

The Grand Rapids Child Discover Center (GRCDC) is a diverse, urban, K-5 school in the heart of Grand Rapids, MI. The school believes education is based on relationships; relationships to others, to ideas, to the environment and the larger community. This approach is based on the Reggio Emilia method which encourages curiosity, discovery and connectedness. This shared experience in passionate discovery engages all members of our school community in co-constructing a unique and effective education.

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## **April 11, 2016 – GRCDC Board Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order: 6:07 pm**

### **Attending**

**Board Members:** Eric Doyle, Andrew Brower \, Jon Beer, Mary Witte (Absent: Raymond McDaniel and Lisa Nuyens)

**Administrators:** John Robinson (Absent: Sarah Cooper-Maternity Leave)

**Guests:** Chris Rauch, Wafa Amash, Sana Amash, Andrew Kleinschmit, Treisch Seeley, Ted Jauw, Peg Jefchak

**Motion to Approve Agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup>-ed, no changes or amendments, approved unanimously,** (There was discussion that per last month's meeting previous minutes were reviewed to mine for other unfinished business that needs to be added to agenda's going forward)

**Motion to Approve March 14, 2016 Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup>-ed, noted correction of spelling of Treish's name, otherwise approved unanimously,**

### **Reggio Reflection**

John referenced the success of Portfolio Day

Andrew K. reported that Discovery D is "amping" up for May 3<sup>rd</sup> sale at the Museum. (Unit on business and commerce)

Ted was pleased about a recent on line dialogue on the "Friends of the CDC" page, and that conversations are happening. (Discussion regarding on the direction of the school, homework, playground) (Off agenda-Ted advocated that "somebody" take the pulse of the parents back to the board)

## Public Comment

Wafa Amash spoke about the “Before and After School” Program. Distressed about the decision not to have a summer program, concerned about the events that lead to this decision and concerned about the future of the program and her role with it. She reported parents have asked her about program issues . Eric asked that she send those parents to John, which she says she has.

There was a discussion that followed and several of the people at the meeting voiced their opinions and concerns. Summarizing comments:

- The value of our program as an extension of the school, academically and relationally.
- The importance of the program to our families, and especially special needs families.
- Families previous experiences with contracted service programs was poor
- Concerned how decisions were communicated.
- Concerned how decisions were made.
- Concerned that there appears to be a lack of transparency.

**DAL:** While there was many issues raised, it was agreed that the rising one was the plan going forward. To that end, an informational meeting was scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at school. This date will allow the meeting to be promoted in two Link Letters. The agenda for the meeting will be made public and include information and disclosure on circumstances that brought us to this point.

## Educational and behavioral data, goals and support

7.1 The board asked John and Bet to engage Sana and Trevor and report back to the board at the April board meeting how behavior reporting is efficient and transparent..

John confirmed that best method of the initial reporting of incidents is by the staff member who witnesses behavior. Reporting needs to happen before the 2<sup>nd</sup> level engagement by John and or Trevor in intervention. John reported on the process taken internally through SST meetings.

Sana reported that there wasn't a meeting with John, Beth, Sana and Trevor.

There was a discussion on the term “engage”.

**DAL Continued:** 1. The board asked that there be a meeting (John, Beth, Sana and Trevor) to discuss the behavior system. 2. John to work with Sana to get it this topic on next week's staff meeting (CP meeting) so all staff can be involved in conversation.

7.2 The Board asked John to report at the next boarding and all going forward this school year) on the use of data in the ongoing management of the school (specifically in the sharing of data with teachers and staff and the related strategy for improvements.

John reported that since the beginning of the school year, performance data has been brought to staff at CP meetings six times. John also reported that the school is working with the districts “Turnaround Network” program, and their assigned consultant, Marcia Kay.

Andrew B recounts the need for the board to understand how the school is providing the same opportunities for improvements for all students.

Pegheen shared that there is other data being collected within the school that may feel more relevant at times and advocated for looking to that data as well.

Mary acknowledged that this data review request by the board and administrators feels “new” this year but the data focus will remain a focus.

There was discussion about how “data” and all information brought to the teachers could be more inspiring. Rich and meaningful to the role of teaching.

Ted and John comment on how this topic is a great example of how we are living in two worlds- Encouraging all of us to find the energetic center.

Jon B stated for the Board: We Want .....

- To see the data (this is a check on our system)
- When we see groups not succeeding, we want to know that it is being addressed and how
- We endorse the Reggio Emilia method and expect it to contribute to our improvements

**DAL; (Eric) and all the board asked staff and administrators to continue to work on this issue going forward. Be creative, be collaborative-Work on how to keep data front and center. Report progress at the next board meeting.**

(Around this discussion was an off agenda discussion on the nature of CP meetings. Eric supported the general idea of making CP meeting less business reporting and more engaging to the current needs of the staff population. While this is not an agenda item for board meetings, board members advocate for using these meetings to continue school agenda.

Around this discussion was an off agenda discussion on training new staff in Reggio methods.)

7.3 The Board asked John to reconvene the 2015 Calendar Committee and include the T in the planning of the 2016-2017 calendar. John to report at the next board meeting the plans and timeline for the 2016-2017 calendar.

John reported that a volunteer group had met on this topic last month. The group included members of staff, board (Andrew) and Family Team (Natasha). Sana led the meeting. The next meeting is April 19.

Continued DAL: the Board asked John to meet with this volunteer group and report progress, outcomes and deadlines set at the May board meeting.

7.4 The Board asked John to manage a period of planning for Staff Handbook revisions at least two weeks prior to publishing.

There was discussion that reminded those present that the handbook is to be revised two times a year. One a beginning of the year and one mid year.

John requested the opportunity to talk to Lisa (not present) before setting publishing dates and plans for engaging the community in planning.

**Continued DAL: The Board asked John to manage a period of planning for Staff Handbook revisions at least two weeks prior to publishing.**

## **Data Review**

No behavior data available, based on time needed to accumulate information and the impact of Spring Break.

John did unofficially report his observations that things are improving, March #'s are looking better. Trevor is trying to be more supportive in classrooms verse responsive. They are learning the signs and are feeling more successful in being preventative in some cases. Free and reduced lunch population behaviors are not escalated in March.

Eric asked staff at the meeting why they thought behaviors were better. Andrew K commented that by now teachers have a good understanding of their students and the investment in relationships is paying off. There is always a cycle around winter holidays that spikes behaviors because students are more stressed.

## **Reports**

### Family Team- No Report

Administration – John submitted a written report and asked if there were questions. The following discussions resulted.

There was a short discussion around the Wellness Event planned for May 14.

Jon B commented on the "email shared" about the use of funds from the food service credits available from the lunch program. The goal is to use funds to hire staff to help supervise lunch. Andrew again cautioned the group about making long term staff commitments but look to contracted help in this situations.

Sana asked about outcomes of mid-year administrative reviews. It was determined that John did share about the process at the beginning of a CP meeting but there wasn't adequate time for reflection. Sana and Andrew K concerned for follow through based on staff's investment in time in writing surveys.

Finance- Andrew reported that there was no meeting last month, next meeting planned for April 26. He reported that the group is looking at the full spectrum of staffing costs and services.

Mary requested the creation of an Dashboard that could be presented at each Board meeting . The Dashboard would highlight a few consistent indicators of financial health.

(Outside of agenda- It was commented that Miss Am's (Discoveryt A) mother passed and staff collected money to give in remembrance .The family decided to give the money back to the school for the playground project. )

### Operations-No Report

Marketing/Communication- Mary reported the ongoing progress of assembling copy and photos to use in building a new web site. Mary acknowledged Rachel H's help in getting this assembled. No date set for completion. Appreciative of Brad G's volunteering to build the site. Mary reported John R had reached out to her for assistance in promoting the Wellness Event on May 14. Mary reported that she will be meeting with Beth S to learn ways that we can talk about how the school reports performance data and assist in communicating that through all appropriate venues for best understanding and use.

Jon B invited Treisch Seeley to share a report on “Special Rights” students. Treisch passed out articles and spoke to the needs of the special students in our population.

Eric reminded the group that at the next meeting there will be Board elections for offices. His term as president will be finished in June.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:47pm**

**Next Meeting is May 9 2016 at GRCDC 6 pm**