

Board of Directors – FSAS | MINUTES

Meeting date, time 03/21/19 6:15 PM | Meeting location FSAS, Gray, ME

Meeting called by Adam Gilman, Chair
Type of meeting Regular Meeting
Facilitator Adam Gilman, Chair
Secretary Penny Collins, Secretary

Attendees:
Adam Gilman, Chair
Alyson Spencer-Reed, Vice Chair
Penny Collins, Secretary
Melanie Prinz, Treasurer
Bill Doughty, Board
Carolyn Beem, Board
Vincent Micale, Board
Zoe Lewin, Board (arrived 6:55)

Meeting called to order at 6:16 pm

Quorum of 7 present at start of meeting.

Also Present:
Jacinda Cotton-Castro, Executive Director

Excused:

AGENDA TOPICS

Review of Minutes

*Motion to accept February, 2019 minutes by W. Doughty
2nd by A. Spencer-Reed*

Discussion:

Motion passed 7-0

Diversity Committee | Alyson Spencer-Reed

Guest presentation by Shannon McRaith, School Guidance Counselor and visiting student, Josh MacLaughlin from the fifth grade. Shannon shared the work of guidance counselors as professionals and the role she plays at Fiddlehead school. The three main focuses are academic, social-emotional and career elements. Shannon shared the focus of her curriculum and the work she does in each classroom each week. Topics include kindness, positive self identity, civil rights team (in 5th grade), etc. The role also involves a caseload of about 10-20 kids for small group or one-on-one short term counseling as well as in-the-moment mitigation for individual responses to events in the school. Shannon is also the 504 coordinator and participates in meetings and student observations.

Shannon took questions on her work. A recent topic that she has addressed is conflict resolution and escalation of physical contact between peers and recent small group was lead around “worry” with children

who were identified as benefiting. W. Doughty asked what Shannon feels the culture of the school is from the child's perspective. She feels we have a lot of students bringing in big feelings due to stressors at home vs. school. Across the board she recommends some social emotional curriculum that is used across grades; similar to PBIS but specific to social emotional. Shannon refers to the second grade teacher's use of the Mind Up curriculum. She credits students who have had that teacher with more mindfulness skills.

Josh MacLaughlin shared his experience on the Civil Rights team and shared some details from the statewide student training he attended with his class. The topics of the training centered around the way different people are treated, i.e. those in categories of sexual orientation, gender, race, physical capability, religion, etc. The team created posters throughout the school. They also recently created a response to the shooting in NZ showing their support. The team has talked about refugee and immigrant issues. The students have traveled around to other classes to present their work. Recommendation of the book "Her Right Foot" which is about the Statue of Liberty and welcoming immigrants.

Reminder of the training on April 5, which will be delivered by the same team that delivered the Civil Rights team training to the children and Shannon as a leader. Board participation is considered mandatory if at all possible.

Questions on Committee Report for March meeting taken. Tookie Bright, LCSW, local counselor, is coming in to present on childhood anxiety and how to help. The event is paid for by the PTO, childcare will be paid for by the school and will take place April 24 from 6:30-8:00 pm.

ED Report | J. Cotton-Castro

Questions taken on Executive Director's report. Questions included interest in the lottery process this year; the Anytime Anywhere learning days; budget workshop days.

Transition/Expansion Committee | Jacinda Cotton-Castro

Reviewed revised configurations for future growth and continued discussion on rental and purchase options. The work that has gone into the several scenarios of what the outlook is for the school in terms of budget and growth is extensive. JCC and her team continue to put forth models for review as older revisions are vetted and found either lacking or with potential. The demands on budget when we forecast out to years outside of our current space. The two models on the table now show a small school with one class per grade vs a "larger" school with two classes per grade over time. There is also a growth model in which we have multiple locations with the small school model. Current models on the table include one model showing 20 children per classroom in grades preK-8 with two classes in lower grades vs 25 children per class in grades pre-K-8 with one classroom per grade. Detailed discussion on how and when classrooms are built out in numbers in different possible models. Review of classroom staffing in each model.

JCC reminded Board that there are two issues at play: the funding and budgeting aspect of a decision and the philosophical issues and mission of the school. Talk about considering multi-age classrooms as we grow as both a fit for our philosophy and our budget. Question: Can we use reserve accounts to cover growth until we catch up? The fiscally conservative answer is no - we use those reserves from time to time, and planning to use them may work or it may 'sink the ship.' We also have to honor our commitment to health care and maintain reserves.

Ultimate recommendation of JCC is to consider focus on keeping the class size smaller and increase focus on a well built middle school that meets the need in our area. She continues to meet with and look at possibilities for rent and space that could impact our budget in a positive way. Should the school grow to include middle school we could have two learning communities within the larger overall organization.

JCC requests/recommends increasing class size in some grades next year. Discussion ensued on which grades can sustain growth in the classroom without impacting the philosophy. Further debate to be held for

budget workshop later in the week. JCC requests support of working with a commercial broker, which will help us find and negotiate space and is not expected to have an up front cost. Committee would invite broker to next meeting and look at contract details together. Question from Z. Lewin: Does the space available drive our program or does our philosophy drive the space we are looking for? (The philosophy and mission will drive the space.)

W. Doughty reminded group of the importance of a project manager for administering the move of the school as it will create a lot of work that is not directly impactful to the daily social emotional growth and education of students. C. Beem offers that having a commercial broker right now will serve the purpose of taking administrative load off JCC and that a project manager in the future will also make sense. Review of terms will happen next week and the contract terms will be shared with the Board. JCC to also consider what she might need help with in the move/expansion for next month and what the scope of work will be.

Motion to enter executive session to discuss lease negotiations at 8:28 pm, per ME Title 1, Chapter 13, Subchapter 1, §405, 6. C. (1), by A. Gilman

*2nd by P. Collins
Motion passed 8-0*

*Motion to leave Executive Session at 8:42 pm by A. Gilman
2nd by A. Spencer-Reed
Motion passed 8-0*

Education Committee Report

Committee took questions on Education Committee Report. Details given on goals around growth and the use of NWEAs and its strength as a test. Much more helpful in determining what children know and need to learn next.

W. Doughty gave update on conversations with current staff on what the fifth and sixth grade might look like next year. The thinking is to have fifth and sixth operate as a team with two teachers and one assistant. This would involve a 'homeroom' base for each grade, but some specialty programming with the humanities/language arts and math provided by teachers with those strengths. The curriculum would be experimental in nature and look to opportunities to get children out into hands on/outside opportunities. Values of the school of meeting needs of the children, emphasis on nature, and priority of social emotional growth have been central to the conversation. This has led to drilling down to what an ideal teacher would look like and would include strength in math, outdoor education, elementary age focus, etc. Experience with the grade level is a priority.

Parking Lot: P. Collins to look for dates on teacher job fairs coming up in the spring.

Governance Committee | A. Gilman

The committee took questions on the Governance report. Noted that the loss of A. Spencer-Reed with her term ending in June will be felt and that her volunteer work on the review of bylaws next year would be appreciated. Note that A. Spencer-Reed agreed to assist.

*Motion to enter executive session to discuss a potential Board candidate at 8:59 pm, per ME Title 1, Chapter 13, Subchapter 1, §405, 6. A. (1), by A. Spencer-Reed at 8:59 pm
2nd by Z. Lewin
Motion passed 8-0*

Motion to leave Executive Session at 9:06 pm by A. Gilman
2nd by A. Spencer-Reed
Motion passed 8-0

Motion to enter executive session to discuss a current Board member at 9:07 pm, per ME Title 1, Chapter 13, Subchapter 1, §405, 6. A. (1), by A. Gilman
2nd by C. Beem
Motion passed 8-0

Motion to leave Executive Session at 9:11 pm by P. Collins
2nd by Z. Lewin
Motion passed 8-0

Motion to accept with regret Z. Lewin's resignation, effective at the end of this meeting, at 9:12 pm by A. Spencer-Reed
2nd by C. Beem
Discussion: None
Motion passed 8-0

Finance Committee | M. Prinz

The committee took questions on the Finance report and P&L statement. Questions on P&L on moving money from reserve to money market account (successful) and around summer salaries (increased). Question on sub salaries, which were higher due to staff vacancies over the year and increase in sub hourly rate. Update from JCC on Title V dollars and what we have used that money for in the past and how it can be used in the future. Suggestion to use some funds for a new copier and some laptops. JCC to research what qualifies and does not, and drill down on possibilities such as unanticipated costs on subs, new curriculum, technology, etc.

Motion to approve the purchase of a copier and laptops to be reimbursed through Title 5 funding, not to exceed \$9,000 for each item in order to meet unanticipated needs of the school at 9:27 pm by P. Collins
2nd by A. Gilman
Discussion: None
Motion passed 8-0

Personnel Committee Report | P. Collins

Committee took questions on Personnel Committee Report. High level overview provided on the Exec Director eval process. Request to provide summary write up of changes and timeline for execution. Add in opportunity for teacher feedback this year. M. Prinz to provide compensation numbers on value of insurance for commitment letters.

Miscellaneous Items | A. Gilman

Reminder to mark calendars for Fiddlehead fundraiser on Saturday, May 18 with Antonio Roca (Spelling?), an artist that has been well received by the students at previous performances.

Discussion on impact of L.D. 714, "An Act to Prohibit Public Charter Schools from Expending Funds for Advertising" and plans to participate in advocacy. Not being able to expend money on sharing who we are and what we do is an obstacle to our and other charter schools. Members discussed and agreed to ask parents to submit testimony independent of the Board as well as a cohesive response from the Board. Action needs to be taken by/on March 27. Recommendation to assign to the Executive Committee to draft a letter that JCC can bring to the hearing in person.

Motion to authorize Executive Committee to draft testimony on L.D. 714 to be presented in person by JCC on March 27 at 9:53 pm by A. Gilman.

2nd by A. Spencer-Reed

Discussion: None

Motion passed 8-0

Reviewed status of 2019-20 Committee Chairs/Board Officers. Members interested in an officer role or committee chair position should contact A. Gilman or W. Doughty as soon as possible.

Public Comment

None.

Motion to adjourn at 9:56 pm by A. Gilman

2nd by A. Spencer-Reed

Discussion: none

Motion passed 8-0