

Gray Highlight is requesting action.

Blue Highlight indicates a decision.

These minutes highlight what was said in the meeting and those highlights may not supersede the importance of things reported in committee reports that are part of the board packet but not discussed. It is important that all stakeholders review these minutes along with written reports.



December 14, 2015- GRCDC Board Meeting Minutes

Call to order: 6:00 pm

Attending:

Board Members: Eric Doyle, Jon Beer, Lisa Nuyens, Mary Witte, Andrew Brower

Absent: Raymond McDaniel, Juan Garcia-Cruces

Administrators: Sarah Cooper, John Robinson

Guests, Teachers, and Staff: Sana Amash, Andrew Kleinschmidt, Tom Vitale

Called to Order 6:00 pm

Motion to approve agenda , 2nd, no changes or amendments, approved unanimously

Motion to approve November 9, 2015 Minutes , 2nd, approved unanimously

Reflection

Tom Vitale introduced himself as a guest who has interest in helping out with committee work (likely Facilities and Fundraising).

Public Comment

Andrew Kleinschmidt addressed the board reporting that an email was sent to Jon Beer (and the Board) on 12/13/2015 with a list of comments and concerns that they wanted the board to be aware of. Andrew hopes that this initiates a growing relationship between staff and board.

Jon Beer followed by acknowledging receipt of the email.

Lisa asked for clarification on what had happened since the last board meeting regarding staff concerns. Mary repeated from the minutes of last board meeting

- (From minutes) *Last month the teachers (via Sana and Rosalie) had requested addition venues and resources to engage the board. An October 28 deadline was set for teachers to communicate with Jon Beer with ideas to meet their needs. This meeting resulted in a two week extension on that deadline. Jon shared his email address.*
- And since the last board meeting, Jon and Mary attended a CP staff meeting on December 3 when they inquired about the November deadline for staff response. They asked for a written list request for how staff wants to be engaged with the board and a collected list of any current issues.

Lisa called for structure and process to be developed that organizes these kinds of requests from staff.

Jon Beer will follow up to next steps on this particular request for response to concerns and issues.

Family Team Report: (Written report)-

Anecdotal comments by Mary and Eric.

Eric noted several events are being planned – see written report.

Administrative Report (Written report in Board Packet) Verbal report from John Robinson:

- John noted that included in the packet is the Focus School Quarterly Report.
 - Not reported in written report is that the State of Michigan asked for “parent notification” and they have notified school families that we have been identified as a “focus” school again, but recognized improvements and efforts. This is an expected report. Board asked if any there was any feedback from families based on this notification, and John reported there has been none to date.
- John noted they we have invested in more curriculum resources (Fountas & Pinnell, MAISA Units)
- John reported that new/revised behavioral systems and reporting are developed (developing).
 - This raised questions from the board regarding parent awareness of these developments (as well as the role of Trevor)

- Lisa asked if there was a written “code of conduct”(as required by the State of Michigan) published and used. It was determined that there wasn’t a current written “code of conduct”
- John reported he is looking for continued support and structure from the board regarding his role as he expects a greater need for him to spend time with the Discovery Care program.
- Board requested John review current tools and write a “ code of conduct”, send draft to executive committee before the next board meeting, who will in turn review and make comments so John can bring a final draft to the next Board meeting.
- From November 9 : Board Meeting minutes-Board requested John report on the use of fund balance from the GRPS Nutritional Services Group through February.
 - John in this meeting asked for the Board to define how they want to be involved with the future purchase of a warming system. As of this date, no additional equipment has been purchased against the fund balance.

(An off agenda discussion regarding the need for financial clarity ensued. Mary is to call Tessa and Juana and report back to John and Eric when a meeting with Tessa and Juana can be scheduled before January 1, 2016)

Pedagogista Report (Written report included in Board Packet) Verbal Report from Sarah Cooper

- Recognized staff, Molly Casey and Ann Rasch, this month. (Board signed cards and they will be given a Meijer gift card)
- Great participation in school events:
 - 96% of families participated in conferences.
 - 20 families attended a meeting about the transition to 6th grade.
- Sarah reported on her revised goals in preparation for mid-year reviews.
- Sarah reported a plan for her covering her duties while she is gone on maternity leave. Key personnel and their responsibilities have been outlined, but since the plan has costs and financial information isn’t available at this meeting, the board has to review the financial impact of this plan immediately.
 - Lisa complimented Sarah on her thorough and complete leave plan.
 - The board is confident that the plan is well thought out and thanked Sarah for her planning.
 - Sarah commented that key personnel who have been identified to perform tasks in her absence have either been involved in processes to date, shown aptitude and achievement in assessments, and or have development goals in this area.
 - Lisa further commented that John has to “own” the plan since ultimately he will have to insure the plan is fulfilled.
- Sarah regretfully reported that the Discovery Care program was only given a 6 month license with a charge to “get busy” with corrections.
 - The licensing consultant reported 4 violations and if a 5th violation occurs in next 6 months, a license to operate will not be issued.
 - There needs to be deeper staff understanding of licensing rules, reorganization for improved supervision (smaller groups and continuous supervision), and clarity around roles.

- A plan for correction needs to be submitted in the next four weeks.
- The board requested to see the plan as it is complete no later than December 18 and our feedback is promised back to Sarah by December 26.
- A Discovery Care development meeting is planned for December 22 (1 to 4pm) and Sarah requested board support.
- Lisa spoke to the issue. The responsibility of the licensing of the program needs to be held by the director. The board needs to empower the adult staff to run the program. In Sarah's absence John will have to be the ultimate manager but we cannot afford to have John involved in the day to day operations of Discovery Care.
- The board understands the importance of the program and is committed to support recommended changes to insure it's long term success.
- Sarah included in her report results from a parent survey and the board was not satisfied with the results and recognized that the program needs improvement from the perspective of family users (as well as licensing authorities)

Facilities Report (Written report in board packet)

- Comments on written report:
 - Mary raised concerns on our long term ability to maintain the school and questioned the board's commitment to the 2011-2012 plan for improvement and expansion.
 - Andrew commented that he was pleased to see funds spent and repairs happening, but also concerned that a volunteer group has the ability to maintain the building and raise funds needed to protect the asset.

Finance Report. No written report, both Tessa and Juana were unable to attend.

- Mary to call Tessa and Juana.
- Short discussion on how the board hasn't had a strong involvement with finance committee for many, many years and that we have to "up our interest and up our game".

Marketing Report. (Written report included in Board Packet) Verbal Report from Mary

- Priority 1 & 2 Activities
 - Social Media Intern, Aja Nelson Williams has completed her internship. Mary has requested of finance committee a budget to continue her involvement a paid staff.
- Addressing Priority 3 Activities
 - Mary requested clerical support for data input into data base for two current campaigns. Thank you Beth for volunteering.
 - Current campaign to identify 100 stakeholders
 - Will be added to data base and informed of significant events at GRCDC only by marketing committee.
 - Will be invited to participate in VIP tours
 - Current campaign to solicit businesses as Discovery Business Partners
- Addressing Priority 4 Activities
 - Updating of Web Site-
 - Had a kick off meeting and a process in place.

- Brad Gammat, parents volunteering time to build new site.
- Still need to keep consultant, Swamp Side Studio engaged, and requested from finance committee additional budget to support his efforts.
- Recognize that we will need effort from:
 - Copy writing and copy research-Sarah and Rachel
 - Photos-Trevor
 - SEO and connectivity-Veronica Danielis
- Planning for and starting VIP tours, starting January 15.
- Planning for and Soliciting for Discovery Business Partners.
 - Kick off Luncheon January 22

Operations Report (Written report in board packet) Verbal Report from Lisa

- Lisa reported her engagement with current operational, priorities including Discovery Care.
- Lisa reported attending a webinar with Mike Nassar on the “Thoughtful Classroom” Principle Rubric Assessment and has asked the finance committee to consider funding a one-time expense of \$8,000 to purchase tools and TRAINING so the board can execute assessments and development of administration. Lisa strongly advocated for this tool and if not this tool, something similar so there can be a common language between leadership and board. “This is an ethical imperative” Lisa states.

Fundraising Report, (Written report in board packet) Verbal Report by Andrew

- Andrew reported a there was a November committee meeting and a plan to meet again in December.
- Fundraising priorities for this school year-Coordination and support of the Family Team’s agenda and process to support classrooms, and the ongoing Outdoor Discovery Campaign.
 - Still to be determined/discussed: Technology and Facility Needs
- Andrew reported on activity furthering success of outdoor discovery campaign and introduced his work on the “Patronicity” program through the State of Michigan.
- Andrew reported a year end letter was mailed to families today.
- Andrew raised a question around a topic raised regarding a “15 year anniversary”.
 - John R reported that a group of parents would like to use our landmark as a tool for marketing and fundraising.
 - Both Andrew, fundraising, and Mary, marketing, raised concerns about soliciting for valuable energy and resources around agenda outside of the board committee agenda.
 - Mary invited all promotion minded families to join the ongoing marketing agendas and help support the campaigns in place. We need all the help we can get.

Executive Report. (Written report in board packet) Verbal report from Jon.

- Jon reported continued efforts in finding a new board president and is soliciting feedback from board members. He welcomes further support and candidacy recommendations.
- Jon also reported that, with help from Lisa, that the recent parent complaint has been satisfied based on his most current information.

Old Business

- Succession planning for Board Presidency-Addressed in Executive Report

New Business

- Behavior Data-(charts submitted to board members). Beth described the nature of the charts and how to read them. She also alerted us to her disclaimers for statistically accuracy based on information given.
 - Along with behavior data, Beth submitted current stats on learning levels. (After the meeting was adjourned Mary asked Beth for some comment, and we agreed that there is general improvement in Tier I across the boards, some improvement in Tier II)
- Mid-year administrator evaluations, no further discussion on the assessment that is due to be complete this month. Jon and Mary managing John Robinson's evaluation. Lisa and Mary managing Sarah Cooper's evaluation. See operations report where Lisa is advocating for the "Thoughtful Classroom" going forward.

Moved to Closed Session at 8:27 pm. Meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Next Regular Board Meeting, January 11, 2015 6-8pm.

Possible Additional Meeting Called to Address:

- Board Structure
- Board Priorities and Focus
- Operational Roles
- Finance and Budget

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.