

**The Autism Model School
Approved Board Meeting Minutes
November 26, 2013**

Attending: Raj Parikh, Mark Greenblatt, Carl Windnagle, Lisa Marsalek, James Rothschild

Excused: Mary Murray, Edward Cancio, Isaac Demarest

Also Attending: Mary Walters, Director; Kali Kowalski, Receptionist/Recorder of the Minutes; Joel Vidovic, Behavior Management Director; Toni Gerber, Prospective Board Member

Meeting called to order at 5:38 p.m.

I. Welcome and Public Comments

Nothing presented.

II. Board Member Candidate, Toni Gerber: Discussion/Vote

The board discussed the possibility of Ms. Gerber becoming a part of the board. Mr. Rothschild questioned Ms. Gerber on the status of her background check. Ms. Gerber stated that she was having difficulty with the fingerprinting machine reading her fingerprints. However she stated that she has checked with the Ohio Department of Education, and they have advised that her most recent background check completed within the past five years while she was employed as a public school principal should suffice for the purposes of board membership at The Autism Model School

Motion to appoint Ms. Toni Gerber to the board of directors:

1. Mark Greenblatt
2. Lisa Marsalek

Vote: Yes – Unanimous – Greenblatt, Windnagle, Marsalek, Rothschild.

III. Minutes from the October 29, 2013, Board Meeting: Discussion and Approval

Motion to approve the October 29, 2013, Board Meeting Minutes, as written:

1. Mark Greenblatt
2. Lisa Marsalek

Vote: Yes – Unanimous – Greenblatt, Windnagle, Marsalek, Rothschild.

IV. Strategic Planning Exercise.

Ms. Marsalek presented on behalf of the committee. She reviewed and distributed an outline of information compiled from the PEST analysis at the previous board

meeting. *Please see the attached outline which contains information discussed in regards to the SWOT analysis.*

V. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

1. October Budget Reconciliation and Variance Report

Mr. Windnagle reviewed the budget reconciliation and variance report. He stated that the expected income from foundation/student entitlements was deposited in October. No unusual expenses were deducted for the month. Ms. Walters stated that due to the state's changes in their funding formula, the October deposit from the state has not been calculated fully and the state has informed that they expect further reconciliation of deposits with the new state funding formula to be completed in November. She stated she had spoken with a representative from the state who advised her that deposits should have been corrected for November. Mr. Greenblatt went on to review the budget and mentioned that our expenses were slightly lower than previously budgeted, as well as income being slightly higher. He stated that we currently have two months of running costs covered in the bank and we are moving quickly toward our goal to have three months.

Ms. Walters presented a compilation of the school's accounting for the past fiscal year year (GAAP Report) which included some standard balance sheets for reference. Ms. Walters then presented an additional budget she prepared for the board to review in regards to possible budget corrections. After taking into account the new funding formula, Ms. Walters stated the school will receive less in student entitlements. The state applies a category formula for each individual student based upon their specific special education needs. Ms. Walters explained that students are placed into categories based upon the ETR process and we currently have eleven students who do not fit into category six, the state's highest funding category. The new budget categories include facilities funding and limited English proficiency funding which were not categories that were part of past formulas. Mr. Greenblatt brought to the board's attention that the new budget, with the proposed corrections, still shows the school negative \$75,000 by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Walters stated that she does not expect the cash flow to run exactly as budgeted, due to the delay in the state releasing funds and student's home districts disputing their responsibility for our student's educational costs.

Mr. Greenblatt suggested the school could consider a strategy of looking at class size and instructional aides, but that this could be part of strategic planning exercises.

Mr. Parikh suggested that we use our low interest line of credit to pay off the remainder of the loans held with the dealership for up to six of our vans. He asked the finance committee to review the possibility for this. Mr. Windnagle mentioned they should research any penalties for early payoff of the loan and check whether or not the interest is simple or compounded.

Mr. Rothschild proposed postponing any budget changes until the December board meeting when the budget is typically reexamined.

Mr. Parikh asked the board to further deliberate staff salary increases so that it could be brought to the table at the December meeting, as well.

2. Federal Grant Funds

Ms. Walters informed the board that what she had through was an approved CCIP application was actually sent back for revisions from the federal level and that this had never happened before. She indicated the CCIP had just yesterday been approved at the federal level.

3. Other

Ms. Walters presented to the board that in previous years, the board had approved giving holiday gift cards to all of the school's staff, van drivers, and the maintenance crew, employed by the Parish.

Motion to give all staff, van drivers contracted by Autism Model School and the maintenance workers employed by St. Clement Parish who are performing services for the school a \$100.00 gift card each as a holiday bonus:

1. James Rothschild

2. Lisa Marsalek

Vote: Yes – Unanimous - Greenblatt, Windnagle, Marsalek, Rothschild.

B. Director's Report

Ms. Walters presented her report for the month of October. She stated that she has asked teachers who have been taking on additional responsibilities, with respect to classrooms with new teachers or without teachers, to fill out time sheets for their additional work. Ms. Walters made calculations dividing the teacher's salary into an hourly rate in order to recommend what she feels we should compensate these teachers for their team work.

Motion to compensate both teachers mentioned in the director's report as Ms. Walters recommends for their additional work to date, and to continue to compensate them for their hourly work in the future until such time as their additional work ceases:

1. *Carl Windnagle*
2. *Mark Greenblatt*

Vote: Yes – Unanimous - Greenblatt, Windnagle, Marsalek, Rothschild.

Ms. Walters reviewed with the board the meeting that she and Becky Knapp, Job Training Coordinator attended with Leadership Toledo in regards to installing a bike path on the school's property. She stated that The Parish has approved this possibility and she will keep the board informed of any new information.

Motion to approve the October New Hires and Resignations as presented in the Director's Report:

1. *Mark Greenblatt*
2. *Lisa Marsalek*

Vote: Yes – Unanimous - Greenblatt, Windnagle, Marsalek, Rothschild.

Ms. Walters stated that due to the Superintendent of the Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities resigning, the existence of the Best Practices Committee is in jeopardy. Ms. Walters reviewed with the board the status of a few grants she is researching the possibility of writing. She stated she has recently attended the Toledo Grant Writers meeting to gain more knowledge of grant writing and found it very informative.

a. Educational Program/Curriculum Report

Ms. Walters reviewed Chris Kopp's new project regarding IIS. This training will help teachers to further develop curriculum for their students. Mr. Kopp is presenting to the staff tomorrow during the teacher work day. Ms. Walters believes it will be extremely helpful for both our teachers and our students. It fits well with the direct instruction curricula already implemented. She states that several key staff members are already impressed with the capabilities of the system and will keep the board updated on its use within the school.

b. Job Training Program Report

Nothing to present at this time.

c. Strategic Planning Committee: SWOT Exercise

Please see the attached outline of information covered.

d. Policies and Procedures Committee

Nothing to present at this time.

VI. Old Business

Nothing presented.

VII. New Business

Nothing presented.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 7:07 p.m.:

1. *Mark Greenblatt*
2. *Lisa Marsalek*

Vote: Yes – Unanimous – Greenblatt, Windnagle, Marsalek, Rothschild.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2013, at 6:00 p.m.

Autism Model School

S.W.O.T. Analysis Exercise

November 26, 2013

Strengths

1. WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE
 - a. Persistent research and data collection in many areas of the school
 - b. Brainstorming with PEST and SWOT exercises
2. KNOWLEDGABLE AND PASSIONATE INSTRUCTORS, STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS
 - a. Dedication to our students and determination to exceed expectations
 - b. Experience and training necessary for all facets of daily operations of the school and the education of disabled students, especially autistic students
3. UNIQUE AND SUSTAINABLE CURRICULUM
 - a. Direct Instruction programming tailored for each individual student
 - b. PAES Lab Program and job training available for students
4. FACILITY AND RESOURCES OFFERED
 - a. Large school campus
 - b. Affiliation/cooperation with various autism foundations in the area
5. FINANCIAL STABILITY
 - a. Continued stability of our fiscal situation
 - b. Knowledgeable finance committee
6. ENROLLMENT STABILITY
 - a. School enrollment is at maximum capacity, with a steady waiting-list at all times

Weaknesses

1. CLASSROOM SIZE
 - a. ODE limits our classroom size according to students' disabilities, we are running out of room to grow
2. FINANCIAL INFLEXIBILITY
 - a. Limited financial resources to increase compensation for staff
3. EXCESSIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 - a. Executive Director has too many roles throughout the school, time could be used more effectively
4. TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS ALL OVER LUCAS COUNTY
 - a. Large area, not cost-effective
5. LACK CONTROL OF FACILITY
 - a. Under lease with the Parish, inability to make final decisions regarding property
 - b. Lack of security with lease expiration and unstable state of the Parish
6. PUBLIC RELATIONS/MARKETING
 - a. The public does not know who we are and the amazing things we do
7. LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION PLAN
 - a. None currently in place

Opportunities

1. PURSUE PRIVATE GRANT REVENUE
2. RESEARCH GRANTS AVAILABLE
 - a. Life Skills/Job Training
 - b. Technology
3. OFFER INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS TO LOCAL UNIVERSITIES
4. PUBLIC RELATIONS/MARKETING
 - a. Build a greater social media presence
 - b. Become more active in the community
5. PRIVATE FUNDRAISING
 - a. Parent-Teacher Association of volunteers to increase parent involvement
 - b. Extracurricular programming and events
 - c. Social activities for students and their families
6. ESTABLISH A FOUNDATION FOR THE SCHOOL
 - a. Offer jewelry made by students, coffee mugs, t-shirts for sale
 - b. Set up donation page on the school's website
 - c. School "Store" on website
7. EXPANSION OF BUILDING TO ACCOMMODATE MORE STUDENTS
 - a. Modular classroom buildings
8. OFFER IN-HOME SERVICES TO AREA FAMILIES
9. OFFER CONTINGENCY SERVICES TO LOCAL BUSINESSES
 - a. Training to educate enforcement and other agencies on autism

10. COLLABORATE WITH BUSINESSES IN THE AREA

- a. Lucas County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- b. Great Lakes Autism Collaborative
- c. Autism Society of Northwest Ohio
- d. Autism Speaks

11. TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT THROUGH STUDENT'S "HOME" DISTRICTS

12. POSSIBLE TAX BREAKS AVAILABLE WITH NEW LEGISLATION

13. NEGOTIATE WITH THE DIOCESE FOR FIRST RIGHT OF REFUSAL IF THEY DECIDED TO SELL

Threats

1. CUTS IN FUNDING FROM STATE, FEDERAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES
2. CHANGES IN LEGISLATION
 - a. State of Ohio's reimbursements rates
 - b. Funding formula
 - c. Health care
 - d. Charter school definition and surrounding legislation
3. OUTSIDE LOBBYING FOR ACCEPTANCE OF ALL STUDENTS
 - a. Deteriorates our ability to use evidence based practices and implementation of curriculum
 - b. Hurts the education of our students
4. TEACHER SHORTAGE
 - a. Less people entering the field of special education
5. LACK OF COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION
 - a. Financial inflexibility to increase staff salaries
6. FACILITY LOSS
 - a. Possibly closing of the St. Clement's Parish
 - b. End of lease
7. DISPUTES FROM "HOME" DISTRICTS REGARDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
 - a. Hinders Ohio Department of Education's reimbursement
8. UNFORSEEABLE LITIGATION