

The Autism Model School
Board Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2020
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Attending: Isaac Demarest, Toni Gerber, Mark Greenblatt, Lisa Marsalek, Bruce Weinberg, Linell Weinberg

Excused: Ed Cancio, Raj Parikh, 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; Dave Massa, Fiscal Agent - Massa Financial Solutions, LLC; Alison Thomas, Clinical Management Supervisor; Amy Trautwein, Job Training Coordinator

Meeting began at 5:30 PM

I. Welcome and Public Comments

- Nothing presented.

II. Minutes

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

Motion to approve the April 21, 2020 minutes as written:

1. Lisa Marsalek

2. Linell Weinberg

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

III. Standing Reports

a. Financial Report

- April, 2020 Financials—budget & variance reports.
- The Board reviewed and discussed the April, 2020 budget & variance report.

Motion to approve the April, 2020 Financials:**1. Lisa Marsalek****2. Isaac Demarest****Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, L. Weinberg**

- Five Year Forecast
 - The Board reviewed and discussed the Five Year Forecast.
 - B. Weinberg asked if the school has any grants with spending restrictions. Massa replied that many deadlines have been waived, meaning we can spend money from this year into the next.
 - Walters asked if that applied to the 21st Century Grant. Massa said it is not definitive yet, but believes those deadlines will also be waived.

Motion to approve the Five Year Forecast:**1. Toni Gerber****2. Lisa Marsalek****Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, L. Weinberg**

- Health Insurance renewal
 - Walters informed the Board that the committee elected to renew with Paramount at a 12% increase in premiums, pretty much across the board for both the 80/20 and high deductible. The school is currently gathering employee enrollment information.
 - B. Weinberg asked Walters for the expected number of enrollees; there are 30, according to Walters.
 - Greenblatt detailed the selection process for the board, stating that most carriers refused to offer a quote and Paramount came down to 12% from 25 or 15%. There was talk of moving to the 70/30 plan, but it was only a savings of \$10-12 a month, so the committee stayed with the 80/20

plan.

- Gerber asked if it was likely Paramount started at a high number, knowing they would be whittled down. Greenblatt answered, saying, “There are a lot of market influences, currently, especially, but they want to make money, too – they can’t be upside down.”
- B. Weinberg thanked the committee for their work.
- Update of FY2020 budget cuts
 - Walters said raises will have to be discussed in June when we have a better idea of the coming budget, the big question mark being the state budget.
 - Walters told the Board that she e-mailed the staff with news of the small budget cut and the savings in spending, saying our full instructional staff is still necessary and everyone will still have a job when we come back. She also stated what she knew at the moment, salaries look like they could hold steady.

b. Sponsor Representative Report

- i. Bair reminded the Board of best practices.
- ii. Financial review occurred with no red flags.
- iii. Bair informed the Board that there was no site visit, but the ESC office is still conducting biweekly webinars for special education and hosting remote office hours to answer questions.
- iv. The ESC has met with the school and ODE about opening this summer, PPE, and social distancing with our population, including transportation. Another meeting will be held May 29th.
- v. Residency verification reminder.
- vi. B. Weinberg asked Bair about 45 minute session Sunshine Laws training for community schools and changes in funding if the school chose to remain virtual (not that we would), Bair will check into these questions and report back.

c. Policies and Procedures

- Nothing presented.

d. Director's Report

- i. The Board reviewed and discussed the April, 2020 New Hires and Resignations; there were no changes to report.
- ii. Update of activities since school shut-down on March 16th. Instruction being offered.
 - The Clinical Management Team added on to the offerings presented at the April board meeting by including another Enrichment Program through the Animal Behavior Center via Facebook Live.
 - Teachers are checking in with families weekly, at a minimum, if the parents want them to, and more frequently at parents' requests.
- iii. Update on ecommerce project. (Vidovic will present following the Director's Report).
 - See §IVd_{viii} below.
- iv. Internet access & smart device for students with none. Equity for economically disadvantaged students, update.
 - With assistance from teachers, the Clinical Management Team members, and the administration, four families have been provided with access to Buckeye Broadband's Lifeline Service in order to have internet services provided for free in their homes.
 - Additionally, 13 students are being provided with a tablet to access internet services already in the home.
- v. Planning for Reopening
 - Through an online skype meeting with the Director of Community Schools at ODE, Karl Koenig, along with several individuals from the Office for Exceptional Children, we shared information on the challenges we will encounter with reopening.

- Although not directly spoken by Karl Koenig, it was indicated that we should NOT plan on opening in July.
- The issue of limiting groups to ten people, as a recommendation, was discussed and the ODE representatives wanted our input. We suggested twenty people for instances of severe behavior. PPE availability was also discussed.
- Vidovic found a guideline for reopening and operating in ABA clinics. The ODE asked that we send that to them.
- The issue of redefining Least Restrictive Environment as suggested by the State Support Team was discussed, along with equity for all students (least restrictive environment may be home for some of our more severely affected students, which has Walters concerned).
- The ODE representatives seemed very interested in our input.
- We are scheduled for another meeting on Friday, May 29, 2020
- Walters and the Clinical Management Team are beginning to work on a plan for reopening based on the guidelines from the Ohio Department of Health, the CDC and the ABA Clinic Article. We will present this to the board for input and approval prior to reopening. This will be required for our safety plan, too.
- Lisa Marsalek is coordinating her school's response to reopening and will coordinate with Walters, offline, to discuss procuring PPE.
- B. Weinberg asked about the constraints of the physical school building in regard to social distancing. Walters has talked to the maintenance staff about the building; the church is planning on opening and purchasing a commercial grade disinfectant atomizer for large spaces that the school would, of course, have access to.
- Marsalek asked if the maintenance staff can install plexiglass barriers at the front desk where parents sign in. Walters replied that they have cut and installed plexiglass in

the past, once we purchase it, and should be able to do so again. Visitors will be limited to begin with.

- vi. Proof of residency approval.

Motion to approve the May, 2020 Residency Verification Form:

1. Lisa Marsalek

2. Mark Greenblatt

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

- vii. Board Meeting/Finance Meeting calendar for 2020/2021

Motion to approve the FY21 Board and Finance Meeting Calendar:

1. Lisa Marsalek

2. Toni Gerber

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

- viii. Vidovic shared a sneak peak of the WTA E-commerce work product. He highlighted the fact that we keep calling this “E-commerce,” when it is really a broader educational tool for our students and a data collection tool for our teachers and paraprofessional.
- Vidovic, Thomas, and Trautwein are currently working through the software looking for bugs and breaks. WTA has added different multisensory tools with images, videos, and audio files and a Training Tab, where a teacher can create highly individualize educational needs, lessons, goals, special needs/notes.
 - Vidovic demonstrated the teacher side of task completion. The teacher and student would each have their own device with the teacher able to see what the student sees in a dedicated window.
 - They are meeting every Friday with WTA and adding more and more to the program online each week and looking forward to the development on reporting features that are forthcoming from WTA in the near future.

- The Board expressed their satisfaction with the efforts of the AMS staff and the WTA for their work on the project.
- Walters told the Board that the teams are on track with the development of the software in terms of the timelines that were developed.
- Vidovic added, "From the stand point of what's out there, I think there's going to be a lot of people who are going to be interested in this, perhaps even beyond schools, although schools are our focus."

e. Development Director's Report

i. \$5000 grant from the Roach family foundation

- Those funds will allow us to purchase some new tablets for the students when we return in the fall.

ii. 21st Century Grant – reapply and submit data to be reapproved

- There is an observation piece that Reed is coordinating with teachers in an effort to collect data to submit. Due to the closure they have been unable to meet, making it tough to get the data in a traditional ways.

iii. Reed provided updates to the board on a few other projects, including the Category 2 wireless internet deal, updates made to the AMSToledo.org website to facilitate distance learning, and the evolving graduation plans.

- The board discussed what other districts have been doing to honor their graduates.

iv. B. Weinberg asked Reed if he has seen any grants dry up, but he has not.

IV. Old Business

- Nothing presented.

V. New Business

- The Board discussed what the school is supposed to do if we remain closed longer than expected, say, through the

end of the calendar year, particularly in terms of staffing. Walters said that is part of what we will discuss in reopening the school. If our funding holds out, there is no reason not to keep our employees, which is probably what the federal government wants us to be doing anyway.

- Marsalek has been modeling different reopening scenarios in her position; this is a massive operation and no one has ever written plans like this.
- The Board discussed anecdotal evidence of the effectiveness of distance learning, especially for families with students on the Autism spectrum. This is a difficult and traumatic time for everyone, and the Autism Model School is doing everything that we can to help our students in these unusual circumstances.
- The Board discussed the next scheduled meeting.

Motion to meet virtually on June 23, 2020:

1. Lisa Marsalek

2. Toni Gerber

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

Motion to adjourn at 6:43 PM:

1. Mark Greenblatt

2.

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

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23rd, 2020 at 5:30pm. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.