

Grand Rapids Child Discovery Center

February 9, 2015 Board Meeting (Corrected 2/12/2015)

Minutes

Attending: Tim Glasser, Eric Doyle, Raymond McDaniel, Mary Witte , Esther Kuiper, Sarah Cooper, John Robinson, Sana Amash

Absent: Tracey Brame, Chris Hanks

Note: Chris Hanks submitted his letter of resignation prior to the board meeting. We thank Chris for his extended service to the board, his time, commitment and passion, and wish him well in his new role as Principal of the new GRPS Museum School.

Call to Order: 6:05 pm

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Mary Witte, Seconded, Approved

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Tim Glasser, Seconded, Approved

Reflection:

- Sarah Cooper reported that she received a call from Saginaw Valley State University inquiring if GRCDC would be willing to talk to them, aid them as they plan a Reggio Emilia charter school in Ferndale, MI.
- Sana Amash reminded us this is Diversity Week and daily events are occurring, with a lunch on Wednesday.

Public Comment: No Comments

Family Team: (Written report submitted with Board Packet)

Mary Witte attended the last Family Team meeting and reported that the minutes submitted to the board accurately reflected the meeting. Overall impression was that the group was organized and motivated to serve. In the meeting there was a comment made by a member that it was gratifying that the Family Team activities are more aligned with the overall school needs

Administrative Report: (Written report submitted with Board Packet) John Robinson highlighted his report by saying:

- School Improvement Plan is progressing and will be ready well before the deadline of June 30, 2015.
- Math Night went very well.
- Diversity Week is in full swing.
- Happy to report that we have filled a teacher long term sub position internally, and a temporary parapro position externally.
- Planning for the Mayor Heartwell's visit on March 17
- Planning volunteer event in conjunction with operations and facility sub-committee.

Pedagogista Report: (Written report submitted with Board Packet) Sarah Cooper highlighted her report by saying:

- Midyear district assessments are in, reporting highest reading scores ever, and improvements in math
 - Raymond asked if the family team had been approached to volunteer as mentors for students who are performing under the GRCDC averages. Sarah asked to address this a bit later in the meeting.
 - John commented that they have engaged the students with KHAN Academy, an on-line resource for families to use to help students achieve
 - Sarah circled the discussion around to tell us that the assessments is a cause for celebration and that today more assessments are going on triggering real time instructional strategies. There is also new curriculum, new staff, and more coaching than previous years. Another on-line tool “Superintendents Drop-Out” is a mentoring program that can be used by instructional staff.
- Reporting that they had raised the rates for the *Before and After School Program*, which will raise more than \$2,000 in funds for this school year. While there were some complaints, staff has been explaining it was not a targeted increase, but a required financial change.
 - Sarah continues to provide bookkeeping services (Quick Books), saving \$5,000 this school year.
 - Kia gave her two weeks notice and Sarah reported they have hired Michael who has experience at the GRCDC to fill that vacancy.
- Sarah distributed a sign-up for board members to sign volunteering for February 28 and March 7 clean up and set up days for the new technology lab.

Treasures Report: Tim Glasser reported:

- That the State of Michigan has reversed their ruling on GRCDC funding, returning to a previous formula which will change our budget from an anticipated -\$100,000 deficit to a -\$12,000 deficit.
- The Board intends to review and approve a new budget based on this information in March with the goal of reinstating the tuition reimbursement that Sarah and John waived right after it was approved (because of what appeared to be inadequate funds).
- Currently the \$150,000 LOC is extended to around \$60,000 and we are making payments on principle and interest. Typically we need to use most of the LOC in August- September – October of every year because tuition reimbursement payments from the State of Michigan don’t show up until October.

Facilities Report (Written report submitted 2/9/2015) Raymond McDaniel reported:

- The committee is working towards compiling updated useable costs for facility repair planning.
 - Brick tuck-pointing is the highest priority to keep moisture out of the building.
 - Roof can be strategically patched but the smaller roofs need attention soon.
 - Boiler will be looked at again.

- The committee is using the “Quality Form” to create room by room assessments
 - This form will help create priorities for repairs and hope to create a standard for preventative maintenance
 - This form will also communicate tasks that could be addressed by volunteers.
- (Eric inserted that a group of engineers he has been working with professionally, volunteered their time to visit the school and are writing an energy audit report. Eric reminded us of the possible future program from Kent County – PACE- that may be a source of funding for energy saving related repairs and upgrades for Kent County schools)

Marketing (Written report submitted with Board Packet) Mary Witte reported:

- Progress on web page and analytic web review; web page tweaks by 3/1, new web site by 9 2015
- Progress on “messaging”; messages 99% complete will circulate when finish and start to schedule meetings with groups that market and message to explain our goals.
- Progress on social media agenda; meeting with Tiffany this week to get organized. Will stay closely connected with John R on content and schedule.

Operations (Written report submitted with Board Packet) Mary Witte reported:

- Employee Handbook is in progress, section 1 and 2 are 99% complete, Sarah and John are trying to introduce this information to the staff.
- As requested, Mary sent to board members the draft of the document that describes recommendations for hiring and training new staff. (As of this writing, no comments from the board on that submittal, so we will move forward.)
- Section 3 includes recommendations for any change of staff benefits and status. Drafts will be sent to the board members prior to working with John and Sarah to make sure the board is aware of any financial implications.
- The Family Handbook will be extrapolated from the Employee Handbook. Tim raised a concern that separate documents would be inefficient. Sarah assured the board that a simpler document is needed for families.
- Mary introduced the idea of a discussion on the future structure of school and board in the ongoing plan to create a sustainable program for a school of excellence.

Fundraising (Written report submitted with Board Packet) Eric Doyle reported:

- Increased attendance and participation in committee meetings. Two new members Amber Fox and Pete Emmerson
- Group met on the alignment of fund raising goals to the needs assessment, creating separate “buckets” for operational fundraising, technology fundraising, facility fundraising and expansion (outdoor space) fundraising.
- The committee is putting together an action plan based on this alignment. There are many action steps assigned.
- Eric reported that the committee feels like it is “back on track”

Other Business

- Eric reported that Chris Hanks has officially resigned from the board as he has accepted the job of principal at the new GRPS Museum School. The board appointed Mary Witte to fill the role of Secretary.
- Eric reported on the search for board members, Ryan Kilpatrick is still considering and Jenine Prus is also interested. Eric is also going to reach out to Jamie Scripps. Sana also indicated that she knew of a parent with a background in finance who may be interested in joining.
- Mary asked if the board was now ready for her to solicit for non-family board members from local businesses who have staff that they would like to have involved in the community, learning how to serve on boards. Mary will pursue an e-blast to 50 companies describing the nature of the board and their committees using committee descriptions that are currently on Google Docs.

Good News

- GVSU identified that the GRCDC has been on the list of the top 50 charter schools in Michigan since 2012.
- Center for Michigan reports that the GRCDC is in the top 20% in performance of all school districts in Michigan.
- Wood TV reported that Snyder is expected NOT to cut funds for education.

7:38 Motion to Adjourn -Meeting Closed.

Next Meeting, March 9 2015, 6pm