

Marine Area Community  
School Board of Directors  
Meeting Aug. 25 – 6:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting

**AGENDA 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 Meeting called to order at 6:06pm

1.1 Roll Call – Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen all present. Also in attendance, Director Drew Goodson and Ele Anderson.

2.0 Approve Agenda

2.1 Chair Miller: Added several items to the agenda – water safety plan, teacher compensation. Motion by Member Dochniak. Second by Member Henschen. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

3.0 Approve Minutes July 28, 2020, Aug. 6, 2020

3.1 July 28 minutes: Member Dochniak noted that she was not in attendance but listed as voting for all of the motions. Member Hong will correct. Member DeCorsey motion to approve. Member Henschen second. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

3.2 Aug. 6 minutes: Member Dochniak motion to approve. Member Ost second. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

4.0 Community Comment

4.1 River Grove Community Updates

4.1.1 Board member driven initiatives

Chair Miller: Thank you to all of our school volunteers. Drew Goodson: Thank you to Katherine Hardie for all of her work helping to get the outdoor learning spaces ready and preparing a water safety plan.

Member Miller: The outdoor classrooms will really set us apart from other

schools even into the future. Thanks.

#### 4.2 Citizen Comments

- If you have citizen comments, please state your name for the minutes.

#### 5.0 Authorizer comments (if in attendance) – not in attendance

#### 6.0 Reports and Discussion

##### 6.1 Financial report and budget workshop

Kyle Knudson: 55% of our revenue from general ed; 31% from special ed and 10% from lease aid. We are currently starting the year with 205 ADM (number of enrolled students).

- Year to date: Through July, we only received general ed revenue. The majority of funds spent so far are for salary and benefits. Cash flow currently looks pretty good, partly due to PPP. The State does not have more money to give schools and the Federal money previously talked about has not materialized. We will need to keep an eye on budget.

- We have some carry-over grant and awards funds remaining to be spent. Title II, CARES, and new COVID funds. River Grove has already applied for COVID funds and will get \$43,622, but schools need to do so by Oct. 1, otherwise it goes away. We will spend that first before tapping into other awards that last longer. - Currently projecting a \$289,713 fund balance

- We've spent 30% of our materials budget, purchasing materials ahead of the school year.

Chair Miller: We are doing really good financially, especially under the current circumstances. We are in a strong position to deal with COVID costs, as well as capital improvements and May CUP amendment.

Member Hong: We approved a deficit budget in July. Will the \$43,000 reduce that?

Kyle Knudson: Yes. It was originally projected to be a \$92,000 deficit and this would hopefully drop that to \$50,000.

Director Goodson: The \$43,000 in COVID funds have mostly been spent already.

6.1.1 July 2020 approvals: Motion to approve – Member Hong. Member Henschen second. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

## 6.2 Director's report – Drew Goodson

Enrollment – 205 budgeted. Currently we actually have 213 students enrolled.

- 168 hybrid + 45 distance learning

- There is a fair amount of movement happening due to new families coming to Grove for a better COVID learning experience and some leaving to homeschool or use an online school

- We are working on finishing up Sun Lodge updates and outdoor classroom spaces.

- There will be hand sanitizer stations outside every classroom. There will be exemptions for students that can't use hand sanitizer. HVAC unit was inspected yesterday. We will be installing new filters and getting quotes and estimates on other treatment, such as air scrubbers or other techniques to clean air. Is there enough quality to justify the cost?

- Lunch program: We are getting back into the national school lunch program. Sandy is familiar and working on that.

- Staffing: We've talked a lot about how to best serve our distance-learning students. How do we make it easier for teachers who are serving both in person and distance. We decided to create two new positions – distance learning teacher for K-2 and for 3-5. This will be Erin Deidrich and Annie Beck. Because we had short notice, the school decided not to hire a new position.

- o There will be a grade level combo for Eric McBride, who will be teaching grades 3 and 4 together. Eric has experience in mixed grade teaching and is very comfortable with this approach.

- o Angie Hong: Will he teach grade 3 on one set of days and grade 4 another?

- o Goodson: No. They will be mixed in both groups.

- o Miller: We did talk about the potential for mixed grade level classes previously but wanted to wait until the next school year to try. But COVID pushed us to try it sooner.

- o Goodson: We hired one more aid but are still looking to hire a few more. We also have a new substitute teacher. We're all hands on deck trying to prepare for staff potentially being out sick. It is a slight challenge out here because we are far outside the city. Our special ed coordinator will take on some teaching.

- Teacher in service is next week. It will be mostly COVID focused. St. Croix River Association will be meeting with staff on Friday and they will discuss activities that could be done in lieu of field trips.

- COVID:

- o Board will approve the handbook tonight.

- o There will be a mandatory orientation for all families to review

COVID-related protocols. There will also be a welcome back to school parent-teacher meetings.

- o Continuous eval – we need to have an emergency response committee that will monitor trends and be prepared to make changes to our teaching model, if needed.

- o Daycare – YMCA may not be able to offer care on site at the school this year. Grove could send students to the Forest Lake YMCA, but we need to determine if that is possible. This is only for Tier 1, essential workers. If we can take care of all of those families, we may be able to open it up to Tier 2 workers too.

#### 6.2.1 Equity and Inclusion Committee follow-up

- o Ele Anderson: Emily McDonald will take over leading the newly formed committee and will bring in teachers as well.

#### 6.2.2 PTO Report

- o Katherine Hardie – approving a budget. Will approve bylaws at the next meeting. Meeting tomorrow at 5pm to discuss trail revitalization. There will also be several work days over the next few weeks. Emailed people from the volunteer form and have 15 people ready to help. Wilder gave permission to clear and use all trails on the property. Someone will come to look at the dock this week. Beginning to talk about the fall fundraiser and a merchandise store. PTO elections – there will be 3 open positions. Elections will happen co-currently with this year's board elections.

- o Kate Sietz – Talking about community engagement activities. Will communicate with families via Facebook and email, asking kids to show off what they've been doing this summer. Kate will be stepping down as committee co-chair at the end of the month.

### 6.3 Board Member Reports

#### 6.3.1 Operations and Facilities Report - Chair Miller: Nothing new to report. Focusing a lot on the outdoor classroom development. Thank you to Member Ost, who also works full time unpaid at the school. Allen Ost has also been building and re-doing picnic tables for kids to use.

### 7.0 Old Business

#### 7.1 May Township CUP Amendment Update – Chair Miller

- All of our reports are back now – road study, septic study, etc. We hope to submit the CUP amendment request very soon.

### 8.0 New Business

#### 8.1 Water Safety Plan

- Developed by Katherine Hardie. Would like to approve tonight and include in

the Twp CUP application.

- Much is from the YMCA water safety plan. This would be a new section in the school's emergency response plan. Currently, we would only be using the dock, not going in the water, so that makes it easier. Three staff – Annie Beck, Eric McBride, and Emily Geffert will be trained in CPR/First AID.

Anytime the teachers go to the water, they will treat it like a field trip – get permission slips, bring a first AID kit, avoid unsafe weather.

- There is also a water search plan, in the event someone goes missing while a class is at the water.

- Member Dochniak: Would recommend increasing the child to teacher ratio for trips to the dock. There shouldn't be one teacher alone with a full class.

- Chair Miller: Let's add that and finalize it next month. We can submit this to the township in our CUP as a draft plan.

- Katherine: Staff has not reviewed the plan yet. - Katherine also developed bus safety and outdoor safety procedures to add to the emergency response plan.

## 8.2 Teacher compensation – Drew Goodson

- Teachers have put in a ton of time over the summer when it is normally not a contract work time. It is way above and beyond what teachers normally do during the summer and teachers have volunteers a lot of time and are working hard. - Would like to recognize this contribution with additional pay. Proposing a three-phased approach.

o Phase 1 – immediately.

▪ Change calendar days Jan 18 and Feb 15 from teacher duty to non-duty days to give teacher two extra vacation days.

▪ Change PTO days from 5 to 10 (no cash out). This would be for safety to keep sick teachers from coming to school, as well as to provide additional mental health or child care days.

▪ This would cost the school a max of \$14,000, mostly for sub expenses.

o Phase 2

▪ Create a bonus pool of \$25,000 to provide one-time bonuses to teachers (\$500-\$1500) based on performance. This would roughly time with holiday season.

o Phase 3

▪ Potential for another bonus (\$500 – \$2500), also based on performance. Could also give teachers the option to cash-out unused PTO days.

- Member Dochniak: This is an awesome idea. In St Paul, the district is handling this extra work and at Grove, teachers are doing this extra work and should be compensated. Concerned about performance-based bonus.

- Director Goodson: There needs to be a performance criteria in order to get a

bonus, based on conversation with Kyle Knudson. It can be pretty simple – just a check-list - and not something that creates hard feelings for some teachers getting better bonuses than others.

- Member Hong: Thinks it's a good idea. Grove is already at a competitive disadvantage compared with districts for teacher pay and we are asking teachers to do more work this year.

- Chair Miller: Ready to commit to phase 1, want to wait and see on financials for phase 2 and 3.

- Director Goodson: Having three phases gives us the flexibility to react if financials change over the year due to COVID, enrollment, etc.

- Chair Miller: Who works with Drew to determine which teachers get bonus pay? Who sets the standard?

- Member Dochniak: 10 days of PTO is absolutely essential.

- Director Goodson: this is just for this year's contract.

- Motion to Approve Phase 1 – Member DeCorsey. Member Dochniak second. Lisa Dochniak, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong– aye. Jackie Henschen and Jessica Hansen – abstain due to conflict of interest. -

### 8.3 COVID-19 school handbook – Drew Goodson

- This has been developed in partnership with Dept of Health. This will be a changing document because the knowledge and situation related to COVID is constantly changing.

- Most common question is what happens when a child gets sick? -  
Background – there are big changes this year and lots of flexibility needed. But we have three tremendous strengths that allow us to react well to this challenge.

- o 1 – we have great outdoor spaces

- o 2 – we have 7 different buildings, which will allow us to keep cohorts separate

- o 3 – we are a small school and can be flexible and respond fast -  
Model update – today's number is 19.23 (14-day case rate per 10,000 people in the county) – by the time schools starts, it will be 22.6, 28 by MEA, 47 by winter break. Toward the end of the calendar year, we may need to go into fully distant learning if the current increase in positive COVID cases continues. MDA requires a two-week minimum notice for a non-emergency change.

- o In our new model, at-home days will be longer and more rigorous. They will be full days of instruction, not like what happened in the spring.

- o Teachers will give monthly progress reports to families instead of 2x per year meetings

- o We've tried very hard to accommodate all factors in scheduling kids.

- Outdoor learning – majority of learning will happen outside until it is less

than 45-degrees. After that, we will dial back to a half day outdoor or less model.

- Fridays will be distant for everyone.

- Teachers are developing ways for kids to continue to interact and build community, even when they are in separate rooms or at home.

- Full-time distance learning – two dedicated positions. Erin Diedrich and Annie Beck.

- Screen time is a big concern for families. Students will need a computer and access to the internet most days of the week. But the teachers are working hard to develop activities that don't happen just on the screen.

- Can families shift between one model and the next?

  - o It would be best if they do that at the semester break.

  - o However, Oct. 19 and April 5 will be two additional times when families could switch if needed. This creates some issues for teachers and instruction, but we want to provide flexibility for families.

- Daily attendance: Kids are required to participate every day even when distance learning and call in absences if they can't participate on a given day. School will be checking in with families frequently and monitoring whether kids are doing school work and completing assignments.

- Health and safety protocols:

  - o Asking parents to screen child's health on a daily basis before sending to school. There will be a series of questions for parents to ask kids and will ask them to take kids temps before they leave for school.

  - o School will do temp checks upon arrival. Anyone with above 100 degrees will be sent home. Megan will talk with families to determine if quarantine is needed.

  - o Teachers will be looking at kids to monitor health throughout the day.

  - o Masks / face coverings will be required at all times indoors. All kids will need to wear masks when arriving until they reach the classroom. Masks may be removed outside, at the discretion of teachers. Department of Health does not see any reason kids need to wear masks outside. This will be part of the Grove dress code.

- For kids who have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a mask (must be documented with a doctor's note), we will develop an IEP.

  - o Hygiene: there will be frequent hand washing breaks and sanitizer stations. Classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized every day. Deep cleaning every Friday.

- o Inspecting HVAC system and fixing problems. Ensuring good ventilation. - Cohort groupings
- o If we can keep cohorts separate, we can avoid impacting the entire school when a kid gets sick.
- o Lunch will be inside classrooms and school will provide for kids who want it.
- o Classroom teachers will implement art and music with support from specialists.
- o PE will be daily and outside.
- Social distancing will be strictly used for indoors. Encouraged but not as strict for outside. Dept of Health does not see as much reason for concern outside.
- Water – fountains are shut off. Asking kids to bring large bottle and there will be bottles in rooms as well.
- Limiting volunteers and visitors and encouraging parents not to check-in at the office or come in for admin concerns.
- Transportation:
  - o There will be assigned seats and kids will be loaded back to front at the end of the day.
  - o Many families will drive kids, so we won't need to buy a 5<sup>th</sup> bus.
- Decision tree from Dept of Health
  - o If a child is sick, there will be a screening conducted to determine the appropriate response. If a kid has two or more symptoms, they will go into the quarantine protocol and must stay home for 10 days and be fever-free for 24hrs before returning.
  - o All siblings and household members must quarantine for 14 days from last contact with a symptomatic individual.
  - o If a student gets a doctor's note showing that the illness is due to something else that is not COVID, they can come back earlier. But a negative COVID test alone does not negate the quarantine period.
  - o Families need to be prepared to quarantine during the year.
  - o Notification of positive COVID cases: All families in the class will be notified by phone call, email and text alert. Other families at the school will be made aware via email with notice that they will be contacted by MDH / Grove if there is reason to believe their child has been exposed.
  - o Hopefully cohorts will remain separate enough to avoid needing to quarantine the entire school for positive cases.



- o There is a cleaning protocol for classrooms if there is a positive case.
- Digital citizenship – same code of conduct will apply for distance learning.
- Mental health provider will be available for any students needing it.
- Special ed services have a huge challenge in serving students from a distance for services that are better done in person.
- Technology: All students will be able to check out chrome books. If families can provide kids with a computer, that is encouraged.

Questions:

- Members Hong, Miller, Dokniak, Ost – kudos to Drew and Ele for creating this document and to teachers for helping to develop the plan.
- Member Ost: If a student stays home due to quarantine, will they keep their same teacher?
  - o Director Goodson: Yes.
- Chair Miller: How will teachers manage the switch from distance to hybrid and vice versa? Will the two teacher's curriculum align well enough that kids won't be lost?
  - o Director Goodson: Yes. But it will be a challenge to bring kids into hybrid learning and still maintain correct class sizes and classroom dynamics. It will be easier for kids to switch from hybrid to distance.
  - o Member Hansen: Primary teachers (k-2) and older (3-5) have been meeting every day to plan for curriculum and assessment to ensure good alignment between the classes and teachers - Chair Miller: Do we need to put something in the manual warning parents that we might not be able to bring them into hybrid from distance due to class size concerns?
    - o Director Goodson: We're going to really work with families to make sure they are making a switch for a good reason and not just a bad day.
    - o Member Hansen – we also want to minimize transitions and disruptions for the kids.
- Chair Miller: What happens in the spring if COVID goes away and we're able to go back to normal school?
  - o Director Goodson: We have capacity to absorb kids and make in-person classes.
- Member Hansen: This has been a very collaborative and teacher-led process.
- Director Goodson: Staff has been great and everyone is comfortable with what

we have planned. But we'll still need to strongly support teachers because it will be a lot of work.

- Ele Anderson: And many staff have also been working on non-COVID school issues to keep those going as well.

- Chair Miller: I worry about staff and parents burning out this year, but you've done such a good job of planning.

- Ele Anderson: What is the process for changing the manual, if needed?

- Chair Miller: We can approve major changes at a monthly board meeting.

- Member DeCorsey: This is very good and comprehensive. Will it be on the website?

- Director Goodson: Yes.

- Member DeCorsey: Motion to approve. Second by Member Hansen. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

#### 8.4 Board of elections call for 9-29-20

- Elections would have happened in May but were delayed due to COVID and the school shut-down.

- Chair Miller read through the official election call. The board is currently seeking nominations for two positions – one community member and one open position.

- Nominations should be submitted by Tue. Sept. 29.

- Being on the board is a big commitment and requires members to work on many issues related to governing the school. It is not a good position for someone with a “one issue” concern.

- Motion to approve election call by Member Hong. Second by Member DeCorsey. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

#### 9.0 Next Board of Directors Meeting: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 6pm

- Chair Miller: would like to have the meeting on campus, if possible in order to Count ballots.

#### 10.0 Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn – Member Dochniak. Second by Member Hansen. Lisa Dochniak, Jackie Henschen, Bre DeCorsey, Marcy Ost, Dan Miller, Angie Hong, Jessica Hansen – aye.

- Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm