

Town Hall Agenda
Mountain Sage Community School
6:30-8:30 pm

What Does it Mean to be a Community School?

Call to Order: 6:37pm. Attendance: Hillary Mizia, Amy DeVries, Ariel Witt, Liv Helmericks, Tim Weinmann, Nancy Sexton, Jon Pointer (excused absent) and about 13 guests

Welcome and Introductions

- The Board introduced themselves and so did the audience members since we were such a small group.

State of the School

- Successes
 - Liv: update on growth since last summer
 - construction: We had construction on the classrooms upstairs this summer for our new Middle school.
 - faculty and staff: Liv highlighted the progress of some of our programs and projects the faculty and staff have made possible: nature based after care, positive behavior value system, middle school, environmental education, woodworking, and choir. It was noted that Mrs. Widom has moved into the Kindergarten teacher role and is unable to fulfill our faculty rep role any longer.
- Challenges
 - Hillary:
 - financial sustainability: Hillary discussed that Charter School PPR (per pupil revenue) is used for the facility rental as well as payment for access to other Poudre School District tools and services that a traditional school would not have to include in the budget. MSCS needs help from the within our school community as well as the greater Fort Collins community. Another very large need is the ability to pay all our staff more.
 - parent involvement: MSCS cannot reach it's full potential without parent involvement. Please share the following information on Fund Development with other parents.

Board of Trustees Fund Development Strategy

- Overview: Hillary presented the Board's new 5 prong Strategy for Fund Development which focuses on many ways to generate revenue for Mountain Sage.
 - School Life: Tim discussed the School Life piece of the Strategy. He will hold an engagement table at gatherings, a silent auction at Winter Faire, and a summer fundraiser event. The Fundraising sub-committee is looking for anyone wanting to help out. A question was asked about whether Scrip would be represented at the engagement table and other easy options to raise money for the school. Yes! A question was asked about promoting scrip at the front desk. Liv will look into that. It was announced that the Board will be running the silent auction at the Winter Faire. Many ideas for silent auction items were discussed. The focus of the School Life piece is to promote our community and get to know each other a bit more.
 - Grants: Amy discussed the Grants piece of the Strategy. She will be looking at a list gathered by the Board of possible Grants to apply for. We are looking for Grants that our school naturally aligns with and Grants that offer large dollars. All leads for possible Grants to pursue, resources, time, and information offers will be happily accepted. Amy will be starting the Grant path for the Board, but it may be a bit more than can be handled by an all volunteer Board. MSCS will be looking at the possibility of hiring a Fund Development Coordinator.
 - Infrastructure: Ariel discussed the Infrastructure piece of the Strategy. The focus is on how to raise revenue. Ariel will be looking at best practices from other charter schools, a homeschool program, a lunch program, and the possibility of hiring a Fund Development Coordinator. A question was asked about renting out the space? It has been looked into and is a possibility. Fees in addition to school supply fees were discussed.
 - Donor Development: Hillary discussed creating relationships and asking people for large dollar donations. The Board will focus on friend-raising and setting up a database for reaching out. School tours and follow up questions about what resonates with people will help to stimulate donations. Parents were asked to bring in anyone who might be interested in visiting and supporting the school. A question was asked about where Estate planning and the Foundation would fit. That would fall within Donor Development .
 - Other: Hillary also discussed other ways to bring in revenue for

Mountain Sage. A discussion about the possible restructure of our lease agreement was had. Tim is working with other charter schools in Fort Collins on a potential bond. And because our Board is only comprised of 5 voting members right now, we will be looking for 2-3 additional Board members. Five volunteer Board members is a small force for such lofty goals and we need more help. We are looking for people with board experience; preferably school board experience.

- Question and Answer: A suggestion regarding parent involvement was to impress upon the parent body the actuality of the PPR and additional charter school burdens. A suggestion regarding fees was asking for volunteer hours in lieu of extra fees. A question was asked about having a school store with logoed items for promotion of the school. The Board is working on that. A suggestion was to send home request slips from each class for what a family can donate to. A discussion about parents being accountable for volunteer hours was had. A suggestion was to recognize volunteers. A discussion about making parents aware of how much money many people pay to get this amazing education was had. A suggestion of a Festival video was had to help parents understand what the Winter Faire is and how they can help.

What Does it Mean to Be a Community School?

- What do you think it means to be a community school: Hillary asked the attendees what they thought it meant to be a community school. Some answers were:
 - A place to nurture. Strong volunteers. Parents are active participants. Shared values. Conscious choice. Get to know each other. Small. Whole child. Relationship with child's teacher. Outdoor time. Connecting to greater community. Sense of place. Bigger picture of compassion. Response to community need and desire. Same songs and blessings in the home. Village to raise these children. Undirected free time. By the community for the community. Change and enlightenment. Creativity and freedom. Brain development. A suggestion was to use these quotes on our website.
- School needs and how you can help: Liv shared her top 5 time and talent

needs.

1. Involvement with children at home.
2. Festival life.
3. Building relationships and getting to know people.
4. Parent Council and SAC.
5. Voluntary cooperation in the parking lot.... Be safe and responsible.
And this includes building our bike and walk culture.

- Question and Answer: Hillary asked the attendees to think about and share thoughts on how they could help. Attendees were given a few minutes to think about this while we watched the school video.

Ideas were: To energize volunteers with recognition. A wet felting project with all the grades. An offer to Hike with a ranger for the silent auction. To gather auction ideas from a successful Church auction and connect with class parents. An offer of Hoop lessons for the silent auction. A request for testimonials to be shared on our website. A table at the Winter Faire for art supplies as gifts and some MSCS schwag. An offer to hold a child development evening. A promise to stay committed to biking to school. A promise to stay committed to volunteering in the classroom. An offer of a family meal for the Silent Auction. There was a question about the possibility of a Food program. The Board will be looking into this, but has no information on it at this time.

8:20 pm: Close