

Board Meeting Minutes Saturday, May 23, 2020

In attendance: Tiffany, Stephanie, Kaarunya, Stan, KJ, Krista, Erica, Kim, Adam and James

Meeting called to order at about 10:05.

Review and approve meeting agenda. **Motion to approve agenda. Motion passes.**

Community Input

A community member expressed disappointment regarding lack (and refusal) of communication with parents about the sped teachers leaving. Request for better communication and keeping parents more informed, especially parents with kids in Special Ed., as well as information about the Special Ed program and what next year's plan is. Disappointment expressed over: learning there's going to be a new teacher for next year via a zoom link, being refused by teachers and at times, the school leader to collaborate, a refusal for technological modifications and a toxic staff environment that negatively affects students' behavior. Request to have someone take a look at the Special Ed program and work with the Director to make some changes, as well as everyone at Southside to reexamine how we are engaging, what we are/are not doing and what we *could* be doing. Many Southside parents believe we can do more and want to help. Request to know what the plan is to implement the new requirements for students with dyslexia that the Minnesota Department of Education will issue as of July 1st.

The board acknowledges the problems regarding the struggles going on the sped department and commits to continue fixing anything that needs to be fixed.

Another community member is called on. They agreed with the other statements regarding the school is dealing with some hard problems. They request that we stay open to "digging deep" and letting go of what we were expecting how this year is going to look. They also thanked the board for all that they do.

A different community member expressed disappointment with their past communications with the school's leader and feelings of continuously being disrespected and unacknowledged.

Community input concludes. Motion to approve April Meeting Minutes. KJ questions if we need Phillip's entire speech included or completely remove. Erica moves to amends the meeting minutes to take out the letter that was read by the Director and instead to put in place a letter of concern was read by the Director and addressed by the board. Amendment passes to the main motion.

Motion made to approve April Meeting Minutes. Motion passes.

Motion to approve the special board meeting on May 2nd. Motion passes.

The board will implement a new standard of board training beginning in August.

Director's Report

Meetings are being held twice a week to discuss distance learning and preparing for the upcoming year. Phillip is monitoring the MDE and meets with VOA once or twice a week. He is working on Q-comp with teachers. There are staff meetings twice a week, para meetings once a week, the CLT is up and running again. There are admin meetings to discuss enrollment and our finances. Every Friday there are zoom meetings with the parents/students and Phillip, as well as movie nights. Save the Date is on June 5th and parent volunteers are needed. We've had a new sped teacher that's been placed by two hiring committees. Financial report looks good. Enrollment is full with a wait list. Phillip included an additional document that outlines his background since he's been at Southside.

Tiffany questioned why the hiring policy wasn't followed in that the second interview should be made public, yet parents were not informed of any hiring in the special education department or in the school at all. Philip said that because the sped teachers would only be working with certain grade levels, they invited all the families of the students in those grades to participate in the hiring process. Tiffany reminded Phillip that the hiring policy has not been followed fully. Phillip said that since this person hasn't been hired, he can schedule an open meeting. Erica says that following policy is important and that all families should be involved in the hiring process, rather than only selecting certain grades. KJ asks for clarification regarding when Phillip had said this person had been hired, that in fact no offer has been made. Phillip said no offer has been made. Tiffany states for the record that this person has not been hired, the hiring policy has not been followed, and we are going to make sure the hiring policy *is* followed in accordance to our policy. The entire community will be involved with the second interview for the sped teacher. The board will ensure that the hiring policy is followed and will follow up with the entire school community to let them know what's been done so far in the hiring process and what the process will be moving forward. Erica asks for clarification regarding where to get information about graduation. Phillip says they are still working on the program and once that's finished they will be included in the Friday email.

Committee Reports

Policy Committee looked at the employment hiring policy to see whether it's needed. The committee decided that yes we do need it. Section 428 is one of the most important policies of the whole school and speaks to the mission of Southside. Section 531, the pledge of allegiance, Southside waives the school requirements to recite the pledge of allegiance. Stan asks the board to vote on whether we should renew the waiver. Erica moves to renew the policy to waive the pledge of allegiance. Motion passes.

Policy committee created a proposed policy on exit interviews, numbered 420. **Policy committee moves to approve policy 420 Exit Interviews. Motion passes.**

Stan mentions that we changed the policy on the CLT but it was never incorporated on the website under board policies for governance. The new policy needs to be included under new governance structure. Kaarunya says she will ensure that happens. Tiffany states for the record that over the past 7 months she has repeatedly formally requested that a staff person be appointed as board liaison at the school so that the job of managing the website does not fall on our board.

Finance

Financial position is really good. We exceeded the 50% mark for the free and reduced lunch program which will increase our compensatory aid for next year by \$30,000. We've saved money by being closed on subs and supplies, as well the civil rights trip being cancelled. We won't have to borrow from our general fund to pay for the food fund. We have an application for PPP to be approved today. Enrollment is full with a waitlist. We won't need to take the interest earning from women's foundation to make budget for the first time in many years. Sherri is working on a revised budget. We've removed the \$40,000 from Caroline Foundation because we still haven't heard what's going on. Phillip has withdrawn the \$30,000 grant request which was for the civil rights trip and there's a \$10,000 restricted grant request that was made for the bus still pending so the finance committee has taken it off the budget. The Hennepin County grant for \$25,000 that we had been approved for was actually a grant for \$900 for recycling bins and this isn't included in the finance reports so KJ wanted to inform the board of that change. We are waiting on an expected \$15,000 gift. The revised budget should be spot on, depending on us receiving the \$15,000 gift. **KJ moves to approve that the revenues, expenditures, net income and ending balance totals (which are all included in Sherri's folder titled "Southside Family School April 2020 Finance Report) be included in the FY 20 revised budget totals.**

	Fund 01	Fund 02
Revenues:	\$1,759,656	\$32,155
Expenditures:	\$1,707,098	\$29,057
Net Income:	\$52,558	\$3,098
Ending Balance:	\$397,027	\$3,098

Tiffany asks for an explanation as to why we had a confirmed grant of \$25,000 to now having a \$900 grant for recycling bins. Phil said the grants weren't fully funded and the programs that were going to be funded weren't executed.

KJ moves to approve the FY 2020 revised budget totals. Motion passes.

KJ says the bank needs the board to approve applying for, and accepting the \$250,000 line of credit to sunrise bank in case the state increases hold back to 50%. **KJ moves that we approve that line of credit. Motion passes.**

KJ moves the board accepting and approving the PPP (payment protection program) loan. Motion passes.

Salary increases. Southside's sub rate is so low it's difficult to hire subs and as a result we end up paying teachers on call for more money. It puts a strain on the staff trying to find subs and sometimes the paras are getting paid more than the subs. KJ moves to pay subs \$20/hour, which is the same rate as MPS subs. Kaarunya asks how that will affect the school budget and if we can handle it. KJ says our financial position is very good and that increasing the sub rate is actually a budget saving measure, and an added benefit is that having subs that are happy to work at Southside will create a better community at Southside.

KJ amends the motion that we increase the salary to \$20 an hour for licensed reserve teachers in gen ed and special ed. Amendment passed. Tiffany moves to approve the original motion to the pay increase. Motion passes.

The finance committee believes we can afford to increase a 5% salary increase across the board and that it will be covered by the compensatory aid increase of \$30,000. KJ also noted that sped teachers are reimbursed by the state at 94% and that we have a title one staff that we get reimbursements for that too.

Erica moves to increase the salary pay rate of our staff by 5%. Motion passes.

KJ proposes that in lieu of taking your leave time, you can get paid out for the amount up to 80 hours at the previous sub rate of \$16.50/hour. Sherri did a calculation that it would cost about \$4,000 if every staff member were to accept the buyout and that this would not be a policy amendment, but something that was time limited that would expire on the last day of the working day of school.

KJ moves to allow staff to elect cash payment of \$16.50/hour of hours over 80 hours PTO, one time only, due to the pandemic, with the request needing to be received by June 15, 2020.

Stan requests that in the future this is brought up immediately so that the board can take a look at it and then support it, rather than making promises and people expecting it before it's been approved by the board. KJ says she believes the CLT followed proper procedure.

Motion passes.

Erica moves to approve all the finance documents for the month of April. Motion passes.

CISA and Equity

The satisfaction survey that need to go out every spring were approved and sent out. The next CISA/Equity meeting is June 9th.

Fundraising

The plant sale was a huge success. We raised about \$5,400 and managed to keep everyone at a safe distance.

School Leader Contract

We have the School Leader evaluations. **Stan moves to terminate Phillip's contract with Southside Family Charter School.** Stan is very troubled by many things, particularly the special ed director and the special ed staff as well as the School Leader's inability to communicate respectfully with the board chair and the board, and the issue with the sub that was ignored for months. Stan believes we need a unifier, not a divider of staff. Kaarunya stated that as a teacher it was a very difficult year and that the staff is very divided due to the way the school leader wasn't able to bring everyone together and treating the staff respectfully and equally. Erica's biggest concern is the lack of self-reflection of Phillip and a feeling that Phillip wasn't willing to hear the board out. Tiffany proposes an amendment to the original motion by amending that Phillip's service to school is terminated effective immediately but that we will honor the 30 days of employed payment. Stan mentions that this is a very difficult decision that comes with a heavy heart. Tiffany notes that this decision is based on the evaluation results from the community. **Tiffany moves to amend that we pay Phillip for the 30 days as per his contract but that his leadership ends today. Amendment passes.** Erica questions why the leadership has to end today. Tiffany says that primarily she wants to give the school the opportunity to be able to finish the school year in a healthy way and begin the search process with an energized school community. We want Phillip to have time to begin his search process for the next step in his career. KJ explained that she is concerned with follow up and administration and that there are so many administration responsibilities that need to be tied up by the end of the year by someone who is accountable and she can trust what they say, which isn't something she feels certain Phillip can do. **Motion as amended to terminate Phillip's contract passes.**

What happens in the interim?

We have a school policy regarding how we conduct a school leadership search, which the board will be diligent about following, but we need to find a school leader in the interim. Stan thinks we need to have a temporary replacement immediately, most likely it will be Sherri or Tarik. **Stan moves that the executive committee chooses a school leader to carry over until a permanent school leader is hired. Motion passes.**

Stephanie moves to create a governance committee to take a close look at our governance structure now and see if there's anything we want to change. The job of our governance committee is to find what best fits our school structure- to look at what has and hasn't worked, until the new school leader brings in their ideas. Stephanie points out that certain teachers are taking on a lot of extra work and that having jobs clearly defined could help distribute the work evenly and be more equitable for the staff. Tiffany suggests that this governance committee is more like a task force. Stan suggests we find out who will make up the task force immediately. Tiffany reminds us that we want to work with the community to support the vision for the community in tandem with the important work that's already been done by the community. Stan suggests we decide who will make up the task force. Stephanie suggests we keep the task force as diverse as possible. **Stephanie withdraws her initial motion and makes a new motion to have a governance task force be formed. Motion passes.**

Tiffany moves to have a special board meeting on May 30th at 10am for the purpose of the task force development and next steps. Motion passes.

Stan and James volunteer to head the task force.

Tiffany will draft a letter to the community to update them on what's going on, as well as a termination letter for Phillip so everyone can see before she sends them.

Stan makes a motion that we decide at the next special meeting when our June meeting will take place. Motion passes.

KJ moves to adjourn at 12.29pm. Motion passes.