

HIGH DESERT MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, October 25, 2017 @ 5:00 P.M.
Star Peak Room
2025 Silverada Blvd, Reno, NV
MINUTES of MEETING

Members Present Doug Whitener
 Max Haynes
 Kay Ko
 Amanda Baldwin
 Elizabeth Motter
 Terry Fowler

Excused Absence Bob Kastelic

Also Present Principal Tammie Stockton
 Vice Principal Tamra Hopkins
 Cheryl Miller Mintz

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson Terry Fowler called the board meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. with a quorum of six board members.

2. Public Comment on topics not on this agenda

People wishing to speak must fill out a speaker's card located at the back of the Hall. Comments will be limited to two minutes. No action can be taken on any items, but public input is welcome. **Christina Fagundes spoke regarding why the Infant Toddler Program was so important.**

3. Adopt the Agenda

Doug Whitener moved to accept the agenda as presented. Elizabeth Motter seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes from September 27th and September 29th Board Retreat

Max Haynes moved to approve the minutes from September 27th with the correction to page 4 of the minutes where it says Keller-Williams and it should read Kidder Mathews. Kay Ko seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Amanda Baldwin moved to accept the board retreat minutes from September 29th with the exception that Kay's last name be corrected to Ko from Co. Dough Whitener seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

5. EcoStudents Task Force/Capital Campaign Update

EcoStudent task force met September 25th and they discussed the Green Ribbon School application which is due mid-November. Eric Perez who is our middle school science teacher said he would help Tammie and Tamra with the application. Jeneane Harter came in and met with Tammie and Tamra and due to health issues, Sustainable Nevada has been suspended or paused for now. We will continue to move forward and we will keep Jeneane updated. Chairperson Terry Fowler spoke about the capital campaign meeting and in a three-word summary, sell the building. Gretchen Bietz agreed to work with the school and she gave us a very detailed to do list. She highly recommended selling the 3-story building and paying off as much debt as possible. Doug Whitener said that we need to have a statement of our vision for the next five years.

6. Finance Committee Update

- 1) Roll Call: Terry Fowler, Doug Whitener, Kay Ko, Tammie Stockton, Tamra Hopkins, Sherrie Jordan, Nicole Commons, Robin Barry, Elyse Niemann and Cheryl Miller Mintz
- 2) Accounts Receivable Update: Sherrie Jordan reported the QuickBooks conversion from Sage is almost complete. She has 78% of the parents paying their tuition fees by credit card and 100% of the employees are paying through payroll deduction. She has collected 53.79% of the supply fees. Kudos to Sherrie and Laurel, admin assistant, for their accomplishments!
- 3) Capital Campaign Start-Up Costs: HDMS will be contracting with a professional fundraiser on a temporary basis to ensure she meets our expectations. This person will be attending future meetings to lay the ground work and will have more time after the first of the year to put into our project. The PTO has approved \$5,000 towards the expenses of the capital campaign. Thank you!
- 4) 3-Story Rehab and Leases: HDMS will be contracting with an individual to clean up the 3-story building in preparation of showing it to potential tenants or buyers. The clean-up will consist of replacing ceiling tiles, painting where needed on the second floor and disposal of trashed items. Keller-Williams has commented they could list the 3-story building for \$3.68 million. Doug asked for the balances of our long-term loans and mortgages. Here are the balances as of September 30, 2017:
 - **Clearinghouse CDFI - Orovada Mortgage: \$1,902,504.57**
 - Monthly payment of \$15,159.57

- **Jonnie Pullman** - Orovada Mortgage: \$10,213.70
 - Monthly payment of \$1,172.50
 - Loan paid in full - June 2018
- **Acorn Corporation** - Silverada Mortgage: \$976,786.10
 - Monthly payment of \$20,000.00
- **Building Hope** - Vacant Lot: \$395,106.16
 - Monthly payment of \$4,440.82
- **Wells Fargo Equipment** - Silverada Solar: \$35,798.04
 - Monthly payment of \$3,679.17
 - Loan paid in full - July 2018

5) Infant Toddler Program: Cheryl provided the Finance Team with a summary of the program's year end income statement for the past five years. Doug Whitener expressed his concerns about the program's increasing deficit. The program summary is attached and has been updated to include the program's current year budget. This matter will be discussed at the Board meeting.

6) Financial Update: Cheryl reported the school received additional Full Day Kindergarten funds in the amount of \$28,831.00 for year ending 2017; but unfortunately, the school is to pay back \$12,555.00 to the State based on the year end DSA true up. The financial auditors are in the final phases of the audit and the draft version will be released by the end of the week.

7) 2017-18 Revised Final Budget: Cheryl found a formula error in the budget previously presented to the Board. Since the NV Ready Grant budget required updating due to another eligible student, she decided to update the 2017-18 Revised Final Budget.

7. Infant Toddler/Finances

Please refer to handout

- Program Continues to run in a deficit which has grown
- Steps to be taken to reduce deficit

Tuition increase by \$50.00 per month effective July 1, 2017

Elimination of infants effective January 1, 2018

Increase tuition to \$850.00 per month effective January 1, 2018

All discounts for staff and siblings to be eliminated effective January 1, 2018

Reduction of staff to include 1 full time employee (Director), 1 full time employee (30 hours a week with benefits), 2 part-time employees no benefits.

Year round contracts for all children excluding staff. Staff children will align with staff members contract.

8. Approval of September Cash Disbursements

Please refer to handout

Kay Ko moved to accept September cash disbursements as presented. Doug Whitener seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Approval of July-September Financials

Please refer to handout

Elizabeth Motter moved to accept July-September financials as presented. Amanda Baldwin seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Updated Capitalization Threshold

When the auditors were looking at our budgets and trial balances at the end of the year and comparing what was reported to the State, the auditors had asked where our capitalization was and Cheryl said that if it's under \$5,000 it goes under supplies because that is what the State told us to do. Per the auditors' recommendations, they asked that the capitalization threshold be raised from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per item and or big quantity orders such as computers. When Cheryl puts the numbers into the report it will line up with the State report and it will make it easier for the auditors to locate.

11. Uniform Guidance Policy Federal Grant Expenditures

This is because we receive Federal money. CPA firm is requesting that we bring our financial polices to a higher level which would include the Uniform Guidance. Without having this, it puts the firm at risk in case we are audited by the Feds or State. This is a safeguard for the school and the CPA firm. Our attorney is also a CPA and she may be able to help us with this. Special education is the only area we need to follow the guidelines for.

12. 3-Story Lease/Sell

It has become clear that selling and paying debt down is the best option. Kay Ko met with Bill Saylor regarding taxes and because we are a 501 C3 it would be considered as an investment and we should not be taxed. Kay also asked about the cell towers and Bill was not sure on that. He said that is a question for a Realtor. Cheryl commented that we receive \$250.00 per month from the cell towers to pay for utilities since it's on our meter. We do not own the leases anymore. Whoever the new owner of the 3 story building will have to allow access to the roof and the utility payment would be assigned to the new owner. That should be a disclosure made in the listing. Bill Saylor said that we can take the capital gain and pay off the debt and not pay taxes. Kay Ko and Max Haynes would like to ask for a second opinion on the capital gain which the school can check with the school's attorney. Max Haynes made a call to a specialist regarding deed

restrictions and we can do deed restrictions on type of use, however, we have to be careful that it's not deemed as unconstitutional or discriminatory than we could have a problem. This is where we need to seek legal specialized counsel. We need to understand the limits of the deed restriction.

Doug Whitener moved to approve the idea of listing the 3-story building subject to task force recommendations. The task force has an initial budget of no more than \$10,000. Elizabeth Motter seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Board Development/Expansion

Chairperson Terry Fowler commented that in the past we have discussed a couple of things, board development which Terry viewed as how do we work together, what tools do we have at our disposal and how do we count on each other. Chairperson Terry Fowler went on to say that the board retreat was an important first step. Chairperson Terry Fowler went through the By-Laws very carefully and he would like to form a By-Law task force committee. It's time to look at our By-Laws and bring them forward into our practices. There are thing in the By-Laws that over time we started doing things differently. This gives us the opportunity to clean up some things. Any changes to the By-Laws needs to be run through the school's attorney and discussed twice at our board meetings.

Doug Whitener moved to approve forming a By-Law committee to meet and recommend changes to the By-Laws that will be discussed in our next board meeting and will be an action item after that. Doug Whitener also moved to increase the board size to up to nine members. Amanda Baldwin seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

14. By-Law Committee

See above comments. 13 and 14 tie together

15. Principal Evaluation/Strategy Plan

Tammie suggested that the board take a look at the five pillars. Chairperson Terry Fowler suggested with the exception of the PTO rep and the Treasurer that the rest of the board rotate so we are not doing the same thing all the time. Principal Tammie Stockton commented that the one thing we have is the evaluation rubric that the State sends. If you look at the Principal's update and the strategic planning pillars the five of them, those are really the five major focuses of the school.

16. NAC 386.350 (3) Duties, Credentials & Qualifications

Report was presented by Sherrie Jordan.

Elizabeth Motter moved to accept 386.350 (3) Duties, Credentials & Qualifications as presented by Sherrie. Amanda Baldwin seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

17. NAC 386.400 (2) (g) Independent Contractors

Report presented by Sherrie Jordan

Amanda Baldwin moved to accept NAC 386.400 (2) (g) Independent Contractors as presented by Sherrie. Max Haynes seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

18. Assistant Principal Update

Please refer to the NV Ready Grant Pros and Cons handout.

PROS

- Continue conversations with high level state officials regarding special qualities of Montessori education.
- Receive grant funds for NV Ready Grant (\$200K + over last two years) and QRIS small grants (\$10K-\$15K total).
- Free tuition for 18 HDMS 4 year olds.
- Formative and summative assessments several times a year hold classrooms more accountable for growth.
- Comprehensive early childhood special education services have helped us to become a more inclusive community.
- For one of the first times ever, charter schools were considered on even ground with district led schools in competition for this grant.
- Fulfills HDMS charter to serve students who live in our neighborhood.

WC Licensing Ratios

- Group Size Cap- Primary (3-6)- 24 (new regs to take effect 2018)
- Ratio (adult/child)- Primary 1:12
- Group Size Cap- Toddler (1-3)- 15
- Total Primary Size 115-120
- Total Toddler Size 15

CONS

- Class size reduced by 15-20 students in primary program and 3 in toddler.
- Potential \$120K-\$150K in lost revenue due to class sized reduction.
- Extra work that doesn't fit Montessori professional development goals.
- If we quit, we will be forced to give back grant money- approx.: \$10K-\$15K.

- Assessments take time away from classroom instruction and assistant principal duties.
- Finances have caused bookkeeper difficulty.
- Bookkeeper went over her payment budget to serve grant.
- Assistant principal and admin support staff spend many hours entering information into databases for the state and federal government to track.
- Lowers morale of teachers.

ORIS Ratios

- Group Size Cap- Primary (3-6)- 20
- Ratio (adult/child)- Primary 1:10
- Group Size Cap- Toddler (1-3)- 12
- Total Primary Size 100
- Total Toddler Size 12

19. Principal Update

- Parent Outreach: We will be scheduling "Take Your Parent to Montessori School" events during the second semester as part of ongoing Montessori focused parent education. The Primary/Kindergarten teachers created this format last school year and it was highly successful. We are looking at doing this school wide.
- Montessori PD: Since we did not receive funding through the Great Teaching and Leading Grant, a few teachers are looking at other ways to receive funding to attend either the AMI or AMS refresher conferences in February and March. The cost per teachers is approximately \$1,000. Three teachers have applied for funding through fundforteachers.org.
- HDMS School Profile: Attached you will find the provided summary of academic progress from WCSD. The data shows a 2-year trend (15-16 and 16-17) and compares our test scores with other similar school as well as projected growth trends broken down by subgroups and grade levels. The state is looking at both proficiency and growth in terms of student success. Overall our reading scores remain on par with other similar school whereas our math scores remain below the district average. These scores are skewed since a large percentage of our 7th-9th high math students take the Algebra End of Course instead of the SBAC therefore lowering our math SBAC scores. Our pass rate on the Algebra EOC is 88% and 89% for the last 2 years.
- HDMS School Performance Plan: Attached is the SPP for 17-18. Our goals remained fairly consistent with the goals from last school year. We continue to provide reading intervention to all students below the 60% in reading and math. We are using Leveled Literacy Instruction (LLI) as our primary school wide reading intervention and Front Row Online as our primary math intervention.
- School Performance Plan Narrative 2017-2018: See attached
- SB 178: Attached is the SB 178 addendum to our School Performance Plan. HDMS is receiving an additional \$34,800 toward interventions.
- Read By Three (Nevada KIDS Read): We continue to send our Learning Strategist Cadence Reed to trainings for this legislation. We have implemented reading plans and notified parents of any 1st-3rd grade student below the 40% in reading in accordance with the law. This process is part of our school wide Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

- Aims web: We finally have this student online progress monitoring system started. This has taken over a year of coordination between WCSD and HDMS.
- Teacher Evaluations: Tammie and Tamra have started this process with teachers. Probationary teachers are formally observed 9 times and post-probationary 3 times. Each observation has a pre and post conference. We continue to use the Danielson rubrics and Montessori look for as indicators. As we did last school year, 20% of teachers' evaluations are based on MAP or DRA reading scores. Our goal is to continue to see an increase in the number of students who meet or exceed their projected growth based on MAP data.
- Reno News and Review: HDMS is ranked the second best charter school in Northern Nevada!
- Edible Reno: Please click on the link which highlights an article about our school lunch program. <http://www.ediblerenotahoe.com/editorial/140-fall17/1859-fall17-school-lunch-revolution>
- PTO Meetings: We've had 3 PTO meeting so far this school year with great attendance, especially among new parents at our school. There is great enthusiasm for new projects and fundraising opportunities.
- Second Cup of Coffee: Tamra and I have held 2 Second Cups this school year. We typically have a different group of parents from those who attend PTO. The 1-hour meeting has no agenda and we discuss a myriad of topics ranging from Social Emotional Learning in a Montessori school to the Capital Campaign and other topics.
- Fall Work Bee: This school wide event was held on October 13th. This is the first time we held this event on a Friday due to low turnout when we held it on Saturdays. Each level coordinated their own projects and parents were welcome to help out or donate items. We did much garden clean up, painting of red curbs and basketball court and trash pick-up. The middle school continues to partner with "Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful" and completed neighborhood clean-up tasks on this day.
- Fall Chili Festival: The Lower and Upper Elementary combined forces to coordinate this traditional fall event. We had a beautiful day with games, food and fun for all who attended. The elementary classes made \$1,600 from this event.
- Run for Education: This event was held on October 22nd and had over 60 HDMS runners attend. HDMS will receive a \$2,000 Kids in Motion Grant for their participation which goes towards enhancing physical or outdoor education.
- Fall Parent Conferences: We are in the midst of fall conferences with the expectation of meeting with 100% of families as we have done the last 3 years.
- Adobe Structure: Parent Asa Gilmore and teaching assistant Dawn Chamblin coordinated the removal of the deteriorating adobe structure on the primary playground.
- Sports Court: The court was installed the end of September and is being used regularly by students.
- Capital Campaign: This group met with professional fundraiser Gretchen Bietz on October 11th. Gretchen went thoroughly through the process of a capital campaign with the group. She has agreed to work with us on this project. Her suggestions included selling the 3 story and paying off our current debt. We would have a better chance of receiving foundation or corporate donations if we are debt free. Fernando's Maintenance cleaned up the 3 story on October 14-15. The removed old furniture, located and turned off the main water valve on the second floor where copper piping has been stolen, cleaned and replaced ceiling tiles. We will wait to replace ceiling tiles on the 3rd floor until the roof leaks have been repaired. The board approved in August that \$5,000 be allocated towards the clean-up of the 3 story.
- Lower El Greenhouse: We are in need of additional funding to complete this project. We are currently coordinating with Nathan Graham, a UNR Journalism student, as part of his wanting to

improve his grant writing portfolio on a couple of grants for nonprofits. We hope to receive an additional \$5,000 in funding.

- Infant/Toddler: Since we are eliminating infants effective January 1, we will reduce the number of staff needed for this program therefore reducing costs.
- TMCC Practicum Students: We have 3 students completing observations at the school.
- Primary Assistants: We are in need of an afternoon assistants to help with closing.
- Teachers/Leads: 6 I/T/primary, 4 lower el, 3 upper el, 4 middle school, 2 special education, 1 learning strategist/EL, 1 Dean of students= 21
- Teaching Assistants: 11 I/T/P/K, 4 lower el, 3 upper el, 1 ms = 19
- Administration: 1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 5 support- 7
- Independent Contractors: 1 bookkeeper, 1 lunch program, 1 janitorial, 1 landscaping, 1 information technology, 1 speech and occupational therapy, 1 school counselor = 7
- 47 employees and 7 independent contractors

20. School Performance Plan/SB 178 Addendum

School performance planned was emailed to all board members.

Principal Tammie Stockton said that our goals have remain the same. We have not had valid scores since 2014. Our reading is on par with everyone else. Math has been a struggle for the last few years. The thing to remember about our math scores is that especially at the middle school level is that our highest math kids take the end of course exams which is a requirement are not calculated into our school profile. Our reading map indicated that 42 percent of our children would pass the SBAC and that is exactly what happened. With math, our numbers are skewed due to end of course. This year using SB 178 funds, is we have a strong math intervention called Front Row Online. Teachers are able to track progress and the students really enjoy it. The interface of the program is just like SBAC. Our goal will be to increase our scores by 10 percent in growth and proficiency over the next couple of years. 5 percent this year and another 5 percent next year.

Max Haynes moved to accept the School Performance Plan/SB 178 Fund as presented. Doug Whitener seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

21. Adjournment and Future Board Items

- **3-Story Listing**
- **By-Laws**
- **Capital Campaign**
- **Revised Budget**

- Financials
- EcoStudent Update

Kay Ko moved to adjourn. Elizabeth Motter seconded the Motion. Motion carried unanimously.

DRAFT