

LCEFC/RMDS Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 4, 2009
1921 Youngfield St.
Golden, CO 80401
APPROVED

Present: Eileen Kratzer (President)
Stephanie Carson (Staff Representative)
Amy Novotny (Treasurer; Staff Representative)
Lisa Hann (Educational Representative)
Steve Hoefer (Business Representative)
David Wilcox (Vice President)

Absent: Michael Germano (Community Representative)
Christine Pendley (Secretary; Parent Representative)

Guests: Janet Dickinson (RMDS Director)
Gwen Walton (RMDS Secretary)

Interpreters: Darlene Ensenat, Tricia Frank

Proceedings: Meeting called to order at 6:13pm by President, Eileen Kratzer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the Board meeting on 4/9/09 have been corrected. Corrections to the 4/30/09 minutes included correcting the spelling on Becky Konjevod's last name, removing the statement that David Wilcox suggested Cliff Moers as the next Board President, and adjusting the suggestion that Jenny Lin be a parent representative to a community representative. Corrections to the Town Hall minutes included adjusting the statement that there will be 19 students in the Middle School next year to 20 students, adding the statement that RMDS will have to raise between 12%-20% of the building fund if we receive the BEST Grant, and clarifying that the Walton start up grant is not a State grant.

Amy N. moved to approve the minutes as corrected for 4/9/09, 4/30/09, and 5/19/09
Steve seconds
No discussion
Motion passes.

Public comments: Eileen K. reported Diana Hart, previous RMDS Board Treasurer, has slowly been paying back the money she stole from RMDS. The state is garnishing her wages. But her allotted time to pay back the sum has expired and the conditions of her sentence are that she go to jail. But in a recent case, a judge gave her a continuation of time to pay RMDS back. This situation is better for RMDS. She has paid \$1307 back of the \$5000 she stole.

Staff Restructuring Concept: Amy reported that the staff had a lengthy discussion about the proposal, and the staff felt worn out and that it was not necessary to decide on the issue immediately. The staff decided to revisit the issue in the fall.

Director's Report: Janet provided members with a written copy of her report and emphasized important topics.

Summer Camp. There are 16 students registered for summer camp. The youngest is 5 and the oldest is 13. There are 2 or 3 students from outside RMDS. The deadline to register is next week, Wednesday. There are two staff members and one volunteer leading the camp. RMDS are very excited to host this camp.

Assessment Results:

- Reading - students averaged an 8 months gain. That is extremely good and rare for deaf students. RMDS had good writing results as well. The rubric shows significant progress from Basic to the Low Proficient range. There was also a lot of success with paragraph structure thanks to the Step Up to Writing curriculum.
- Math – The results were odd. The stats showed an average of 9-month gain and 4-month gain in the procedures category. This indicates that RMDS needs to focus on word problems next year.

Learning Center Proposal: Janet D. and Alison T. base the proposal on the recent steering team meeting and in-depth discussion.

The proposal includes the following:

- Adjusted tuition rate to encourage full time attendance.
- Higher tuition rate to increase revenue. Janet D. made sure the rate is still competitive
- Excuses ½ tuition in August and December to encourage attendance (higher tuition other months to balance revenue.) Last year attendance dropped in December
- Increased hours to 7:30 – 4:30 to promote recruitment of students with working parents. RMDS will not need to increase staff
- No free services for RMDS staff
- Staff Discount Rate =20% but no discount for drop in rates
- The Learning Center calendar averages 20 days (or more) of services per month. This accounts for shorter months in November and March.
- Toddler program will change to a 4 day program

The preschool will become a 5-day week, half-day program. In the past it was 4 days a week, but RMDS had the Early Years programs on Fridays. Next year the preschool teacher will not be able to do Early Years. The vision is that on Fridays, Terri Bazalewski-Austin will lead the Early Years on Friday morning while completing billing and administration work in the afternoon. Yessica would take over the older group at this time. If the students are 2 ½ years of age or above, they can join the preschool age on Friday.

Janet reported that the cut off date to turn 3 years old and enter the preschool is October 1st. The LC program allows 2 ½ had any time, but the programs are required to change to

curriculum and meet specific room requirements for the older children. RMDS can make these adjustments on Fridays by doing a more advanced curriculum for the 2 1/2 year olds on that day. The budget for Early Years can go toward paying Terri thus helping the Learning Center budget slightly.

- Staffing will be reduced by 4 hours per week.
- The LC lead Teacher will have one ½ day a week to complete grants, billing, PR and required licensure documentation. This will significantly reduce time requirement for RMDS staff. Can't add the LC to existing administration duties.
- Planned Aggressive Advertising: Terri will take responsibility for PR. They will organize their own fundraising events.

Janet met with both Yessica and Terri. They are aware that changes need to be made to keep the program. They seemed open and positive. Janet D. passed out the Learning Center Calendar for 2009-2010. Regarding the question of if the LC should be open year round, it would be a problem because the support staff would have to be in the building also.

Learning Center Budget: The bottom line for the program is \$17,000 in the red. The Learning Center needs 2 more students to register in order to break even next year. LC has this tentative enrollment, but it is not yet confirmed.

Board members discussed paying off the Learning Center debt. The RMDS school budget is \$52,092 ahead, but Bill warned that it is not appropriate to use this money to pay off the Learning Center because that would be using special education funding for a public daycare program.

The Board decided that the Larent Clerc Fund would pay back the Learning Center. Eileen suggests that next year the Board watch the LC budget very closely, and seriously avoid going into the red again.

In addition the Board discussed the getting Jeffco's approval to use some of the \$52,000 to put into the Building Fund as a safeguard against possibly losing the Capital Construction Funding next year. Some of the money could also be used to purchase supplies for next year. The remaining money would be paid back to Jeffco for previous deficit. Bill B. supported this proposal and felt it would be a legitimate and viable option.

Amy N. reported that there is about \$35,000 in the Clerc Fund currently. Typically, the balance has been around \$80,000-70,000. Amy N. expressed concern over the decline in funds.

Possible Signing Bonus: Janet D. requested the Board allow her the use of signing bonuses as a negotiating tool. Janet D. reported in the past Pricilla Guteriezza negotiated salaries and CSDB also utilizes signing bonuses between \$2,000 and \$5,000. Janet D. felt that often RMDS cannot compete with outside salaries, and signing bonus can be used to attract employees.

Stephanie C. commented it would be nice for people who are relocating.

Bill clarified that it is a one-time bonus. Bill believes it is a good tool to consider using. For budget purposes, the signing bonus will be in their salary line. Eileen commented that the board is in agreement that Janet should be able to use bonus as a negotiation tool, but a limit needs to be determined. Steve H. felt that \$2,500 is a standard amount, and Bill B. suggested that should have a range that starts at \$0 as sometimes people are local, qualified, and want the job and don't need to offer a bonus. Eileen clarified that not everyone is guaranteed a signing bonus, but Janet would have discretionary power to offer him or her. The Board discussed the potential problem of resentment among staff if the employees discuss with each other who did and did not receive bonuses.

Amy N. moved to allow Janet D to offer a signing bonus up to \$2,500 for relocation and up to \$2,500 for shortage positions.

David W. seconds the motion

No discussion

All in favor

Motion passes.

High School Report: Janet D. will submit a separate charter application. In fact, a lot of the application is already done. Jeffco is encouraging RMDS to apply for start-up grants. Charter application is due August 14, and Janet D. has some availability to get it ready by the 14. Janet reported that next year there would be 4 kids graduating into High School. Janet reported that Jeffco would prefer that a school have one budget, although it could be separate if RMDS wanted. Many parts of this application are done, but it will require time gathering and organizing it all.

Charter Application includes:

Vision mission statements

Evidence of support

- Description of need
- Letters from parents
- Community support

Education Program

- Curriculum course descriptions. (Janet clarified some logistical issues with on-line classes in the High School)
- Report card

Governance Description

Evaluation of pupil performance

Budget and finance report for 5 years

Employees

- Narrative regarding employee classification
- Narrative regarding oversight
- Organizational chart
- Job Descriptions
- Employee Policies
- Professional Development Plan

Insurance Coverage
Parent and community involvement plan
Enrollment policy
Transportation and food services
Facilities
Student discipline plan
Special education report
Dispute resolution process

Suggested Highly Qualified timeline: If a person wants to teach, he or she must be Highly Qualified by Fall 2010 for the High School and Fall 2011 for the Middle School.

Bill B. commented he expects Jeffco to take issue with RMDS's governance policy as they did in the past. Jeffco does not support staff members on the Board.

Bill B pointed out that RMDS can negotiate holding on to the charter if we are not ready to open until 2010. Bill emphasized that this is a lot of work for Janet over the summer. Janet explained that she has a week at a beach house with her family the first week of school. She requested that if she does the charter school application, then she be allowed to take the time off.

Bill commented that it would be a good idea to get feedback on the chances of approval from John Perry, and then get help from League of Charter Schools. If the application is not done right, it may ruin chances of getting a High School in the future. Bill B. suggested that RMDS commit to spending time on the application now even if RMDS doesn't use the application this August.

David W. asked that Janet keep the Board posted about how the process is going during the summer.

Eileen K. moves that RMDS write the charter school application for a High School with the potential to submit it on August 14, 2009, and with the understanding that Janet will do more investigation to assess if it is a possible and reasonable task.

Amy Seconds
No discussion
All in favor
Motion passes.

Amy N. moves that the Board give Janet vacation time during the week of Aug 12-20, 2009, in exchange for the work she will do on the High School Charter Application.

Stephanie C. seconds
No discussion
All in favor

Capital Campaign Update:

Amy moves that the Board enter into executive session to consult with council regarding the proposed contract of Bob Hughes.

Steve seconds the motion

The Board enters executive session at 8:05pm

End of executive session at 8:40pm

Eileen proposed that board wraps up discussion on Bob Hughes contract and make a vote.

Amy moves that RMDS sign the contract with Bob Hughes with the corrections as written with the understanding that he attends and reports to the September and November Board meetings and will be paid from monies in the Building Fund.

David W. seconds the motion.

David W. commented he appreciates that Bob H. has already been working and he's not waiting to find out if he will getting paid.

Eileen K remembered meeting Bob Hughes 9 years ago when he first became bonded to RMDS.

All in favor

Motion passes

Pay Scale:

Eileen reported that Alison reviewed the Jeffco pay scale and adjusted it so that teachers climb the pay scale quicker at RMDS than at Jeffco. RMDS will have smaller raises but more consistent. Amy N. questioned the usefulness of a pay scale if raises depend on the Excess Cost Rate and FTE regardless. The pay scale would always have to be reviewed and possibly changed. If it was not revised every year, then the Jeffco pay scale would be steadily increasing with the costs of living and PERA, and RMDS would get further and further behind. Eileen K. commented that it is more important for new hires. Steve H commented that he agrees it will have to be revisited every year. Lisa H. suggested RMDS follow Jeffco's cost of living increases, and it is important to give the teachers confidence that RMDS has a method and is not arbitrarily picking a number for their salary. Eileen agreed, and suggested approving the scale for the upcoming year 2009-2010, and include on the scale that raises depend on the Excess Cost Rate and FTE with the understanding that the Board will revisit it in the spring. The Board discussed and clarified the meaning of each step and title.

Stephanie C. moves the Board approve the salary schedule for 2009-2010 with the understanding it will be reviewed in the spring.

Amy N. seconds the motion

No discussion

All in favor

Motion passed

Spring Benefit: Eileen reported the date for the Spring Benefit needed to be moved because it conflicts with the CESDA conference. She suggested the Mount Vernon as a

beautiful and possible venue for the event. The Board made the decision to move the Spring Benefit to May 8, 2010. David W. commented that Kay Bohan and other volunteer should be recognized at the event. Eileen K. suggested that the Board hold the discussion of volunteer appreciation until the fall.

Dress Code: There are only a few and very simple changes. Eileen will type up the new policy for the Board to approve in the fall.

Plan for the Board this fall: The RMDS Board needs an Educational Representative. Eileen K. contacted Laura Balzcerek, but she hasn't responded. Laura was involved in ChildFind. The Board also needs a Deaf Community Representative and a Teacher Representative.

Eileen K reported that she had a good conversation with Michael Germano and suggested he step down the Board and find a better way to be involved at RMDS. Michael G. agreed.

Eileen K suggested David W. become the Educational Representative. Anne Marie Baer has applied to be a Community Representative. Jenny Lin never replied to attempts to contact her. Rob is interested in becoming a Community Representative. David W. suspects that Rachel Namain is not interested in a position. Amy N. will contact Kristie Lukowicz.

Eileen and Janet discussed how to make the board more attractive to members. Janet commented that at CSDB Board meeting dinner and drinks are provided, and everything is set up very nicely. The Board is also strict about attendance, and if you miss 3 times, then you are off the Board. John Dickinson takes the meetings very seriously. Information is set out ahead of time, and members make sure they are prepared. Janet suggested paying the mileage for members. Eileen reported all nominees need to attend the August meeting.

Amy N. suggested Rachel Parys could be a good Board member.

Eileen stated she would help through the summer. Eileen explained her personal reason for stepping down from the Board entirely in the fall.

New Board officers need to be decided including President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. David W. may be an interterm President.

Eileen moves to enter executive session for personnel reasons.

Steve H. seconds the motion

The Board enters executive session 9:34pm

Exit executive session at 9:55pm

Eileen K. reported that they feel David W. should not be an interim President because the Board would prefer to have a long term commitment, and there is potential for conflict of interests because David W's wife is an employee at RMDS.

Eileen K. moves to enter executive session to discuss employee evaluations.

David W. Seconds the motion.

Enter executive session 10:00pm

Exit executive session at 11:00pm

Meeting adjourned at 11:00pm