

LCEFC/RMDS Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 24, 2009
1921 Youngfield St.
Golden, CO 80401
APPROVED

Present: Christine Pendley (President; Parent Representative)
David Wilcox (Vice President: Parent Representative)
Stephanie Carson (Staff Representative)
Kelly Baldwin (Staff Representative)
Lisa Hann (Educational Representative)
Rob Gerk (Deaf Community Representative)

Absent: Lara Balczarek (Educational Representative)

Guests: Janet Dickinson (RMDS Director)
Gwen Walton (RMDS Secretary)
Bob Hughes (Hughes Consulting)
Kristin Healy (Parent)
Anne Marie Baer (Community Member)

Interpreters: Lynda Rimmel, Tricia Frank

Meeting called to order at 6:10pm.

Approval of minutes:

A wording change was recommended under the Director's Report to clarify the topic of professional development. The suggested word change is from "writing paragraphs" to "students will respond to texts." There are no other corrections. Minutes approved with correction.

Public Comments:

Kristen Healy introduced herself as a parent of a RMDS student. She is recently involved in the RMDS Capital Campaign.

David Wilcox summarized the Team Meeting Night as small but productive. He described a few strategies for encouraging parent involvement with the Campaign. On October 24th, RMDS will host a Victory Party Breakfast to celebrate the High School Charter - all parents will be invited.

Building Team/Capital Campaign:

Bob Hughes reported on the progress of the Capital Campaign. RMDS plans to submit the BEST Grant soon after January 8th, giving the BEST members time to review the application and RMDS to improve the application prior to the April 8th deadline. Recommendations from the BEST members will be made in June, approved in July, and announced in August. If approved, funds will be made available in March of 2011. Based on this timeline, RMDS may have to secure a bridge loan to begin construction on time.

The Building Committee is working on various components of the campaign. One key factor is foundations. RMDS must raise 1 – 1.2 million dollars. The Boettcher Foundation indicated a willingness to contribute \$230K to \$250K at the back end of the Capital Campaign. There are ongoing discussions with the Daniel’s Fund and the Walton Foundation. The Gates Family Foundation declined our request for consideration.

RMDS may qualify for High School start-up grants. To comply with the US Dept. of Education regulations, it was recommended one sentence be deleted from the enrollment policy.

“The RMDS High School is intended primarily for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. “

Board members discussed the reasons, details and implications of removing this statement. Bob suggested removing it from the application and readdressing it in the charter school contract.

Bob expects good exposure for RMDS due to a newspaper article in the Mile High Newspaper and an article in the Examiner, an online newspaper. Both articles will be linked in e-mail releases by the Colorado League of Charter Schools and the National Charter School Association.

Excess Cost - the formula for RMDS is scheduled for a vote by the State Board of Education in October. The charter friendly members of the State Board of Education have been contacted and asked to support the rate request.

Political Due Diligence - we are seeking political support for our BEST application and also for help on any pending legislation that would affect RMDS. Several legislators want to visit the school in October and November, including Senate President Brandon Shaffer, who is trying to schedule his visit September 29th.

Douglas County Transportation - we are trying multiple approaches to resolve the transportation issue regarding an RMDS student. It looks like progress is being made and we hope to have a resolution shortly.

Capital Campaign Committees - we are getting volunteers for the various capital campaign teams. Teams should all be up and running by November.

Business Support - we have been having one-on-one meetings with a variety of business people about supporting the capital campaign. Several have attended the open houses and we are scheduling private tours as well.

Naming Rights:

It is common for schools to have a policy that identifies that naming rights are discussed and voted by the Board of Directors. Naming Right Policies include topics such as; controversial donations and donor control. It was recommended the Board review the policy Bob has proposed. Members discussed the option of naming in honor of someone as well.

David Wilcox moves to delete the statement “The RMDS High School is intended primarily for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.” from the charter application with the understanding that it will be included in the charter contract.

Kelly Baldwin seconds the motion.

All favor.

Motion passes.

Partnerships:

The BEST Grant encourages partnerships. Some possible partnerships for RMDS are: Global Village, a multi-lingual charter school, and The Children’s Hospital. Janet will follow up with these possibilities with Kelly and David. Bob will write partnerships into the proposed naming policy as well.

Charter Renewal:

Janet reported that she has a draft nearly prepared for the Board to review and provide feedback. She expects to have it prepared mid-October to send out electronically.

Deaf Community Representative Candidate:

Anne Marie Baer met the Board, sharing her background in language acquisition, involvement in the deaf community, and identity as an ASL user. She expressed excitement over the RMDS Capital Campaign. Board members posed questions for Anne Marie regarding her potential position on the RMDS Board as a Community Rep.

Board members discussed the possibility of Anne Marie on the Board. Some staff members had expressed concern of Anne Marie’s philosophy regarding deaf children. Board members were concerned as to how much time she would be able to contribute to the Board. Christine will compose an e-mail and ask for some clarification regarding Anne Marie’s ability to commit before the Board makes a final decision.

Board Directory:

Contact information was collected for the Board Directory. It will be printed and passed out at October’s meeting for the Board’s Handbooks.

Officers:

Lara Balczarek is willing to accept the office of Secretary and Rob Gerk is willing to accept the office of Treasurer. Amy Novotny will provide support to Rob before turning the reigns over to him.

Stephanie moves that Rob Gerk become the RMDS Board Treasurer and Lara Balczarek become the RMDS Board Secretary.

Kelly seconds

No discussion.

All in favor

Motion passes.

Staff and Parent Surveys:

Kelly and Stephanie reviewed the existing staff survey. The statement “*Our school uses staff effectively to promote high academic achievement*” is vague; therefore the answers will be unreliable. The Board decided to rephrase the question to become “*Do you feel you are in the appropriate position to promote high academic achievement?*”

Public Relations Policy:

RMDS is quickly growing and changing. In 2007, a PR Policy was reviewed by the Board but never voted upon. The Board re-visited the draft policy to ensure RMDS has some guidance when handling PR items. Christine consulted with Bill Bethke and presented his suggestions for manageable changes to the policy. For the time being, they suggest changing the *Public Relations Committee* to a *Public Relations Spokesperson* or *Coordinator*. The Board will review the policy and provide feedback at October’s meeting.

There are several existing Facebook pages existing for RMDS with different administrators outside of RMDS. Janet and Christine are working to consolidate, resolve, and centralize this issue.

Director’s Report:

Janet provided Board Members with a written report. She reported on Academics, Outreach and PR efforts, Jeffco’s approval of the RMDS budget that is now at the State Board level, the need to increase student enrollment by 3 to meet current budget, waiver of final transportation costs per Jeffco, and upcoming events.

The Board discussed the possibility of enrolling a hearing student with aphasia whose primary mode of communication is ASL. Board Members felt Janet should assess the child to see if RMDS is an appropriate match.

CSAP Results:

At the end of October, RMDS will find out its accreditation rating. The rate is based on parent satisfaction and CSAP scores. Based on the 07-08 and 08-09 comparisons, Janet feels RMDS will be classified as “High Performing”.

Learning Center Budget:

Total Revenue Expected: \$7,915 (lower because August was half tuition)

Total expenses: \$10,509

Gap: \$2,594

Janet reported the deficit was because Yessica was absent for two weeks in September resulting in paying for a substitute as well as August being half a month for tuition charges. Janet reported the LC is in need of more students. To rectify the deficit, a grant has been submitted to Temple Buell foundation for \$5,000. To help with student enrollment:

- advertisements have been delivered to local audiologists
- advertising for the LC is posted on coloradodeaf.com
- RMDS was represented at booths at CSDB and the Denver Zoo.
- gave tours to 3 potential families

- Improved the program to ensure retention of students
- Terri Bazalewski-Austin serves on the board of Hands and Voices
- Terri is now responsible for all of the billing

Janet made a proposal to set up a Learning Center Budget Oversight Committee. The committee could consist of the LC lead teacher, RMDS Business Manager, and 2 Board Members.

The Oversight Committee would be responsible for:

- Meeting twice a month to review the budget
- Recommending changes to programming to increase revenue
- Help locate and/or write grants
- Report to the RMDS Board

Lisa Hann, Alison Talbot, and Terri Bazalewski-Austin will be the Oversight Committee.

Employment policy:

Section 7.5.2 was reviewed because staff tardiness is an ongoing issue. Some staff are occasionally late while others are perpetually late. The Board discussed the possibility of a personal work schedule, also known as a flex schedule. Staff Representatives will survey the staff about personal schedules. Beginning Monday, September 28, teachers will begin signing or punching in.

Enter into executive session 11:17pm
Executive Session ends at 11:37pm
Meeting Adjourned at 11:37pm