will make a plan to address the deficiencies.

6. Director's Report

6.1 Enrollment Lottery Date: Enrollment deadline is March 31; lottery will be held Wed. April 2, at 4:00 p.m. Allison and Pete will be present for lottery, which is open to the public.

6.2 Staff FY 2014-2015: Pete will begin notifying staff of their status for returning next fall; he will work with Susan and personnel committee.

Pete reported that:

- the county voted today to install a sidewalk along 5th Street, from 5th Ave. West to 8th Ave. West, as part of Safe Routes to School.
- GES was applauded at Blandin Leadership Conference as the first charter school in Cook County, and as a school that has changed the face of education in the county.
- he spoke with some community members about the inaccurate perception people have that it is impossible to get into GES because kindergarten class is filled with siblings of current students and children of staff.

7. Committee Report

7.1 Personnel: Sue and Sara met and will be sending out a survey to staff and board members to review the Director.

7.2 Policy: Pete and Jeanne have been reviewing policies. Two-thirds are generic and do not need to be updated; a few do need to be revised to meet current requirements. Final product will be a set of complete school policies in an electronic format to be shared online.

7.3 Board Packet: Facility, Policy, and Technology
Sara is working on this, including bylaws, articles of incorporation, and committee descriptions. These documents are in the drop box and will eventually be on the website. Let Sara know if anything else should be included in the New Board Member packet.

8. Old Business

8.1 Board Priorities: Sara revised the strategic plan, and added items to the list of things to do. Jeff suggested adding a history book, including interviews with the school founders.

Updates to calendar: Email any changes to Sara

Discussion about accessing board documents in the drop box and on the website. Jeff requested a prompt when new items are added.

Allison left at 4:45.

9. New Business (this was moved to the last item on the agenda, awaiting Patty's arrival.)

9.1 Patty Nordahl SHIP: Patty was selected by the Sawtooth Clinic to be the SHIP (Statewide Health Improvement Program) coordinator for GES. This is a prevention effort by the state to help Minnesotans live in an environment that is conducive to

being healthy. Patty will begin by focusing on two school initiatives: healthy school foods and an active school day. She will also convene a Wellness Council. There is \$1,000 available for supplies or projects over a 2-year period.

GES already has nutritious meals, school gardens, and active day for kids. SHIP funds will help us build on what we are already doing, and make it better. Patty proposes contracting with Karina Roth to write down everything she does regarding gardening, food planning, etc. for future use.

Additional areas to work on:

- Alliance for a Healthier Generation website has an assessment tool for schools that helps identify goals.
- Developing a wellness policy that would address what kinds of food are available to children during the day, including birthday treats and food served at events, and following federal guidelines regarding trans fats and other ingredients.
- Active school day: develop policies about how to incorporate activity into the day; what kinds of wellness curriculum to use.
- Staff wellness: what are our policies to help staff stay active and eat healthy?

Patty has access to training resources and can help find information on any related topic of interest. Contact info: Patty.nordahl@gmail.com

Amy left at 5:17. Sue arrived at 5:19.

Motion by Sara, seconded by Jeff, to authorize school to contract with Karina Roth to document existing food and gardening programs, paying her \$300 in SHIP funds; also move to form a wellness committee. Ayes all.

Sue left at 5:24.

10. Upcoming Actions

10.1 Board Development: There is information on the MACS website about board training opportunities.

10.2 Graduation Planning: Date is set for May 30th, the last day of school. Sara will send parents of 8th graders a 'save the date' email this week, followed by an invitation sent via mail by Jackie. There will be an all school acknowledgement during the school day, plus an evening ceremony from 7-9 p.m. for graduates, families, staff and board members. Snacks and desserts will be served.

Grants: Jackie will research grant possibilities in the areas of technology, gardening, arts in the school, and STEM subjects.

10.3 Report on Director Review: see 7.1

11. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:33.

GES Board meetings are open to all. While guests may not participate during the business meeting, our host team is available to visit, answer questions, and discuss your issues 30 minutes prior to each meeting. We invite you to share your ideas, suggestions, and concerns with our hosts during this time.