Minutes for Wednesday, October 14, 2020

2pm, Virtual Meeting

In attendance: President Meghan Agresto, VP Al Marzetti, Treasurer Bryan Daggett, Secretary Allison Broughton, Susan Taylor, Gerri Adams, Teacher Liz Fennimore, Teacher/Admin Sylvia Wolff

The meeting was called to order at 2:00pm. A quorum was established.

Board action

* + Susan made a motion to approve the September meeting minutes. Al seconded, and all voted in favor.
  + Bryan made a motion to ratify the Request to Renew Charter Letter. Susan seconded, and all voted in favor. The letter, which signals the board’s intent to renew the school charter for 10 years, was submitted through Epicenter.
  + The board will meet next Wednesday, October 21 at noon in Meghan’s office for a work session on the Renewal Self-Study. Meghan will make a public announcement of the meeting.

President’s Report

* + Update on 4 weeks of virtual school- Overall, virtual schooling went exceptionally well. There were some frustrations for kids, parents, and teachers (as to be expected) but for the most part all went well. It was very helpful to have Teacher Aide Gill online at all times to handle tech issues. There have been no formal complaints from parents.
  + Update on in-person program that started last Wednesday – K-3 is back in school every day, all day with the option for parent pickup at lunch. Not all students are attending live instruction; some remain virtual. Teachers are working to complete all three core classes each day before lunch so that students can leave before lunch/recess and complete afternoon work virtually. Report cards will go out in three weeks. Most students are staying afloat re: missing work. There are no complaints so far from parents who have decided to stay home.
  + Update on grants – 611 IDEA grant, which is the EC grant that pays a percentage of Teacher Fennimore’s salary, has been approved.
  + Waitlist - unchanged since last month. There has been no additional communication from those still on list as of last board meeting.
  + Background checks contract with BIB – The contract with BIB has been finalized, costing us $14/month + fee per background search. Having all background check paperwork organized is worth the subscription fee. Teacher Aide Gill’s background check was successfully completed with good result before students returned to school.
  + Public record request – WEVS received a public record request for an electronic copy of all payment transactions for fiscal year 2019. The school is required to respond in a reasonable time frame. Meghan requested and received from Acadia a report of vendor payments.
  + Donations - $150 donation received and thank you letter sent.
  + New aide update- Teacher Aide Gill is doing wonderfully. He is keeping busy, seems happy, and the teachers are confident enough in him to have him substitute for them when needed. He is working from a desk outside on the porch right now. He can move his computer to the kitchen in the chapel when it is cold or raining.
  + Should we have a family coffee/donuts at school with board? Bruce Lorenz has again offered to take school pictures on the morning of November 4. Parents will be asked to bring all students to school that day for a socially distanced, whole school photo. Board will consider providing coffee and donuts or bagels outside at picnic tables for families.
  + Charter Renewal – (We are as school because of our charter issued for 10 years in 2012)
    - Monday meeting
    - Renewal Self-Study – (CEF>Application to State>Renewal) *Provide a copy of your school’s goals for the next five years. This should include at least one academic, one financial, and one operational goal. These should be written as SMART goals. If your school has a strategic plan you may attach it.* – Self Study due 11/15
    - School visit – likely virtual, agenda, 10 minutes between, organize: admin, staff, parent committee
    - Determination probably March 2022
    - Renewal Fee due 12/1 $500

Treasurer’s Report

In September 2020, the school received the first revenue from Currituck county ($5K), first federal Department of Education grant money ($3K), and over $6K in donations ($5K from one source!). For the fiscal year, the school is now in positive territory as revenue exceeds expenses by $2K. We are 25% through the fiscal year and revenues are 25% of what was budgeted for the year and expenses are also at 25%.

There were no unusual expenses in September and the operating account had $94K, with another $476K in CDs at three local banks. As approved in the September board meeting, two CDs were renewed at current rates.

There is a new weatherproof donations box in front of the schoolhouse, thanks to a gift from Mike and Kathy Thompson.

Dare County funds should be arriving soon, as they usually come at the end of October/early November.

Management Discussion & Analysis of the audit will be done by the end of the month and sent to the board.

Curriculum Committee Report

Susan observed Teacher-Admin Wolff, Teacher Fennimore, and Teacher Sonnenberg virtually at the end of September. The information is on NCEES and available for their review. Teacher-Admin Wolff created an observation form that is great, but not applicable to virtual school. Susan would like to submit a narrative instead, in order to capture the creativity and ingenuity the teachers have used to teach students virtually.

Susan had technical difficulties when she tried to observe Marcy. She would like to set a date to observe for 20-30 minutes, ideally with Seth to assist. Meghan suggested that she could FaceTime Susan from Marcy’s classroom instead. Observing virtually may be more complicated now that most students are back in the classroom.

Building Committee

New air filters have been installed in the school.

Bryan spoke with Sharon Twiddy regarding a possible land donation or sale at a reduced price. She indicated that they are ready to discuss that possibility. The building committee will plan to set a meeting with the Twiddys in early November.

Wayne and Betty Evans, who recently made a $5000 donation to the school, are eager to contribute in additional ways and want to know of any needs. Bryan suggested asking teachers for a wish list—items that they would like to have but haven’t really considered requesting because of expense.

Grievance Committee – no report

New Business – none

Old Business

Gerri received a response from Towne Bank regarding the donation or reduced sale of the former Corolla Classic Vacations building. The email said that our request would be sent up the chain of command. It is still in process.

Teacher/ Teacher/Admin update

* Virtual learning – The teachers met yesterday and discussed concerns regarding missing student work. No major concerns. Teaching in-person and virtually is going well and relatively smoothly. It hasn’t been a major distraction to have some students live and some online. It does feel like there is some catch-up work to do, but that’s true at the beginning of every school year. Teachers are recording classes if a student is not present or their internet is spotty.
* EC updates, Self-assessment for EC – due October 31. Only sections 4-6 need to be completed (because of Covid) and they want to see the virtual learning plan. The virtual plan should meet all of their criteria. The self-assessment will be finished at the end of next week at the latest. It will be sent in through a survey website, the same system as last year.
* Four students took BOGs yesterday. One student passed. Five students will likely end up in Portfolio, which must be administered by a certified teacher. Teacher Aide Gill can work with the students identified, or it can be done during Teacher Fennimore’s open periods. Istation will serve as the alternate assessment.
* MPact printing – Teacher-Admin Wolff and Teacher Sonnenberg have signed up for a grant program with the mission of moving math curriculum from abstract to computational thinking via 3D printing. All materials and training are paid for by the program. Teacher-Admin Wolff will integrate it with project based learning.
* Concerns?—All teachers say they have their heads above water. Introducing Kindergartners to boundaries is (as always) a challenge. Teachers have expressed concern for students who remain virtual only. A few students are requiring extra time and attention from teachers and it is difficult when those students are home while others are in the classroom.
* A parent suggested purchasing an air purifier for the schoolhouse, which will cost >$200. It can be purchased with PR121 or via donation.
* Teacher Aide Gill is doing wonderfully. He now has a lull in the morning with Go Guardian. That time could be used to work with third graders on Portfolio, or help 4th and 5th graders with flashcards.
* Istation provided PD last week, which Teacher-Admin Wolff, Teacher Fennimore, and Teacher Moore attended.
* The teachers are doing an amazing job and working incredibly hard.

Public Comment - none

The meeting was adjourned at 3:17pm.