

River Grove Elementary  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday, August 22, 2022 5:00 PM  
(Closed Session 4:15 PM)  
MINUTES

1.0 Meeting was called to order at 5:54pm by Chair Marcy Ost.

1.1 Ost read the River Grove Mission Statement

1.2 Ost read the Conflict of Interest Statement and asked members to raise their hands if they have any conflicts of interest. No conflicts were noted.

1.3 Roll Call: Members present: Jessica Hansen, Katie Bruns, Annie Beck, Katherine Hardie, Lisa Dochniak, Angie Hong, Marcy Ost. Others in attendance: Shirly Volk, Bridget Peterson, Drew Goodson.

2.0 Approve Agenda

- Ost: Suggestion to move nominations for officer vacancy to 4.3 under Community Discussion
- Hardie: Request to have an update on the policy project added as 8.3 under Old Business
- Motion to approve agenda by Dochniak. Second by Beck. All members voting yes. Agenda approved.

3.0 Approve Minutes: July 2022 Board Minutes

- Two spelling errors were noted and corrected under Item 8.0
- Motion to approve minutes as amended by Beck. Second by Hardie.

4.0 Community Discussion

4.1 River Grove Community Updates

4.1.1 Authorizer Comments - not in attendance

4.2 Community Comments - none

4.3 Chair Marcy Ost announced that she will be resigning from the River Grove board at the end of the meeting. She has been offered and accepted the position as Business Manager.

- Katie Bruns nominated Jessica Hansen for chair. Annie Beck nominated Katherine Hardie for chair. Board members submitted paper ballots and selected Jessica Hansen as the new chair.
- Jessica Hansen nominated Lisa Dochniak for the position of vice chair. Katherine Hardie nominated herself for vice chair. Board members submitted paper ballots and selected Lisa Dochniak as the new chair.
- Question: Is there a conflict of interest in having a teacher serve as board chair?
  - Answer: The MN Guild has indicated no concerns and recognizes this could be the case in a teacher-powered school.
- Question: How should we fill the board vacancy?
  - Conversation: River Grove's current bylaws say new members should be appointed by the current board to fill vacancies that occur midterm.
  - Beck - this feels different since it is only one month into a 3-year board term.
  - Hong - agree. It would be better to have an election.
  - Goodson would like to do a public call for potential new board members and the board can review applications and consider their merit and qualifications.

## 5.0 Finance Reports & Actions - Bridget Peterson (TAG)

- Peterson shared the River Grove Financial Dashboard for 7/31/22. Current ADM for the 2022-23 school year is 225 students. The cash flow projection is negative but that is caused by a delay in getting payments from the state. As the number of students enrolled goes up, the hold-back becomes larger. The school has a reconciled cash balance of \$91,808 at the end of the month.
- These numbers will change by Aug. 31 but will still present some cash-flow challenges next spring.
- Bruns and Goodson are looking into a bridge loan to help cover the gap between when expenses are due and when we get payments from the state and federal government.
- Our current budget for 2022-23 is balanced (no surplus) so there isn't a buffer for unexpected expenses. Grove did have to dig into its contingency funds during 2020 and 2021 due to COVID.
- We will have a better idea of the school's true budget in October.
- TAG will delay its billing to help address cash flow issues.
- River Grove received its Propel loan on Aug. 3 and it is now in the bank and being spent.
- Dochniak - looking at expenses, we are spending \$9000 per year for copies. Is this comparable to other schools?
  - Ost - we have a contract with Loeffler that includes the machine, copies and service, which is much more affordable than what the school did previously.

### 5.1 Treasurer's Report - Katie Bruns

#### 5.2 July 2022 Financial Packet Approval

- Motion by Hardie to approve the July 2022 Financial packet and June supplemental packet. Second by Beck. All in favor. Motion approved.

## 6.0 Director's Report

### General updates:

- Enrollment: 225 students are enrolled for 2022-23 and 78 students on the waiting list.
- Our 6th grade teacher for next year Dawn Krohn has accepted a position at a different school and will be leaving River Grove.

### Learning program:

- Partnership with Hamline continues and will also have an Indigenous Studies component with Star Gazing added
- EdVisions will be dissolving as an organization but some of the staff are interested in continuing to work with River Grove
- A national specialist in co-teaching will be coming to Minnesota next week to provide training for River Grove staff
- Crisis Prevention Institute has provided CPI de-escalation training for all staff at the school

### 6.1 New Staff

- Marcy Ost has been hired for a full time position as business manager for the school.
- Derek Peterson will be moving into a new role as behavioral interventionist and recess supervisor

### 6.2 Campus Reorganization Update

- A comprehensive space and reorganization project is almost complete.

### 6.3 Open House Update

- This Thursday is back to school night: 3:30-6pm. Board members are encouraged to attend.
- Welcome conferences during the week of 8/29

### 6.4 Student Handbook

- The handbook is not yet completed but Ele Anderson has been working on it and expects to be done by September.

Hardie requested an update on the May Township CUP. There was an article in the Country Messenger, but we were not aware the township had approved a new CUP. Goodson reached out to Township Chair John Adams to request clarification.

### 7.0 PTO Report - no representative present

### 8.0 Old Business

#### 8.1 Enrollment Policy - Action item

- Currently we are at our school max of 225 students, according to the CUP. However, there is still room in several classes. If we have an enrolled student leave now, very close to the beginning of the school year, do we accept the next student in line (based on application date) or do we accept the next student applicant in that grade?
- Goodson proposed a new policy for the board to consider.
- Discussion:
  - Beck and Bruns would prefer to fill openings beginning with the younger grades first because those kids will stay with River Grove the longest.
  - Hansen suggested that we should fill under-enrolled classes first.
  - Hong - for example, the sixth grade class only has 11 kids so if we have an available opening to offer, it seems like we should fill that class first.
  - Hansen - right now the lower grades have many more students enrolled than the older grades.
  - Ost - hopefully the issue with sixth grade won't be a problem in the future because there will be two fifth grade classes moving on to sixth. We should come up with a policy that makes sense in the long term instead of changing it every year.
  - Goodson - hopefully we'll be able to enroll more than 225 students in the future and we won't be up against this issue again.
  - Hardie - maybe we should have a lottery of the current students on the waiting list to establish an order for who gets accepted next.
  - Beck - What does State Statute say?
    - It says schools must establish an enrollment policy and publish it on the website.
  - Hansen and Beck - what does our current policy say?
    - It doesn't speak to this particular issue. It establishes a process for conducting a lottery and then enrolling additional students based on siblings, parents as employees, etc.
  - Goodson - for next year, all students on the waiting list will be given two ranked orders - one for their grade level and one overall for all grades.
  - Ost read the proposed new policy, as amended by the board:
    - In the event that the school has reached its overall student enrollment capacity as set forth by the school board, but enrollment openings are created by student withdrawal, the

school will fill these openings using the following method:

- 1) The school will replace the withdrawn student by using the established waiting list for the grade level of the withdrawn student.
  - 2) In the event there is no waiting list for the grade level of the withdrawn student, the school will fill the position of the departed student by offering a student a position from the overall waiting list in order of application date.
  - Starting August 1 of each calendar year, families have two business days from the time of the offer of enrollment to accept.
- This policy will go into effect on Aug. 23, 2022 but will be revisited and amended by the school board for the coming school year.
  - Hong motioned to approve the policy. Bruns seconded. All members voted yes. New policy approved.

#### 8.2 Student Achievement - Hardie

- Hardie shared a proposal for how the board might create a student assessment and goal setting process. Her proposal included an example calendar for when staff could present the board with various pieces of information related to student achievement, such as curriculum, F&P assessment, BARR, World's Best Workforce, and NWEA.
- Bruns wondered how this proposed calendar aligns with information that is already being presented to the board.
- Goodson noted that most of this information is already being presented to the board in the annual report. He also likes to have teachers present to the board about special programs.
- Beck - it is a lot to review and consider all of the information at once in the annual report. There could be a benefit to breaking out the information into smaller pieces.
- Hong sees this as a way to formalize what we're already doing as a board. The teachers and administrative staff have previously presented to the board about Barr, the new SpEd co-teaching program, and other initiatives. Maybe it would feel less intimidating if we spread it out to be every other month instead of every month.
- Bruns agrees but doesn't think it should be a requirement this year. We need time to develop the calendar and determine what we want to know about.
- Hansen would like to have a board retreat to spend more time talking about this.
- Dochniak - when she's participated in student evaluation, it's helped to present about it and talk through potential issues.
- Hardie - for board members who don't work at the school, we don't always know how things are going when parents ask us about student achievement

#### 8.3 Policy Project

- Volk spoke with MDE and they provided her with 27 policies that are required for charter schools.
- Hansen looked at founding board documents and many had to be established at the beginning of the school.
- Volk suggested that the board should form a policy committee to make sure we're meeting all of the requirements.
- Hansen suggested that we could discuss this at the board retreat.
- Goodson - when will the board retreat be held? Hansen will send out a doodle poll to schedule the retreat.

## 9.0 New Business

### 9.1 Academic Update - Curriculum Development - Hamline University - Volk

- Hamline staff have planned three weekend retreats for teachers in the fall and spring to learn how to improve their teaching skills in an outdoor setting. Teachers are being paid to attend the training and receive CEUs, thanks to grant funds from Manitou Foundation.

### 9.2 6th Grade Class Update

- Dawn Krohn has taken a new job and the school needs to hire a new 6th grade teacher before the beginning of the school year.
- The class currently has 11-12 students enrolled.
- Three current teachers are interested in teaching sixth grade. Chris Glover who currently teaches SpEd has experience teaching sixth grade and is interested in the position.
- Volk and Goodson have also talked with the fifth grade teachers about the possibility of merging 5th and 6th grades. The teachers would be willing to do that if absolutely necessary but would prefer not to.
- River Grove board could decide to cancel 6th grade due to losing a teacher and being under enrolled. This would save the school money but would lose trust within the school community and would make it hard to bring back 6th grade next year.
- Goodson's recommendation is to extend an offer to Chris Glover to serve as 6th grade teacher. She has 6th grade science experience, SpEd experience, 20 years of teaching experience, and has gone to Camp Widgi numerous times.
- Because we have a waiting list, we can enroll kids into other grades if we lose any 6th grade students as a result of the teaching change.
- The board agreed that this would be a good way to proceed.

9.3 Business Manager Update - see note above in 4.3. Marcy Ost has accepted the position as Business Manager for River Grove.

## 10.0 Next Board of Directors Meetings:

10.1 Regular Board Meeting: Monday, September 26, 2022 at 5pm

11.0 Adjournment - Chair Ost adjourned the meeting at 8:13pm.