

Board Business Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2021, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Location

Mountain Sage Community School
2310 East Prospect Road, Suite A, Fort Collins, CO 80525

A. Opening, 6:00 p.m.

A1. Call to Order

Beau B. called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

A2. Attendance & Introductions

- Present: Beau Bump, Stephane Cosby, Ashley Haas, Liv Helmericks, Bryan Kimbell, Eric Richardson, Nancy Sexton (faculty liaison), Rachael Sudhalter, Hillary Mizia
- Late:
- Absent:
- Guests: Chris West

A3. Our Mission: [Cultivating the Creative Mind](#)

Eric R. read our school Mission.

A4. Public Comment (3 minutes per person, Limit 20 minutes total)

No public comments.

B. Preliminary Matters, 6:15 p.m.

B1. Approve Minutes from Prior Board Meeting ([8/24](#))

MOTION: Director Beau B. moved to approve the minutes, Ashley H. seconded.

VOTE: Unanimously approved.

B2. Call for Late Additions to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

B3. Approve Meeting Agenda

MOTION: Beau B. moved to approve the agenda, Ashley H. seconded.

VOTE: Unanimously approved.

C. Board Education

C1. This month's presenter: Stephane Cosby

C1.1 - Topic: Vaccines, mRNA, and COVID

D. Regular Business, 6:30 p.m.

D1. Consent Agenda (Confirm Consent Designation)

D1.1 Policy Review (i.e. no discussion, if item pulled move to bottom of D):

D1.1.1 - School Policy Review: [GDQB](#), [GDQD](#), [IGA](#), [IGD](#)

MOTION: Director Eric R. moved to approve the school policies on the consent agenda, Bryan K. seconded.

VOTE: Unanimously approved.

D2. Review [Strategic Plan](#)

- Each committee/responsible party to review the Strategic Plan for their areas, make any updates from the Next Steps and right. Prepare to discuss changes made and any suggestions for changes at any higher level at the next board meeting on 10/26.

D3. School Director's Report (6:47pm)

D3.1 COVID Update

- Last week there was another COVID update from the Department of Public Health.
- We had two classes in pre-outbreak status. We are out of pre-outbreak status for one class. The school communicates with individual classes for pre-outbreak status. The other class will be out of pre-outbreak status on 9/30.
- Contract tracing ramps up if you are in pre-outbreak or outbreak status.
- Volunteers - If a volunteer tests positive they are counted towards your status.
- Masks indoors, no masks outdoors.
- Encouraging eating outdoors, though that may be more challenging as the season changes.
- The number of positive cases so far have been manageable. Parents have typically self-quarantined.
- It's possible if a class has 50% of class missing due to required quarantine or positive test status that a class would have to be switched to remote learning for that class.
- Pre-outbreak seems to follow a progression (it hasn't been sudden). Remote learning would focus on core content, not specials.
- Hillary has been keeping the school's COVID page.
- Director Haas wanted to acknowledge that the staff have been great.
- The District has a contract tracing, but so far MSCS has not been included in that.
- There has been some confusion around antigen testing. Two negative tests in a row are required before a return to school, but that is if people are already testing weekly. For now at-home tests are not being accepted. The situation continues to evolve.

- The school is trying to consider the baseline for individual students when it comes to symptoms. For example a student with a history of allergies, that would be taken into consideration.

D3.2 Staff, Students, and Parent Update

- We need substitute teachers. It's difficult to find substitutes and COVID has complicated that due to COVID-related quarantine or symptoms.
- Will have a facilities related position posted soon. It's difficult to hire. The added stress makes retention more of a challenge as well.
- Director Helmericks showed the Board the "Chain of Success" made up of links in the colors of the schools four pillars, which students get to add to when they exhibit helpful behaviors.
- We still have children joining the school as we approach the October count.
- We cannot currently hold a school-wide event in our space which is why the Harvest Festival was changed to Friday, October 1st, as an at-school event. The staff really wanted to preserve the festival in some capacity, including the Dragon pageant.
- Parent circle revitalization.
 - There were a handful of parents at the last meeting. It's still a very different feeling than pre-COVID times.
 - Want to focus on building classroom communities.
 - Winter Warmth Drive
 - Discussions about Lantern Walk. Because it's a smaller group it still seems like a possibility.
 - Discussions about Winter Faire

D3.3 Unified Improvement Plan

- Due October 15th
- Another SAC meeting on October 6th.
- We don't have test results from last year, so it's difficult to focus on test performance.
- Focus on professional development and student support.

D3.4 Enrollment

- Enrollment has been going up, though not likely to get to the levels to meet budget estimates it is getting better.
- Kristen Hundley has taken over enrollment coordination.

D3.5 Fund Development- Thoughts from the Admin Team

- Nancy S. - River Song did their last gala as a virtual event and had their best results ever.
- Friends of Mountain Sage is not yet set up as a 501(c)3.
- We are still trying to recruit for the Board, so it's challenging to think about recruiting for a Foundation.
- Hillary Mizia

- Friends of Mountain Sage as a Foundation is in the works. Working with legal counsel now.
- Genesis of the Foundation
 - As a school we can accept donations, but there are limitations for large-scale fundraising.
 - A separate organization as a 501(c)3 can do things the school cannot do.
 - It needs to operate as its own independent 501(c)3 organization with its own Board.
 - Focus on donor development/cultivation and large donations.
 - Can pursue grants.
- Four Tiers
 - Foundation - large dollar amounts
 - Operational - School grants that need to be done by the school.
 - All-Community Fundraising Events - Spring Into Our Future for Vans, Gala's, etc. As much about networking as they are about the money because they have not traditionally raised a large amount of money.
 - Parent Direct - Scrip, Milk Caps, recurring donations, ... some of which are a very small return for the effort involved.
- If anyone has any ideas for Fundraising we should work with Hillary
- Probably will want to focus on something in Spring.
- All the money raised for the Destination Exploration is still there.
- Beau B. - The question of where ownership for this lies. It's an important question and one that we cannot let fall to the wayside.
- Grants - We need people to do grant research. We could apply for more grants if we were aware of more opportunities. Liv pays attention to grant information coming from the Colorado League of Charter Schools. Liv thinks we should look at the BEST grant related to our building needs. Liv feels like a grant researcher needs to be tied to the program to understand what grants apply. Hillary - If we were going to spend money on something I don't think it would be a grant writer. A lot of the grants we would apply for you cannot include grant writer fees.
- Possibly a board subcommittee could focus on researching grants.
- We have had some success applying for and getting grants. Grants have to fit into the strategic picture and be worth the effort.
- Beau B. - It feels like it is important that we have some kind of sub-committee to focus on at least some aspects of fundraising. Maybe not the same structure as before, but something.
- Ashley H - Feel like the Facilities Committee should take a look at potentially owning the BEST grant.

- AI: Beau B - Formulate scope of new Board subcommittee focused on strategic financial support development.

D3.6 Miscellaneous

D4. Committee Updates

D4.1 - Finance Committee Update ([report](#))

Committee Chair: Bryan Kimbell - Treasurer

D4.2 - Facilities Committee ([report](#))

Committee Chair: Ashley Haas

Ashley H: It would be helpful if we could graph the student population on a map.

D4.3 - School Accountability Committee Update ([report](#))

Committee Chair: Rachael Sudhalter

D4.4 - Logistics Committee Update ([report](#))

Committee Chair: Rachael Sudhalter

D4.5 - Policy Discussion

D4.5.1 - PSD Policy Updates (through 8/24/2021): [Summary](#)

D4.5.3 - Policy Review: [IGDA](#), [IGF](#), [IGF-R](#), [IHA](#)

D5. Scheduling Matters

D5.1 Items of the Month (see [Board calendar](#))

D5.1.1 - First draft of audit to PSD

D5.1.2 - Review School Performance Framework & results from spring CMAS

D5.1.3 - Determine open number of board seats for election

D5.2 - Colorado League of Charter Schools [2021 Leadership Conference](#): Monday, October 11, 2021 9am - 3pm

D5.3 - Review [Upcoming School Calendar Events](#), Board Member Attendance

D6. Miscellaneous

E. Closing, 8:30 p.m.

E1. Review Action Items

E2. Call for Final Comments

E3. Move to Adjourn

Beau B. adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

E4. Closing Verse:

*Steadfast I stand in existence.
With certainty I tread life's path.
Love I cherish in the depths of my being.
Hope I place in every deed.
Confidence I place in every thought.*

*These five guide me through existence.
These five guide me to the goal.*