



Board of Directors – Regular Monthly Meeting

20 November 2014 6:00 –8:00 pm

2904 W. Kiowa St., Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Room #20 on lower level

MINUTES – APPROVED DECEMBER 18, 2014

1. Call to Order – 6:09pm

- a. Check in & read Mission Statement
- b. Present – Dr. Evelyn Cortez-Ford, Dr. Blair Cano, Melanie Chadwick, Sandra Johnson-Benning, Jack Roberts, Eva Manz-Jackson, Marty Schneider, Laurie Ristig, Erin Bay, Jason Guerrero, M. Nate Siebert, Kalysta McClaughry, Joye Levy, Francie Crary, Jeremy Tackett, Feather Groves, Kate Pettey, Lee Philipson, Jennifer Barnes, Bradley McCollough

2. Public Comment

- a. Kalysta McClaughry – Single Tracking – Concerned about the caring capacity of our community. Projections for next year’s specials teachers show they will work Monday-Thursday without a single prep period if we continue to double track, not including recess duty. We need to provide those teachers with more breaks. We would either need to limit specials to certain grades or hire more teachers if we continue to double track. Agricultural and Cooking Arts are already limited to certain grades. As the year continues on, we need to slow down and focus on building our foundation.
- b. James McDonald – Single Tracking – In the charter it stated we were supposed to be single-tracked, but because there was so much interest in the school people got excited and we decided to double track. We should be clear about what our intentions are and what’s really going on in the charter. If we continue with double-tracking we will have to move. Doing this while we are on turnaround status would be difficult. Finding trained, passionate teachers is also a challenge.
- c. Jeremy Tackett – Single Tracking, Ag Certification - I heard “holistic” in the reading of the mission. Moving ahead at this pace would not be holistic. Page nine in the charter, states how many children we anticipated, and we had far more. The same happened again this year. Let’s do the work in the here and now, because right now I feel like we are compromised. Also, there is an organization that was inspired by Rudolf Steiner’s Agriculture lectures called Demeter – an Ag Organization. Jeremy would like to get our parking lot Biodynamic Certified by Demeter in the near future.
- d. Mary-Ann Corey (statement read by Jeremy Tackett) – Single Track - Spoke with Mountain Sage Community School. They began to double-track, and chose to change to single-track. The board understood the necessity of staying in a single-

track school. Rather than focusing on growth, It is crucial we understand what our students need, and meet those needs.

- e. Rita Issagholian (statement read by Jeremy Tackett) – Single Tracking - We had good reasons for the decision we made last year, but she wishes we had stuck with single-track.
 - f. Kate Pettey – Turnaround Status Partnership - Kate did a little research on the Journey School, which is a top-performing charter school in California. They have managed to mesh the Waldorf curriculum with State requirements beautifully. Could we consider sending an envoy from Mountain Song out there to see how they are succeeding? They are having a conference in April.
 - g. Jennifer Barnes – Turnaround Status, Behavioral Expectations of Students - She sees at Mountain Song a lot of students with fairly extreme behaviors. Many students here are already on IEP's, but there may be more out there who also need that extra help. It would really help our turnaround status, as well. Average and above average students could succeed more if the children who needed a little help were identified and assisted. She feels there is a strong undercurrent of discontent in the staff because of this, and they feel they cannot say anything. It's important that we reach out and offer them the aid they need.
 - h. Brandy Robinson – Pulling Up of Roots - We've been conditioned not to be satisfied or to feel comfortable. We always strive for the unattainable. We have such wonderful things going for us here. I hope we can find a way to keep a sense of grace and awareness of what we do have at present. We are well-equipped and if we can hear the people in our community, we can draw on those resources. We need to have faith in our vision.
3. Approval of October 23rd minutes. Motion to approve the October 23, 2014 minutes as-is. Motion: Laurie Ristig, 2nd: Melanie Chadwick. Motion passes.
4. Operational Report 6:30-7:00pm – Director's Report
- a. Finances – Jason Guerero from G&G (see handouts) – We moved from Alio financial software, and transitioned to Quickbooks which has built-in reporting metrics. All the financials were re-posted online to be in compliance with financial transparency requirements, and the October books were closed last week. The financial transparency page on the website has also been updated. The link is on the main website page. We are currently tracking pretty close to the original budget, and are in a good financial position right now. There was discussion of what the school would need to accomplish in order to receive Title 1 funds next year should we decide to go that route, to include requirements for Highly Qualified teachers, receiving Economic Data Surveys, etc. Finance Committee will review the revised budget at the next committee meeting. G&G is also revising the Financial Policies and Procedures. They will be sent out to the board next month to be voted on in December or January.
 - b. HR – Jason Guerrero - There are some issues with compliance that G&G and Erin are working on making sure all our files, hiring practices, etc. are compliant with HIPAA, etc. The Board should consider adopting a Hiring Policy.
 - c. Hiring –

- i. 7th grade – we have four good candidates, and the job is posted on the MSCS website, Steiner & Antioch. Candidates will be guest teaching before and after the break.
- ii. 2nd grade long-term sub – 2 candidates remain, guest teaching after break. 1st grade teaching positions will be posted in December.
- iii. Pedagogical Director – This position is not being posted immediately so that Evelyn can better assess the needs of the teachers and post for someone who can meet those specific needs. James McDonald discussed the work of the Pedagogical Committee and about the positive outcomes of teachers stepping up and taking ownership for their own learning rather than relying on a Pedagogical Director to do the work for them. That is not to say this position won't be filled, but we would need just the right person. In the meantime, consultants who can target teacher specific needs will be brought in.
- d. School Improvement UIP - today there were instructional rounds that went very well. Sandra stepped-up and joined the SAC as a board representative.
- e. Stories of Mountain Song – Jack requested Development Committee to support the year-end Gala and Silent Auction. Planning, venue, sponsors, etc.
- f. CSSI visit - (see handout) The staff is working to be ready for the visit. There are several board-specific items CSSI will need. Erin and Jack have been assigned as board-liaisons to assist us with any needs.

5. Board Report & Action

- a. Policy & Procedures Review – Communications policy needs to be written. Policy on how parents and community members best contact the board, and how we respond. Include this in the Parent Handbook. Blair will take on this task.
- b. Schedule the board retreat – The Strategic Planning Session, CSSI visit review, and Charter Contract Study Session/Review is tentatively scheduled for January 3, 2015. We will confirm this date at the December board meeting.
- c. Eva has volunteered to track required board training.
- d. Committee Updates -
 - i. Facilities Committee – With the turnaround status, we need to slow down on our search. The single-track discussion needs to be re-opened. Also, we are unsure if the Safety Sub-Committee should be under the Facilities Committee or Operations Committee.
 - ii. Waldorf Accountability Committee – The first meeting was successful. There was a good mix of staff and parents, and they have begun their work defining how we are Waldorf.
- e. **Vote**
 - i. Motion to elect Blair Cano to the position of MSCS Board President. Motion: Laurie Ristig. 2nd: Marty Schneider. Motion Passes.
 - ii. Motion to elect Sandra Johnson-Benning to the position of MSCS Board Vice-President. Motion: Eva Manz-Jackson. 2nd: Blair Cano. Motion Passes.

- iii. Cano Custom Landscapes to continue this year as the school's snow removal company. They have submitted the lowest bid, and did the snow removal last year. Blair will abstain from the vote. Motion to accept Cano Custom Landscaping for snow removal and other services needed for the 2014-2015 school year. Motion: Melanie Chadwick. 2nd: Laurie Ristig. Motion Passes.

6. Other Business

- a. Schedule NVC Training, Part 2 – We need to find space on the calendar for this training without overloading teachers. To be revisited at the next board meeting.
- b. Kim John Payne – scheduled for April

7. **Executive session** (closed to the public) (7:00-7:55pm) pursuant to C.R.S. §24-6-402 (4) (f)- personnel matters. Motion: Laurie Ristig, 2nd: Sandra Johnson-Benning. Motion Passes. Enter into closed session at 8:42pm. Exited closed session at 9:20pm.

8. Adjournment

- a. Remaining Board meetings –12/18/2014; 1/15/2014; 2/19/2014; 3/19/2014; 4/16/2014; 5/21/2014; 6/18/2014
- b. Motion to adjourn at 9:22pm. Motion: Laurie Ristig, 2nd: Melanie Chadwick. Motion Passes.