



## Board of Directors Special Meeting

*February 25, 2015 6:00 –8:00 pm*

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

### **Minutes - Approved March 15, 2015**

1. Call to Order – 6:05pm
  - a. Roll Call - Blair Cano, Laurie Ristig, Christi-Marie Butler, Evelyn Cortez-Ford, Melanie Chadwick, Greg Augspurgen, Sandra Johnson-Benning, Marty Schneider (arrived at 8:21pm)
  - b. One word check in & read Mission Statement
2. Public Comment— 6:10-6:30 (20 minutes total to be divided amongst number of commenters. Questions will not be answered during this time.)
  - a. James McDonald - Torin Fincer is going to be speaking at 6pm Thursday March 5th at the Denver Waldorf School. It's open to the public, but requires an RSVP. He writes quite a bit about governance, and is also the general secretary of the anthroposophical society.
  - b. Erin Bay - I know there will be a lot of decisions this year. My oldest was denied enrollment to a school based on an entrance exam. Specifically her math scores. When she was in third grade she was asked to test for the gifted program. I knew my younger children would not be at state standards, but I did not expect my older ones to lose so much ground. That is very frustrating as a parent.
  - c. Jennifer Barnes - My daughter always tested well in her old school, particularly in math. Now, she is barely proficient. Behavior in the classroom is impacting the ability of the teacher to actually just teach. There are a number of factors that go into why this has happened.
3. Waldorf Study - "Importance of handwork in Waldorf education" (Eva) postponed until next meeting.
4. Motion to approve minutes from 12/18/2014, 1/15/15, 1/24/15, 1/29/15, 2/03/15, and 2/04/15 as is, and to approve the 2/12/15 minutes with the following edit: "How does a

school get to the top-down board model to a more Waldorf model of governance?" Change the first "to" to "from." Motion: Laurie Ristig, 2nd: Melanie Chadwick. Motion Passes.

5. Operational Report 6:30-7:00pm

a. Director's Report

- i. Credit card Policy update - Monday Greg and Evelyn will go to open the new account with First Bank.
- ii. Social Media Policy - The board will review the proposed policy and will discuss at the next regular board meeting.

6. Board Report & Action

a. Policy revision updates

- I. Hiring/Termination Policy- Draft Policy was presented to the board. Most of the policy is pretty standard, but items were highlighted that needed more Waldorf language or need to be specified. Laurie will share on Google Docs for remarks and recommended edits.
- II. Communications Policy- Melanie shared a handout with key points to tackle to include when/how the board responds to emails, who is the spokesperson, grievance policy tie-ins, etc. Draft policy will be available at the March meeting.
- III. Kindergarten acceptance policy update- Have a discussion of first-grade readiness with prospective parents. We could check into the possibility of doing a later kindergarten/1st grade lottery. Add a statement about 1st grade readiness in the parent handbook. Draft policy will be available at the March meeting.
- IV. Director's evaluation- The mock-up is available, but Blair will be doing another revision.

b. Development Committee Update - The short-term goal is that we send out an Annual Appeal mailing. To make it more impactful, we will earmark money raised for something that will resonate with the parents. Once we really know where our gaps are coming up, we can come up with a more strategic approach. April and May are the two best months for fundraising. Our goal is to align it with philanthropic patterns. The Gala on May 30th will also be an opportunity to bring in funds.

c. WAC committee update - Raj Solanki - The "WAC'os" have been studying the rhythms of learning, and recommend for the board that we focus on three-folding of governances. We've come up with four pressing needs:

- i. Much of the teachers role is not so much methodology, but how they observe the children. We've recognized a need for Foundation Study for the staff. Ben Miller has been looking into it.

- ii. Classroom management and improving main lessons to take teachers to the next level is needed. This is usually accomplished through a pedagogical director guiding teachers in the classroom. This position needs to be posted as soon as possible.
  - iii. How do parents support the classroom teacher? Community education - study of shared artistic expression. There is a rift among the parent body about some not feeling “Waldorf enough” or feeling judged. How do we ensure that all parents are feeling welcome?
  - iv. Three-fold governance - It’s one of the most important things we can do to support our teachers in the classroom. Pedagogy is a completely different governing sense than administration. People should not be making pedagogical decisions if they are not in the classroom. Raj passed out “Personal Reflection of Governance: The Eleven Keys to Success”
- d. SAC committee update - Meeting tomorrow. The focus of the work is talking about the CSSI report. Themes, recommendations, and action plans. Our school Improvement Team also met and discussed this report as it relates to operational teachers and coming up with a Professional Development Plan. The SAC will also talk about the UIP and the full implementation of that, and will make some decisions about how to use the READ Act money - possibly around a summer program.
- e. Recruiting New Board Members - We have several positions that are going to be opening this summer. Would it be prudent to have some start before the new year to fill in the gap? We will be losing a handful of board members, and need to begin recruitment now. We need to be specific about who we recruit, and what skills we are looking for. We can really profile what type of people we are looking for.
- f. Vote
  - i. *Motion to single track first grade and to reduce the size of the kindergarten classes going forward beginning the 2015-2016 school year to be revisited in 2018.* Motion: Laurie Ristig, Second: Sandra Johnson-Benning.
    1. *Motion to amend the original motion: “Motion to single track first grade and to reduce the size of the kindergarten classes going forward beginning the 2015-2016 school year to be revisited in 2018.”* Motion: Laurie Ristig, Second: Sandra Johnson-Benning. Four votes for, two opposed, one abstaining. Motion fails.
    2. Discussion:

- a. The budgetary concern beginning next year once the Startup Grant monies are expended is very real. We need to consider how single-tracking will affect our budget, and would need to determine what gets cut, whether we can add students to existing classes, and how we can make up for the remaining deficit through fundraising.
  - b. The building is very full, and adding two classrooms next year will make it even fuller and we will not physically fit in the building the next year.
  - c. Adding more students adds more stress to special ed staff, who are already taxed. We would need to add employees to cover that.
- ii. *Motion to have a conservative lottery opening only enough spaces for one first grade class and two smaller kindergarten classes, and to have a budget working session to prepare ourselves to vote to single or double track first grade moving forward. Motion: Laurie Ristig, 2nd: Greg Augsperger. Motion passes.*

## 7. Other Business

- a. Parent Council Update - Jennifer Barnes gave the update. They held their first open parent council meeting in December. During the meeting last night they unveiled their new meeting structure. They are working on establishing a separate bank account just for Parent Council fundraisers. Hospitality, Mayfaire, Parent Reps, and Health and Wellness are new sub-committees. Info and surveys to get involved will go out soon.
- b. Food program - Beginning next year we will receive federal funding from the USDA food program. What has been a deficit will potentially turn into a profit beginning next year. The only change we had to make to our food program was to provide milk as an option. Also, there were large purchases made (ovens, freezer) that came up on the budget under the food program costs that will not recur in the future.

## 8. Adjournment

- a. Remaining Board meetings— 3/19/2015; 4/16/2015; 5/21/2015; 6/18/2015
- b. Motion to adjourn. Motion: Laurie Ristig, Second: Marty Schneider. Motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.