

MAC Board Minutes May 16, 2022

Attendance: Crystal, Erica, Wynda, Dom, Buffie, Kathleen, Rosie
Head of School, Brad.

Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm.

Mission Statement read by Crystal.

Public Comment: None. 3 parents present.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to accept minutes, with edit that Erica had made a request for a report on student retention with exact figures for each grade comparing to the current situation. Offered by Erica. Second Wynda. Approved.

Chair's Report: Heartfelt thank you to everyone during this difficult time for her family. She very much appreciated the support.

PTO Report – none but Mr. Tillman talked about the dances they put on. It was the first ever, outside of school hours, and first dance since pandemic. Students had a great time. There is a different plan next year. Mr. Tillman thanked Ms. Barton who did 80% of the preparation and had assistance from some of the teachers. A big thank you to the PTO. Everyone would like to do it again. Crystal also thanked the PTO for their work on Teacher Appreciation Week.

Head of School. Brad

Enrollment Update – One hire to fill an empty slot; most faculty are planning on returning. Enrollment is on a par with what was discussed at the last Board meeting. 9th & 10th graders may return because of dual enrollment opportunity. There has been high interest in the meeting on this subject taking place Wednesday night. The prospect of obtaining college credits is appealing to most high school students and their parents.

Faculty Staff Update: Federal funds have been rearranged to enable the school to provide a teacher retention bonus. The school needs to have an approved policy for the use of the funds for this purpose. Brad explained that Title 2 funds may be used to send teachers and staff to conferences, including sending Brad to administrators' conferences. Since the pandemic a lot of that did not happen so he hopes to pool funds to provide a signing bonus in addition to a retention bonus, a provision about which the teachers have not yet been informed. Brad is trying to obtain approval for up to \$1,000 for teachers who continue at the school.

The program would have separate parts. First, funds would be provided to reward teachers who return. Second, depending on funds available next year, there may be a performance bonus. In order to carry out this plan, the school needs an official

policy, approved by the Board, and also by the Charter School District—to ensure that the policy conforms to Charter School District rules. Brad would like the board to approve a policy tonight to meet a district approval deadline. If we wait until the June meeting, we may not be able to meet the June 30th spending deadline. A suggestion was made for a discussion under New Business.

Dom expressed a concern that we need a clear understanding of the impact of such a policy on the budget. He was also concerned about whether this particular source of funds can be used for this particular program. Dom also expressed an interest in doing more for the teachers. Brad explained that some funds can be used for salaries and also to retain teachers. Others can be used for professional development. Since, during the period when the school was virtual, teachers and staff did not get to go to conferences, some part of the funds remained. By pooling the funds from the last 3 fiscal years, he would be in a position to allow the school to provide up to \$1,000 for teacher bonuses. This allocation would have no impact to the budget. Brad agrees that it would be desirable to do more, especially since the school does not provide retirement funds. In addition, two of the fiscal years' budgets are ending and we have to spend

the funds. Brad pointed out that we are missing policies that Policy & Governance Committee need to devise and have on the books for situations like this one.

Crystal asked Brad to mention the performance by the Theater students, Once Upon an Island. They started on it two years ago but Covid delayed the performance. Sixty-eight students in the Theater Program were engaged with the show in one way or another. It was an excellent experience for all the students and the school is grateful for the partnership with Columbia Children's Theater.

The school will have potential access to a sufficient number of used Chrome books at low prices. A district is trying to replace current Chrome books, but they are still working on the arrangement. The arrangement will allow MAC to have enough Chrome books for everyone at less than \$50 a piece. Brad will provide an update at the next meeting.

Erica asked about the School Climate survey. There is one for the parents and one for the students, administered by the state on Powerschool. Every school in the state participates. Brad will put out an email with specific instructions for accessing the survey online. The results will be available on the report card in

the Fall. Overall school data will be sent a week before it is released to all.

Finance: Melissa.

Because our current company could no longer continue helping us, she sent out RFP to four auditors and there was only one response. Melissa speculated that the auditors might be busy with tax work at this time of year. The one reply, Martin Smith, represents many charter schools, and she is concerned that they may not have the capacity to add our school. Martin Smith is usually one of the cheaper auditors: our cost would be \$11,000, and fees would be discounted, which makes the charge reasonable.

Erica requested asking for at least one more response, but the end of June is the deadline for submission to the district. The audit will take place in Aug/Sept and the district may require a letter before that. We definitely need an auditor confirmed by the end of the fiscal year (June 30). The charge last year was \$17,850. Dom would like more bids but knows that everyone is struggling with staff so people can't submit the bids to RFPs. Crystal suggested maybe accepting the Martin Smith proposal, given the time limited and reasonable charge.

Looking at the budget, Melissa said although the report isn't complete, the numbers look better now that the federal funding has come in. She will go over the full report in June for May and June.

She then went over the proposed annual budget. The budget is very much up in the air because the House and Senate are still debating the funding. There will have to be two readings, and the budget will probably need to be amended. We should know by June 14th, but there may be a further delay in the legislature. She will revise the budget when we have more details. It is a general fund budget only. Schools should receive more money than last year so she kept the amounts for income the same. The school's revenue cannot support the arts staff and educational staff from state/fed funds alone. The Board needs to find other funds.

Cleaning services were absorbed by federal funds, but now will need to come from the general fund. Major issues are personnel and revenue. Erica asked about revenue of \$20k; Melissa said it was based on \$18k and there was \$10k from a different fund. We will need to raise or adjust that figure. It is similar to previous numbers except for the computers and supplies that we bought with the federal funds.

Strategic plan for finance reviewed. There are two huge strategic variables, budget and relocation. Erica asked about the Strategic plan for 12 months and 36 months. Crystal explained that there isn't 24 months because there is basically a short term plan (12 month) and long term plan (36 month).

Fundraising & Community Engagement Erica

Midlands Gives: We did well, given that we had only a week's notice. We tried to get a matching donor, but did not have enough time or connections. Erica thanked Lee Jane for her work on the appeal, and added that Lee Jane has been writing thank you letters which Brad will be signing and sending.

The dance teacher, Ms. Quinn Brown, ran an amazing social media campaign. Gena Barton (PTO) led an excellent program of yard signs. The committee met and has extensive notes and plans for next year's campaign.

Erica expressed a huge thank you to all of the people who helped with the campaign.

We are hoping for 100% Board participation next year.

Midlands Gives raised \$3096.50 total with a net of \$3075. Last year we raised \$3376 NET. However, we had more donors this year than last year.

We had 27 new donors this year out of a total of 46 donors. Last year there were 38 donors total.

We also have one monthly recurring donor, which is especially appreciated.

On the Midlands Gives website, there was an option to check off an interest in being included on the non profit email list. We would like to have ideas on how we can we keep those who signed up involved and up to date? Could we have a quarterly newsletters to report on our arts programs? Crystal suggested Wynda write an arts newsletter that we would send to all of the donors to keep them involved and up to date.

The Fundraising and Community Engagement Committee had the first meeting on May 15 via zoom. People were sent an agenda a week in advance to ensure a more efficient meeting. We are planning a Krispy Kreme fundraiser in the morning on June 1st. Orders will be taken beforehand and the school gets 50% of all proceeds. Next year we are doing two fundraisers one each in the Fall and Spring. The Committee is meeting in June to start planning those events. Also we have begun a list of ways to help the school via Amazon Smile, Publix

Partners, and others. This list will be publicized. Short term goals are two fundraisers, Midlands Gives campaign, and smaller fundraisers.

Richland Library open Mic program this summer for community engagement.

We are looking for someone to write grants. Crystal suggested reaching out to John Burnhardt who ran for the board. He is a researcher and does grants.

Our long term goal is to add a MAC Foundation. There is a lot of work to be done with this committee so anyone who is interested and willing to work, is welcome to join!

Arts Committee No report. Wynda had to leave early.

Strategic plan. Crystal Relocation – tabled to executive session

Policy & Governance

Buffie is looking into bylaws over the summer to create a more professional process. One item to address is setting the agenda sooner. She will tackle the changes one at a time focusing on the short term, 12 month plan. System assessment. Kathleen is seeing what they need as the issue arrives, for example, the expulsion hearing. These policies must be clear and available to parents so that they can see them in advance of problems. There is also a need for a clear conflict-of-interest policy. Over the summer the committee will

be drafting policies using a comparative analysis on all topics. Rosie asked about the 60 student per class cap and wondered if it should be 50. This cap was approved by the district about a year ago.

Recruitment & Enrollment No report.

New business:

Motion to consider the teacher retention policy offered by Kathleen. Seconded by Erica. Approved. The teacher retention proposal with the changed school name to MAC was submitted for the Board to adopt. This proposal would allow the use the funds available this year for the purpose of teacher retention. The actual disbursement would be dependent on the availability of funds and the policy would simply make it possible for Brad to take this action. The motion was offered by Erica. Rosie seconded. Approved.

Board meeting dates for next year. The Board will meet on the third Monday of the month with a few noted exceptions, as on the sheet. We will meet on Feb 22 -Wednesday- since Monday of that week is President's Day. There are 10 meetings and we are only required to have 9. Motion to discuss board meeting dates was offered by Buffie. Erica seconded. Approved. No discussion.

Motion to adopt the dates submitted offered by Rosie. Kathleen seconded. Approved.

Motion to discuss audit RFP offered by Erica. Rosie seconded. Approved. Rosie expressed confidence in Melissa's recommendation, but Erica wanted to see if we could get one more RFP since companies did not respond because of the busy tax season. If no one gets back to us within the time period, we will move forward with the one we received. Melissa will reach out to another firm and let the one that got back to us know that a decision will be made in June. Rosie was concerned that if we don't finalize with the current proposal, we may miss them. Buffie suggested just checking the current audit company's references. Dom reminded everyone that it is best practice to have more than one proposal in order to make a more informed decision. It's the Board's fiduciary responsibility. Melissa was asked to check with Smith to see if they are willing to hold our spot and how much time we have. Melissa will do due diligence to find out why others did not submit bids. Crystal suggested a Motion that the Board authorize Melissa to contact other auditors, but that if she does not hear anything back by June 1st, the Board would approve the Smith proposal. Motion to this effect offered by Dom. Rosie seconded. Approved.

Motion to go into Executive Session offered by Erica. Rosie seconded. Approved.

Motion to come out of Executive Session and adjourn.

Next meeting June 15th.

Respectfully submitted, Erica Serbin