

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

Regular School Board Meeting at Great Expectations School
Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 4:00 p.m.

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

Present: Sara Hingos, Mary Haussner, Peter James, Amy Henrikson, Sue Butter, Allison Plummer, Jeff Kern at 4:20, Jackie Dillenbeck at 4:45. Also present: David Greenberg, Lead Coordinator, Audubon Center of the North Woods Charter School Division, Clara Weitz

Sara called the meeting to order at 4:08.

2. Reading of the Mission: Amy 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 Sue, second by Mary, to approve the agenda with the additions of 6.1 SpEd, MACS and Presence Learning Agreements, 8.3 Graduation, and 9.2 MCA Proficiency Goals. Ayes all.

4. Consent Agenda: **Motion** by Mary, second by Sue, to approve the consent agenda. Correction to minutes: remove Sara from list of people attending enrollment lottery. Ayes all.

4.1 Approve Minutes from March 18, 2014 Meeting

4.1 Review Expenditures and Fund Transfers

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Financial Policy and Procedure Review 2nd

- Allison reported that we pulled \$15,000 from line of credit to cover cash flow shortage in March.
- The committee looked at budget forecasting for the next five years. Documents are in the dropbox to review; will discuss this as a board in May. Questions can be directed to the finance committee prior to their next meeting on May 13th.
- They reviewed purchase order language, and propose to change amount not requiring board approval from \$5,000 to \$3,000.

6. Director's Report

Pete reported that kindergarten has four openings and third grade has one opening, for fall 2014. His report also included information on several grant opportunities that he is pursuing for bike safety projects, including training bikes for third graders, and off road bikes for fifth graders, which would be shared with Grand Portage and Birch Grove schools.

Plans are in process to develop a bike path from our east parking lot to the paved bike path on Highway 61, with the help of a \$4,000 grant. There are also plans to build a weather station with funds from the Grand Marais Lioness Club and from the Surbaugh family. Several gardening grants are also in the works.

6.1 SpEd, MACS and Presence Learning Agreements

Pete recommends renewing our agreements with Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS), Innovative Special Education Services (ISES), and Presence Learning (providing online speech therapy services).

Motion by Sara, second by Mary, to renew the annual agreements with MACS, ISES and Presence Learning. Ayes all.

Pete has received confirmation from all but one educator about returning next year.

We will be graduating 6 students with IEPs, so special education needs will change. Wolves and Lynx classrooms will need the most special ed para support. Fawns will continue to have a general ed para. By end of April, Pete and Susan will identify needs and decide who will be invited back.

Pete reported that he is investigating the price of propane and pre-buy programs among several local suppliers. He is still waiting for some prices, but it appears that a long term contract will make sense, which will mean a fixed price for up to 5,600 gallons. **Motion** by Sara, second by Jeff, to have two authorized signers sign a contract for propane for two years when a supplier is chosen. Ayes all.

7. Committee Report

7.1 Personnel:

- Sue reported that as a result of the staff and board survey, they recommend re-hiring Pete for next year. **Motion** by Sue, second by Allison, to rehire Peter James as Director for the 2014-15 school year. Ayes all. Sara and Sue will meet with Pete to share feedback from the survey and will then share it with the board. Sara gave Pete a letter to sign and return.
- Specific procedures need to be put in place for several items:
 - health insurance for paraprofessionals during the summer. Committee recommends that their 10% contribution be taken out of the last three paychecks of the year, and insurance will stay in force during the summer if they are returning in the fall.

- maternity leave
- the stipend offered to employees who decline health insurance, currently at \$1,000 to be increased gradually to \$2,000. This will be reviewed next month during budget discussions.

Jackie arrived at 4:45.

7.2 Policy: Pete reported that he and Jeanne are going through policies and prioritizing those that need to be revised. The Safe and Supportive Schools Act, passed by Governor Dayton, places specific requirements on schools to implement anti-bullying policies, and to provide staff training, documentation, compliance monitoring, and reporting. It also extends the school's responsibility for monitoring outside of school, such as cyber bullying on social media. We will be talking about how to implement a policy that meets the state requirements and is in keeping with our school philosophy. Sara thanked Pete for taking on the task of organizing the policies. She feels that it should be monetarily compensated because it is such a big job. Sara will submit a payment proposal to Amy to be discussed by finance committee.

(Allison left at 5:02)

7.3 Board Development~Training: Jackie referred to information in the dropbox about open meeting laws. We need to be careful about discussing board business via emails. Sending meeting materials is fine, but engaging in conversation about board business is not acceptable. Board deliberations need to take place in public, not in private conversations. There is much more information about open meeting laws in the dropbox and on the website.

8. Old Business

8.1 Board Priorities: These are updated and in the dropbox. Jeff will finish revising the communications committee section. Please look at the calendar for upcoming board activity; let Sara know if anything needs to be changed. Make sure every bullet point on your committee's priority list is represented somewhere on the calendar.

8.2 Board Packet: Final committee descriptions will be added to new board member packet.

8.3 Graduation: Friday, May 30th, 7-9 pm, at GES. Sara sent out a save-the-date notice to 8th grade families. Jackie will send printed invitations. Parents are welcome to invite extended family. Pete will ask GEF to supply otter puppets and cake.

Mary left the meeting at 5:25 and returned at 5:40.

9. New Business

9.1 Volunteer Thank You: Discussion about how to thank them; ideas include an invitation to lunch, thank you cards, and a thank you in the newspaper. Jeff will work with Mary and Pete to decide how best to acknowledge our volunteers.

9.2 MCA Proficiency Goals: The board is required to set goals for test results, as well as goals for reducing the achievement gap between underperforming groups and white affluent students. The two subgroups applicable to GES are students who are eligible for Free & Reduced Lunch, and Special Education students. Amy presented a chart showing the MCA proficiency count from 2010 through 2013. We are better able to see growth through MAPS tests, but MCAs give a bigger, broader picture. Mary pointed out the positive difference it makes to have a teacher for 2 years in a row.

David said we have already had goals set up with our contract with ACNW; we should create ambitious, realistic goals, but will not necessarily reach 100% student proficiency. Test scores are just one piece of data that they look at. Pete said we can set realistic goals for a class based on looking at individual student performances. Discussion about the validity of standardized tests.

10. Upcoming Actions

10.1 Budget (Finance): Please review the documents in the dropbox, including budget draft, 5 year forecast and commentary; let finance committee (Amy, Allison) know of any comments or questions before their next meeting on May 13. The 2014-15 budget will be presented at the next board meeting.

10.2 Insurance Review (Finance)

10.3 Audit & Tax Return Agreement (Amy)

10.4 Review Board Openings (Board Dvlpmt): Jackie

10.5 Parent Satisfaction Survey (Communications)

10.6 Development Plans (Personnel)

11. Adjournment: **Motion** by Sara, second by Jackie, to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 p.m. Ayes all.

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 15 minutes prior to each meeting. We invite you to share your ideas, suggestions, and concerns with our hosts during this time.