

**Hill View Montessori Charter Public School
Regular Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 13, 2006**

Board Members Present:

Shaw Rosen, David Kelley, Kelly Martin, Nandesh Palanisamy, Ed Maguire, Ross Povenmire, Peg Roberts (Ex-officio).

Board Members Not Present:

Veronica O'Brien, Paul Accardi, John Michitson.

Other Attendees:

Nancy Parshley, Heidi Steen-Johnsen, Louisette Morin, Laura Castine, Alice Liu (note taker.)

I. Minutes/Schedule

Meeting Began: 6:35pm.

Shaw called meeting to order.

Ed motioned, to accept last month's minutes and the meeting agenda.

Seconded by Ross.

All in favor. None opposed. Motion passed.

Shaw announced that the next Board meeting is going to be on August 10th, 2006.

II. Public Agenda Comment

None.

III. Executive Director Report

Shaw commented that from the Board retreat, there was no academic goal. So it is a good idea for Peg to give a report on benchmark. See Executive Director's (E.D.) Report.

As part of the ED Report, Peg spoke about the progress made on piloting and refining the benchmarks. A discussion about the need for the board and parents to learn more about the benchmarks ensued. The following actions will be taken:

1. Peg will send one complete benchmark for board members as baseline reference.

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Peg continued her E.D. report: School continues to do alignment. Some were revised Based on DOE feedback had to be revised. (ED academic goals #2.)

ED mentioned that even though we don't have any ELL students this year, we might have ELL students next year.

Ed M. commented on great job that latest annual report has measurable goals. Eg. % students met or exceeded. He requested if the board can be informed on bullet basis of the progress of the academic learning.

Peg reported that HVM has hired all our teachers. Waiting for contract to be signed and returned: 3 Lower Elementary teachers, 1 Special Ed teacher, and 1 Upper Elementary teacher. Looking into the art and fitness teacher right now.

Concern about if the newly hired teachers are qualified expressed by a Board member. Peg mentioned that some are in the process of being trained. Melanie, who has a lot of experience, will provide classroom support work and HVM has hired consultant to provide extra support.

When asked about changes in enrollment since report came out, Peg pointed out that one child has moved to western MA, another child's parent orally said not coming back for 06-07.

IV. Old Business

A. Retreat/ Meetings

Shaw reminded board members that board meetings focus on procedural establishment, in depth discussions of details. See Attachment: Retreat Notes from facilitator. Open to comment and discussion.

During discussion, it was suggested that a 6 people representative group team (parents, staff, and board member) be developed to ensure the results of the board retreat be brought back to their constituencies. David stated that the fact that we brought all 3 constituents together is an achievement. We got a good start in terms of the goal. The process has started, but never really will have an ending. It's an ongoing process. Shaw expressed the need to create a task force and to have it occur by September. October meeting would be good time to present a finished set of goals.

David motioned to set up a task force for the retreat goals.

Ed seconded.

Nandesh amended that outcome be a set of "SMART" goals.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Motion passed.

Discussion followed regarding if October would be a good time to be reporting the results and whether waiting until October is too late. Shaw mentioned that we chose to have an all inclusive process.

Ed motioned that the task force personnel be appointed in 30 days.

Ross seconded.

Board members discussed on how long to wait, if there is any needed to include the teachers due to the summer vacation.

Kelly amended that move up the date to have the task force formed to August 9th, before the next board meeting.

3 in favor.

3 opposed.

There's a tie.

Motion not passed.

It was suggested that the task force be given the flexibility as to how they want it to work and when it's done, keeping in mind that the timeline needs to be determined so that it won't get dragged to another June. Parents started to hear about this retreat in April and March. So even November 06 seems far. Some parents were expecting to walk out with goals at the retreat.

David motioned that task force to complete by October.

Ross seconded.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Motion passed.

B. Confidentiality Policy

Shaw asked if there were any questions. David explained that the first read is when Board members provide feedback to the committee. The Trustees Committee was requested to define "confidentiality." Feedback provided will be taken back to the Trustees Committee for consideration.

C. Public Participation Policy revision

It's was pointed out that the current writing seems to indicate that if the person does not sign up, then they cannot speak. A board member asked how a family could connect with the Board if the "formal complaint" requires "in writing according to the complaint Policy." Shaw explained that does not prevent a person to express their opinions and concerns during the meetings. Peg passed out the "Tips" draft that was not included in the package.

V. Break

Meeting reconvened at 8:37pm.

VI. New Business

A. Executive Director Contract

Shaw stated that the contract is the same as the one used last year. Only dates are changed. Therefore, no need to ask for lawyer to re-review the contract. Minor modification is that Peg has requested to roll over 10 days of vacation from 05-06 to 06-07, and just for this year; given that she didn't have chance to take vacation.

David motioned to accept contract as is.

Kelly Martin seconded.

Ed wanted clarification on how the vacation process works for ED.

Peg said that she would notify the Board Chair when she needs to take a vacation.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Motion passed.

B. Approval of Annual Report

Peg stated that there are some minor changes to the draft that the board members have received, and pointed out that the most important part of the annual report is the "Accountability Plan."

Peg pointed out that under Goal A1, Objective A1.1, The Developmental Reading Assessment, that the children have done well both years. We don't show 3rd year data because it's not part of the goal, but we are tracking it. Shaw recommended that given the priority on communication, we should have an orientation for the parents to explain what different assessments are.

David asked if there's something that the parents could "stick it on the refrigerator" for children's progress. Peg stated that they are currently tracked from K-4 in their portfolio.

Shaw we need program to help parents to understand what this is. Ed stated that as an involved parent, he is only familiar with part of the assessment tools used.

Peg said that we are planning to have curriculum night this year, she'll take into account the above mentioned items when planning for those events.

Ross commented that a lot of work went into the annual report. He complimented the work done. Per Peg, Alison will format it and add pictures like last year's annual report. However, the Annual Report cannot go on the website until DOE sends us a letter of approval.

Peg needs to add Executive Summary to the Annual Report, which is a summary of the year.

Shaw noted that no change in content, just minor format suggestion.

David motioned to accept Annual Report.

Kelly seconded.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Motion passed.

C. Committee Assignments

Shaw noted that from the Board retreat, it was noticed that there are “many committees for a small school”. One of the goals is to see if there would be fewer committees needed. It was stated that some committees are meeting quarterly and meeting as needed.

Shaw asked John Michitson and Ed Maguire to join the Retreat Committee, given they are not serving any committee yet.

Peg is planning to reconvene the HR Committee in August. She wanted to polish personnel policy and make recommendations to the Board in the near future.

Audience Lou, Heidi and Board member Ed volunteered to join the HR Committee.

D. Approval of School Calendar

Peg stated that currently there are 179 days schedules on the version of the calendar. Last day of school needs to be June 14th, and the tentative alternative on June 21st. Everything else for the teachers will move up one day too (become “June 15th and June 22nd” as the potential last day for school.)

**Nandesh motioned to accept the 2006-2007 school calendar.
Kelly seconded.**

Discussion:

Nandesh noted that previously HVM used to start couple of weeks earlier than the Haverhill Public Schools.

Peg: we know that the modular won't be ready, so the professional development was front loaded in the beginning. The first 3 days, 23st-25th are just for staff. Peg stated that the modular addition will not be completed before school starts.

Nandesh asked if staff had been taken into consideration. Peg said that she asked the staff and they preferred it.

Peg reflected that parents said that they have to take time off on professional development days, so having professional development before school starts, will help parents.

David: what happens when children only attends half day?

Peg: It counts as a one school day.

David: what's the state law on half days?

Peg: 12 noon release.

Kelly brought up that there were 2 days scheduled for parent teacher conferences to give teachers to have preparation time in previous years.

Peg pointed out that so far the teachers usually ended up making the conference time during one night and one day. The half-days were planned as a “cushion” in case of anticipated modular building construction required the school to close for a day.

Peg brought up that the HVM staff expressed concerns about longer school year. This was one of the reasons leading to teachers not coming back. Rearranging the school year a bit helps to alleviate that concern.

Kelly pointed out that short summer was to help connect the learning from the children's perspective.

Peg stated that to retain staff, we need to compensate them appropriately for longer working year.

Kelly: The founders tried to make small gesture that our school is different. By having a longer year, to explain to future parents the reasons for that difference. They are joining a better school that's different.

David pointed out that we are tied to so much to the availability of the public school transportation for the children. David's experience as year round school, it's a “slow, torturous process.”

Peg: Bus children goes on 3:35 pm, and car children 3:40pm.

Kelly commented on due to the 2 weeks worth of half days planned for the kindergarten students that those children are going to loose one week worth of school.

Peg: Last year, children had 1 week of half-days. However, they couldn't adjust.

Audience: Mrs. Lou Morin interjected that "I had so many pictures of children snoring from the first week of school."

Peg: Arrangements with the bus company have been made so that these kindergartens will have transportation back to home for those first two weeks of half-days.

Kelly asked why the parent conferences are at different time than last year. She felt that the 1st conference is late. 2nd conference is even later in the school year that only about 6 more weeks for children to learn after that. (Jan, April, this year, not as effective). Last year was Dec and March.

Peg said that this was based on discussions with and recommendations by Melanie Wilson, the new MTL.

Shaw took a vote to pass the school calendar:

All in favor.

None opposed.

Motion passed.

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Peg reported that Peg and Shaw went to City Council on past Tuesday, July 11th, 2006. Building lease is ready to be signed. Hope Board gave Peg the authority to sign contracts with minor changes.

David asked about the 2 rooms in current basement, and the availability for them to be functional.

Peg: One room can be made usable if a crash bar is installed on the door. The other room has only one exit so cannot be used for students. We have a qualified parent who is willing to oversee the indoor modifications.

VII. Committees/Fask Forces

A. Site Task Force report

B. PR/Development, Finance and HOPE Joint Meeting

Shaw recommended a joint meeting of PR and HOPE. Kelly suggested that the chairs and any key person to meet first for these 3 subcommittees.

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No Executive session.

No public comments.

David motioned for meeting to adjourn.

Ed seconded.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Meeting adjourned 9:24pm.