

**Gettysburg Montessori Charter School
Board of Trustees Official Minutes
2/22/18**

Board Members Present

Kathy Johnson, Chair
Jill Clinton, Vice Chair
Tish Weikel, Secretary
Diana Williams, Treasurer
Lieucetia Swain
Becky Uppercue

Board Members Absent

AJ Warner

Others Present

Faye Pleso, CEO

Executive Session

The board met for executive session at 6:40 pm to discuss a student concern and employment related issue, which if conducted in public would violate a lawful privilege or would lead to disclosure of information of confidentiality protected by law. Faye Pleso was invited to attend.

Call to Order

Kathy Johnson adjourned the January 25th meeting and called to order the February 22nd meeting at 7:16 pm.

Introduction of Members and Guests

There were no guests in attendance.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

There was no public comment.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Jill Clinton made the motion to approve the consent agenda as submitted, Lieucetia Swain seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

Chair's Report

Housekeeping: Kathy Johnson reminded everyone of the upcoming final Montessori training for parents and community members on Wednesday, April 11 at 4:00 pm.

Kathy reported that the next newsletter deadline is on March 22. The board decided to include information on upcoming board vacancies, the 2018/2019 budgeting process and the remaining board meeting dates for the school year. Jill offered to draft the newsletter write-up and will send it to Kathy before March 22nd.

Diana plans to attend the Poverty Simulation Event being conducted by SCCAP, Inc. on Tuesday, March 13 on behalf of the board.

Kathy reminded the Governance Committee to begin the preliminary planning for recruiting new board members later this spring, with particular focus on finding additional community members to fill upcoming vacancies. Kathy's term is expiring in August 2018 and two other board members are up for reelection. The goal is to have prospective board members fully vetted by the May or June board meeting so they can be voted in before summer.

Kathy also reminded the Personnel Committee to be going to revise (if necessary) the parent and staff surveys which are administered each spring.

Kathy will submit all the updated bios she has received to Dani so she can update the website.

Finance Committee

Dr. Pleso reported that she has been quoted \$28k for a philanthropy feasibility study. She would rather not spend that kind of money as the return on investment is likely to be relatively small in this area.

She reported having a conversation with Jeff Stouffer from the USDA Rural Business Development Grant & Community Facility Loan & Grant program, and she feels it is going to be the best funding option for GMCS when it comes time to build the addition. The current fixed rate is 3.5% for a 40-year loan. Jeff suggested GMCS pursue the loan because the grants offered are very competitive and max out at \$50k. According to him, a loan in the \$6 to 8 million dollar range seemed like a reasonable loan amount for a school of our size. Faye can get started with the preliminary application and the full application and approval process can take a significant amount of time. She has tentatively invited the USDA reps to the March meeting to give a presentation and answer any questions the board has. As she understands it, the money can be for anything building-related.

Faye has been in touch with one architectural firm and was told that a build out can happen for well less than the \$6 to 8 million loan max quoted by the USDA rep.

Kathy reminded everyone that the choice of an architect will be based on the terms and fees they require and their ability to successfully complete a project in Adams County, not on the initial building estimate offered. Ultimately, the architect will build a building based on our budget constraints and wishes, so the main concern with hiring an architect is the firm's reputation, ability to work within Adams County and the terms requested in the contract.

FY 2018-2019 Budget: The finance committee is starting the preliminary work of preparing the 2018-2019 budget. Dr. Pleso would like to add the following to the budget:

- An instructional coach at a rate of \$45k to \$50k plus benefits, who is Montessori-trained
- A part-time Special Education aide - someone who will help with paperwork
- Two part-time PCA's (increasing the total number to four) for learning center room.
- A part-time ESL teacher to replace the ESL tutor we contract with through the LIU
- Give the classroom aides two additional weeks of paid prep time in the summer
- Typing and Library Science curriculum
- Extra phones for the learning center
- GMCS needs to reevaluate the bussing needs for next year
- Dependent on enrollment, an additional 3rd-4th grade teacher may be needed
- Additional instructional support based on enrollment and tutoring needs
- Dr. Pleso feels it would be beneficial to hire a grant writer at least once to formulate a proposal to present for additional future grant applications; \$4k would be sufficient

Kathy reviewed outline for upcoming budget requirements: the board will have to vote on a final budget by the June meeting at the absolute latest. The goal is to present a preliminary budget at the April

meeting, post a copy of the proposed budget on the website and in the office publically for 30 days, then vote on the final budget at the May meeting, if possible.

Kathy mentioned other wish list items that had been discussed at previous meetings:

- Full-time PE teacher with benefits
- Part-time executive assistant for Dr. Pleso
- Nurse course work certification

Finally, Kathy asked Dr. Pleso about whether additional security features or training are needed at the school. Dr. Pleso will identify any areas that need to be addressed and report back to the board.

Additionally, Kathy reminded the finance committee to begin to work on a policy to give pay increases for current employees who receive advanced degrees.

SOFI Forms: Diana is working to track down all outstanding 2017 SOFI forms and is preparing to submit them to the state.

Administrator's Report

CEO Report:

- Enrollment currently 197: 2 students reported leaving the school due to a long bus ride
- Megan Stough had her baby and her aide, Keri Bechtel, will be covering as a long-term sub. Dr. Pleso is currently looking at subs to fill the aide position.
- Dr. Pleso reported that she is changing the wording on the billboards to say "tuition free" Montessori school.
- Dr. Pleso was contacted by Dr. Ruff to serve on an academic panel at Gettysburg College where she shared information about charter schools and Montessori
- The Hunterstown Ruritan club invited Dr. Pleso to give a talk about GMCS. On March 10th they will be raising money for the school at breakfast.

Programming Update - DIBELS:

- DIBELS: Dr. Pleso reviewed DIBELS test scores from the evaluations conducted in January. Overall results are positive and progress appears to be on track for students.

Preliminary Personnel Recommendations:

- See staffing/budget discussion in Finance Committee section

Hiring Motion for Personal Care Assistant:

- Lieucetia Swain made a motion to hire Kyla Martin as a Personal Care Assistant at a rate of \$14.50/hour with no benefits. Kathy Johnson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Hiring Motion for RtI Position:

- Lieucetia Swain made a motion to hire Amanda Hedrich as an RtI specialist at a salary of \$39,000/year. Jill Clinton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.
- Faye reported that Kyla will start this week, and Amanda is available to start the following week.

New Business/For the Good of the Order

Jazmine Johnson had previously been employed at the school, but was forced to leave because she needed additional hours. Dr. Pleso reported that our current Breakfast and Lunch Servers have put in

their notice, so she has decided to combine those positions and Jazmine is thrilled to return to the school and take on extra hours. Dr. Pleso is recommending Jazmine for those positions.

Diana Williams made a motion to hire Jazmine Johnson as the Breakfast and Lunch Server at a rate of \$10/hour with no benefits. Lieucetia Swain seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjourn

Kathy Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:46 pm.

Approved:



Tish Weikel: Secretary