

## **Mountain Sun Community School Board**

### **Meeting Minutes**

November 7, 2018

Open Session

5:45-8:10 p.m.

*Members Present: Michael, Dilshad, Linda, Melissa, Mary, Joy, Meighan, Kevin, Nicole, Jessica, Brigid*

*Dilshad chaired the meeting and Linda recorded minutes.*

### **Approval of September open minutes**

- The September 5 minutes will be reviewed and approved at the December 5 meeting.
- The September 30 minutes were reviewed and an addition added to specify money was raised for the Transylvania County St. Baldrick's Children's Cancer fundraiser.

### **Review of the November 4<sup>th</sup> Community Meeting**

- There were a number of adults and children who RSVP'd but did not attend. The question of whether Sunday is the best day for Community Meetings was discussed but it was decided to continue meeting on Sunday afternoons.
- Moving the fall date so that it does not fall immediately after the EDT/EST time change was discussed and all agreed to this change.
- The strategic planning activity with parents went well and results were similar to the Board's earlier ideas. Charts from the parents' group activity were reviewed.
- The spring Community Meeting will either focus on a new strategic plan or classroom activities. Board members are to let Dilshad know whether April 7 or May 4 work better for the spring meeting.

### **Ninth Grade in the Coyote Class discussion**

- It is possible to add a ninth grade component for the 2019-2020 school year. MSCS would need to develop a curriculum that meets NC Core Standards and issue 8 credits covering required content such as English, Math, Physical Science, World History, PE, etc. Grades would not be given so the credits would count toward high school graduation but not toward a GPA.
- Adding the ninth grade would complete a 3-year cycle (Grades 7-8-9) in the Coyote class.
- It was pointed out there could be social implications for some students since they would enter high school at Grade 10 after other students form their social cohorts in Grade 9.
- The Board asked the Executive Director to further explore adding the Grade 9 curriculum/credits. This discussion will continue at the December meeting.

### **Update on Tuition Insurance research**

- Linda shared information about tuition insurance and Michel shared research that Suzanne completed with two companies offering tuition insurance.
  - Hanover tuition insurance could be offered at a rate of 1.4% (approximately \$98) if paid by all students or 1.77% (approximately \$124) if paid only by students on payment plans. However, they would not offer insurance for voluntary withdrawal for at least the first year.
  - Dewar Insurance would be about the same price. Their insurance would only become effective after 14 days of the school year.
  - Neither of these plans would cover the instances that have occurred at MSCS, i.e., one to three students withdraw during the summer without giving sufficient notice or cause.

- Another option would be to find an entity that would do low-interest, 3<sup>rd</sup> party loans to parents on payment plans. Currently MSCS offers the payment plan with no interest.
- It does not appear that tuition insurance or low-interest loans are appropriate at this time.

### **Faculty Report**

- All classrooms are busy and learning and there have been a number of field trips by various classes.
- Ellie is here this week providing Montessori training via classroom observations followed by consultations with individual teachers. Her assistance is personalized to each teacher's needs. It is very helpful but also quite intense for the teachers.

### **Executive Director's report**

- Parent/Staff/Community Pulse:
  - Parent conferences will begin on Monday, November 12.
  - In addition to Ellie's classroom visits, Michael is also doing classroom observations.
  - There is fairly continuous feedback from parents, typically one or so each day. These are primarily positive comments and interactions.
  - MSCS was well-represented at the local Halloween Festival and Sesame Street activities. There were numerous positive comments about recent Transylvania Times articles. MSCS continues to build positive awareness in the community.
- Recruitment/Retention Update:
  - MSCS enrollment is now 84 with the addition of a new Owl and Monarch.
  - Michael will follow up on other potential enrollees around the first of the year.
  - The "Create" video was recently released.
- Other School Matters:
  - The NC Board of Education visited MSCS on Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> to review health requirements. The visit was brief and positive.
  - The Fire Marshall also inspected MSCS this month and all was well.
- Fund-raising Activities
  - TAG planning is in progress and the committee is pursuing sponsorships at this time.
  - Trade for Tots clothing consignment was held on Saturday, October 6 from 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and netted \$1,440.25.
  - Friends of Mountain Sun letters will go out this coming week. Dilshad requested that each board member submit names and write a personal note on the letters to their names.

### **Finances**

- Both monthly and quarterly financial updates were shared. The school's cash position is strong and the debt repayment plan is healthy at this time.
- Given the improved financial balance based on additional enrollment, Michael is considering the possible addition of a part-time staff person to help with reading in the Acorn class after the first of the year.

### **Policies to Add to the Parent Handbook**

- A written policy is needed to address early admission if a student is younger than 3 years old. The importance of students continuing through the 3-year cycle (ages 3, 4 and Kinder) was discussed to ensure that the whole child has time to mature and progress physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally. It was also decided to add a specific birthdate, e.g., November 1, that a student must reach before enrollment and that parents express the intent that their child to complete the 3-year Primary cycle. Parents may petition for early entry of their child, and the classroom teacher and

Executive Director will assess such requests. The Board is committed to supporting the Executive Director and classroom teacher's decisions in these cases since student placement/promotion is not a Board decision.

- The written policy on lice will be updated. Michael discussed the particulars included in the following and the Board agreed to this more current policy information.

### **HEAD LICE**

MSCS generally follows the most recent recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

If a child is identified with lice, the parent will be notified. It is preferred for the child to be picked up from school. Please notify your child's teacher if you are aware of lice on your child or in your household. In concurrence with accepted current protocols, children are not restricted from school attendance due to head lice. However, children should be treated with an effective treatment (e.g., Vamousse) before returning to school. We also encourage parents to reach out to their pediatrician for advice on diagnosis and treatment. Parent efforts in this regard will help prevent spreading. If a case of lice is identified in your child's classroom, you will be notified via email by the classroom teacher. For more information, please see:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/135/5/e1355>.

### **Next meeting**

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, December 5.

*The meeting continued into closed session.*

*The meeting reconvened in open session.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.*