

The Autism Model School  
Board Meeting Minutes  
April 21, 2020  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Attending:** Toni Gerber, Mark Greenblatt, Lisa Marsalek, Raj Parikh, Bruce Weinberg, Linell Weinberg

**Excused:** Ed Cancio, Isaac Demarest, James Rothschild

**Also Attending:** Mary Walters, Director; Catherine Moore, Administrator 2 /Recorder of the Minutes; Joel Vidovic, Behavior Management Director; Mary Cornell, Assistant Behavior Management Director; Luke Reed, Developmental Director; Jessica Bair, Sponsor Representative - ESC Lake Erie West

**Meeting began at 5:32 PM**

I. Welcome and Public Comments

- Nothing presented.

II. Minutes

- From the March, 2020 board meeting. Discussion and approval.

**Motion to approve the March 17, 2020 minutes as written:**

**1. Mark Greenblatt**

**2. Lisa Marsalek**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Cancio, Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Rothschild, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

III. Standing Reports

a. Financial Report

i. March, 2020 Financials—budget & variance reports.

- The Board reviewed and discussed the March, 2020 budget & variance report.
- Massa, based on what he has heard so far, informed the board that the state will not make any adjustments

whatsoever for FY20; going into FY21 there is less certainty with possible midterm correction. It is anticipated that there will be some reduction in funding for next year by community schools and traditional districts as well. We're not ordering anything anymore or driving the vans, so those costs are way down; the only thing we're paying on the vans is the finance payments.

- Walters said that Rothschild had previously suggested seeking a liability discount from our auto insurance company. The vans are currently in park and we should get a substantial discount for that. Julius Walker is using one van to run errands for the school.
- The board discussed the safety and status of the vans. Greenblatt asked if the vans were secure and L. Weinberg wanted to know if the tanks had been filled with gasoline prices as low as they are. Walters replied that Walker was monitoring the vans regularly and that she would ask him to be sure to fill the tanks.

**Motion to approve the March, 2020 Financials:**

**1. Linell Weinberg**

**2. Toni Gerber**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

ii. Health Insurance Renewal

- Walters let the board know that when we shopped it out, UHC and Aetna refused to offer a quote and we're still waiting on quotes from two other insurers; the open enrollment period is in May.
- Greenblatt and Walters will form a committee to review the offered rates and select a health insurance plan for 2020-21.

**Motion to enlist Walters, Greenblatt, and a potential third person to select a health insurance plan before the current plan expires:**

**1. Mark Greenblatt**

**2. Lisa Marsalek**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

**b. Sponsor Representative Report**

- i. Bair provided updates on the virtual learning opportunities through the state and the ESC.
- ii. There are no red flags to report from the monthly financial review.
- iii. The ESC is in contact with ODE regarding year round schooling; Bair said ODE replied, "We will need to wait and see the actual order regarding school closure" via e-mail. This is what we are being advised.
- iv. Bair reminded the board that Sunshine Laws training is due at the end of the month.
- v. Asked if the school should approve a calendar for next year, without knowing when students will be allowed to return, Bair recommended approving the calendar because virtual learning will continue, regardless of when the students return to the school building.
- vi. B. Weinberg and Bair discussed the difficulty in obtaining background checks while the state is under Stay at Home orders.

**c. Policies and Procedures****i. FY 2021 School Calendar**

- The calendar is presented as is (the original draft) because we have not resolved any of the issues previously discussed.

**Motion to approve the FY2021 School Calendar, as originally written without the compliance dates:**

**1. Lisa Marsalek**

**2. Toni Gerber**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

**ii. Current year Teacher Evaluations (OTES) (suggested motion)**

- Walters described the OTES process and informed the board that the administration had not completed the required observations prior to the school closure.

**Due to the state mandated school closing in March, 2020, and since teacher evaluations were not completed at that time, I move to waive the formal evaluation of teachers employed by Autism Model School for the fiscal year 2020 (school year ending June 30, 2020):**

**1. Lisa Marsalek**

**2. Toni Gerber**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

- iii. Current year Progress Reports (of student performance) policy during school shut down (suggested motion)
- L. Weinberg verified that the parents have been receiving feedback. The CMT assured the board that parents were likely getting more feedback than they would under normal circumstances.

**Due to the state mandated school closing in March, 2020, I move to waive the completion of Student Progress Reports until the Autism Model School is no longer closed.**

**1. Lisa Marsalek**

**2. Toni Gerber**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

d. Director's Report

- i. The Board reviewed and discussed the March, 2020 New Hires and Resignations.

**Motion to approve the March, 2020 hires and resignations:**

**1. Linell Weinberg**

**2. Toni Gerber**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

- ii. Update of activities since school shut down on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Instruction being offered.
- Walters highlighted the organizational and instructional processes being utilized during the closure, including individualized instruction and meeting times for our students

and the use of our web presence to present additional learning opportunities to the community.

- B. Weinberg and Gerber agreed the progress reported is top notch. Gerber can't imagine other schools doing any better. The documentation is impressive, according to B. Weinberg.

iii. Update on e-commerce project.

- Walters provided the board with an update on the e-commerce project. WTA was awarded the bid on April 14, 2020.
  - Vidovic described the walkthrough meeting on Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup> to the board; there will be weekly meetings set up each Friday.
  - WTA has a mock up Vidovic wishes existed now, for the current crisis. They have an amazing grasp on what we are looking for. This tool is going to be so versatile: breaking down tasks with photos and video imagery, with various reporting options. They are creating it in a way that can be scaled up.
  - Central Reach, a very well known organization in the world of digitalized data (online data collection), sent an example of something out there similar to ours, but ours is head and shoulders above anything else we have seen.
  - Trautwein and Thomas are both really pleased with how things are coming along. Trautwein stated that WTA are good guys who are genuinely motivated by helping our students. Thomas appreciated that they are in it for the right reasons.
  - Vidovic, speaking to the public in attendance, said this is going to make our lives easier; it will be something to be proud of.
- Parikh asked to connect with Walters about the agreement to make sure we own the original work product for the second phase.

- Vidovic and Parikh discussed the ability of parents to purchase licenses to use the product. There are security concerns in doing so, but the program could benefit private families in the future.
  - Gerber asked if the program would have a name other than e-commerce project. Walters replied that we are still working on that, but this is what we have for now, as a placeholder.
- iv. Internet access and smart devices for students with none. Equity for economically disadvantaged students.
- Walters told the board that some of our students are unable to engage because they do not have internet access at home; we're waiting on information from Buckeye Broadband regarding free access for distance learners.
  - Walters also said that we will need to provide equipment to some families, but it will likely be a small number.
- v. Transportation Director's Report
- Julius Walker, our transportation director has dropped off school pictures to students (pictures had been taken right before the shutdown and arrived at school in April).
  - He continues to monitor the vans and has gotten maintenance (oil changes) done on those that need it.
- vi. After School Program Director's Report
- The Director of the Program, Mary Jo Besase is staying in touch with the students who attend and offering suggestions to them.
  - She continues to receive her salary. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center officials have NOT determined if anyone is permitted to spend funds allocated through the grant since the time of the school shut-down.
- e. Development Director's Report
- i. Reed presented "Network Overview" powerpoint
- B. Weinberg asked if the e-rate covered everything. Reed responded that it does not.

- B. Weinberg asked to see the quote to see what the school would pay with the e-rate discount. Reed presented the quote and proposal from NWOCA.
- L. Weinberg asked if NWOCA would be able to install new equipment while the school is shut down. Reed was uncertain, but acknowledged that construction is ongoing and certain services are to start phasing in starting May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Motion to approve pages 5-9 of the proposal for a period of six years for the upgrade of internet system for the Autism Model School:**

**1. Raj Parikh**

**2. Lisa Marsalek**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

- ii. Reed updated the board regarding fundraising and special events.
  - We have received two grants and been invited to apply for a third.
  - The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant application deadline has been extended through the end of May.
  - Prom and the Autism Awareness Breakfast have been cancelled; the Graduation Ceremony will likely be canceled, but we are waiting on continuing guidance from the state.

**IV. Old Business**

- Walters read an e-mail from Matt Kerr, USI: health insurance companies are not offering to provide the school with a quote for the coming year; Paramount, the current health insurer, is currently offering a premium increase of 15% but still reviewing the school's needs. Kerr will keep the school updated.

**V. New Business**

- Change of location for board meeting for June, 2020. Greenblatt may not be able to host the meeting in June, but we will wait until next month to discuss it.

- B. Weinberg expressed his hope that everyone is safe and well; families, too. He also wanted the public members involved in the meeting to please know, “that you guys did a wonderful job working with the information you had.”
- Marsalek asked Walters to e-mail the calendar that was approved.

**Motion to adjourn at 6:42 PM:**

**1. Mark Greenblatt**

**2.**

**Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, L. Weinberg**

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 5:30pm, TBD.