



River Grove: A Marine Area Community School  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, May 26, 2020 – 6:00 PM  
Via Zoom Online Meeting

### Minutes

Mission - Marine Area Community School will utilize the natural resources, history, arts, and civic stewardship of the community as a foundation for the study of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, art, and other curriculum subjects. The place-based learning environment will be student-centered, designed by teachers, and reinforced and supported by the local community.

#### 1.0 Call to Order

- 1.1 Roll Call: Members Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Lisa Dochniak, Angie Hong, and Jessica Hansen were present. School Director Drew Goodson was also present.

#### 2.0 Approve Agenda

- 2.1 Motion by DeCorsey , second by Hansen. Roll call vote: approved unanimously.

#### 3.0 Approve Minutes April 2020

- 3.1 Motion by DeCorsey, second by Hansen. Roll call vote: approved unanimously.

#### 4.0 Community Comment

- 4.1 River Grove Community Updates
  - 4.1.1 Board Member Driven Initiatives -- None
- 4.2 Citizen Comments -- None

#### 5.0 Authorizer Comments (if in attendance) – Not in attendance

#### 6.0 Reports and Discussion

- 6.1 Director's Report from Drew Goodson
  - 6.1.1 Enrollment/Marketing for 2020-21. Because of the pandemic, our enrollment numbers for the upcoming year are unclear. We hope to have clearer numbers for the next meeting; we are expecting to be around 205 for next year. A charter school in the very south part of the area closed, so we may pick up some enrollments from them but the distance might be a problem for them. We continue to do online marketing for enrollment. 6<sup>th</sup> grade and kindergarten promotions events were held. Both will be socially distanced parades. A virtual kindergarten roundup went well. Next steps will be socially distanced community events.
  - 6.1.2 Facilities and operations: The as-yet-unused portion of the "Administration" building, which was remodeled last year is being touched up and expected to house special education; we are waiting for the fire inspection.
  - 6.1.3 Community Connections: Our last virtual PRIDE assembly for the year will be held tomorrow. 6<sup>th</sup> graders will be receiving gifts from River Grove and the PTO, lawn signs for recognition. Kindergartners will also be getting gifts.
  - 6.1.4 Teacher Appreciation: We delivered gifts to teachers to thank them for their work. Sponsored by the PTO.
  - 6.1.5 Staffing: Still looking for a special education teacher for the growing program.
  - 6.1.6 Teacher self-evaluations have been underway.

- 6.1.7 Learning Program: Distance Learning although hard has been going well considering the situation. The staff pivoted quickly and stepped up for the students.
- 6.1.8 EdVisions: As a result of a Collaboration Grant spearheaded by Annie Beck and Jessica Hansen, Edvisions is helping River Grove teachers partner with Level Up Academy teachers with professional development in the areas of student empowerment and student-driven, project-based learning.
- 6.2 PTO Report from Katherine Hardie: The teacher appreciation event went well. The Read-a-Thon is finalized, and book prizes are being ordered from Scholastic. Our volunteer pool for 2020-21 is being organized; a form went out to all families as part of the "Required Family Forms." The PTO will help coordinate volunteer needs with teachers. The PTO is working on next year's budget. The PTO is kicking around ideas for summer fundraisers.
- 6.3 Board Member Reports
  - 6.3.1 April 2020 Financial Packet Report from Marcy Ost and Kyle Knudson of The Anton Group:
    - 6.3.1.1 Conflict of Interest Forms regarding the audit are being sent out to all board members. (Forms regarding Lease Aid already went out.)
    - 6.3.1.2 Total assets currently about \$285,000. Total liability about \$215,000. Fund balance projected to be about \$70,000. Refer to financial documents on the website for complete information. Fiscal year is 83% complete. We have not had to use our line of credit and won't need to because of our PPP loan. Because of Distance Learning, many of the usual expenses are completed for the year. Some of the payments from the state are lagging, notably Lease Aid and Special Ed. Cash flow looks strong right now.
    - 6.3.1.3 Motion to approve April 2020 Financial Packet by DeCorsey. Second by Dochniak. Roll call vote; approved unanimously.
    - 6.3.1.4 Chair Miller added that at the next meeting, the board will approve a 2019-20 budget revision because the budget was approved at 205 students (note that we have been operating at a budget of 195 students).
  - 6.3.2 Operations & Facilities Report from Chair Miller:
    - 6.3.2.1 May Township CUP: Amendment request work continues to move forward. We are waiting on the reports from the civil engineer and traffic study.
    - 6.3.2.2 Wilder Forest Lease Extension: River Grove is in talks with Wilder Foundation regarding extending our lease for another 5 years. Discussions include additional space, maintenance and improvement concerns.

## 7.0 Old Business

- 7.1 Bylaws Updates: In an earlier meeting, attorney Laura Booth was approved to update the school's bylaws for best practices, clarify, and to reduce redundancies. The revisions have been approved by our Authorizer. The bylaws were emailed to board members. Chair Miller requested a motion to approve. Motion by Hong; second by Ost. No discussion. Roll call vote: approved unanimously.
- 7.2 2020 Board Elections Pandemic Delay: Language was added to the bylaws to enable the board to delay elections due to the pandemic: Clause 5.c: "*Force Majeure*. In times of *Force Majeure* that close the school or campus for an extended period of time the board may delay elections until it is able to reasonably meet requirements as laid out in 5.a." Chair Miller suggested elections in September, with a call for candidates in July or August. Board members up for election are Dochniak and Henschen; both agreed to the delay. Chair Miller called for a motion to invoke clause 5.c. clause to delay elections until September 2020. Motion by Hansen; second by Hong. Roll call vote; approved unanimously.
- 7.3 PPP Program Resolution: River Grove was approved for a federal Paycheck Protection Program loan for \$255,600. A resolution was emailed to board members with details. As a nonprofit, River Grove will be very careful and specific with the loan funds, making sure we are following all the guidelines set forth. Reasons for the loan application were sent to board members, and included the additional COVID costs incurred, such as childcare and cleaning; loss of fundraising capability; enrollment uncertainty and associated loss of revenue; state budget uncertainty; inability to access other loans. The money will not be used for special education staffing; 75% will be used for payroll. No payments are due on the loan until December 2020, then the rate is 1% for 18 months. Board members will be asked to sign

a resolution detailing how the money is able to be spent and River Grove's intentions. Motion to approve the Paycheck Protection Program load resolution by DeCorsey; second by Henschen. Roll call vote; approved unanimously.

7.4 Strategic Plan and Mission Statement: No update.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Conflict of Interest Forms: Kyle Knudson of TAG will be sending these to board members.

8.2 K-6 Class Sizes Proposal: School Director Goodson presented a class size discussion to clarify the number of students in each class/grade. Previous board action set only kindergarten class size for 2020-21 (which was 20 per class). Background: For the first year of the school, class size was set at 25 per class. Last August prior to the 2019-20 school year, class sizes were adjusted to 27 in grades 2-6 to accommodate families with siblings and for budget concerns. Currently we have 1.6 for general education para staffing (i.e., about 1.5 persons per day). Goodson shared a chart showing revenue and overhead per student/per class. Current average for River Grove is 19.5 students per class, so we have approximately \$56,000/class remaining for curriculum, books, salaries, benefits, subs, specialists, and general ed paras. Goal is to keep River Grove a small school setting. Feedback from the teachers indicated that the larger classes of 27 made it difficult to personalize instruction. Recommendation from Goodson for 2020-21 is to have an escalating class size scale: K=20, 1<sup>st</sup>=22, 2<sup>nd</sup>=23, 3<sup>rd</sup>=22 (not 24 because of small classroom space), 4<sup>th</sup>=24, 5<sup>th</sup>=25, 6<sup>th</sup>=26. If a class size is lowered, we would "grandfather in" current students but not extend new invitations to enroll. These numbers are about 10-15% less than Minnesota averages. Escalating scale leaves room for growth. This would put overall capacity at 23.14 students, although it is unlikely that we would be at full class size limits. Goodson recommends establishing an exploratory committee to look into the concept of cross grade sections for the 2021-22 school year to better personalize for students and balance class sizes. Motion to approve the proposal for class sizes by Henschen; second by Hong. Roll call vote: approved unanimously.

8.3 School Director Annual Evaluation: Chair Miller proposed to have an executive committee to review, possibly offer a new contract to Goodson. Chair Miller would send out a review sheet to all board members asking for commentary. Closed meeting would be held next month. Motion by DeCorsey to have an executive committee move forward with the school director evaluation, which includes sending an evaluation form to the whole board; second by Henschen. Roll call vote: approved unanimously.

9.0 Next Board of Directors Meeting: Tuesday, June 23, 2020, 6:00pm full board meeting (5:30pm Director Evaluation closed meeting)

10.0 Motion to adjourn by Hong; second by Ost. Roll call vote; approved unanimously. Adjournment 7:35pm.