

ACEC Board Meeting
June 21, 2021
Start time: 7:01 pm

Board Members Present: Erika Gregorius, Ashley Bath, Shari Hanneman, Ashay Desai, Erica Cates, Gina Connor, Liz Bradley, Nicole Valencic, Jeremy Ondresky, Dana Patel

Others Attending: Becky Allen, Sara Klawikowski, Mary Beth Hendrickson, Krist Clover, Emily, Bryan Engelhardt, Sarah DeArmond, Jill Mach

Welcome (Gregorius):

- Agenda schedule was moved around a little to give parents an opportunity to speak about the music program before any decisions were made
- May ACEC minutes were approved by Bryan, Gina, Nicole, Ashay, Erika, Liz, Shari

Open Forum:

- Each non-board member will get one turn and have a 2 minute time limit
- Emily: the music committee would benefit from more time to research the option and provide due diligence before a decision is being made; there are funding questions that still remain; it is concerning that incoming families were not included in the survey; the survey was a little misleading and did not allow for flexible answers nor did families know that permanent decisions were going to be made from this survey; that being said, not opposing moving away from keyboards but we should have more time to make the decision
 - Also believes that the secret ballot is not a good idea because we are a public school and we should have transparency
- Becky Allen: 3 solid options were created by the committee to do what is best for the students; each option will be an improvement for the students; she is proud to be a part of our music program
 - Many thanks given to Mrs Allen for all of her hard work
- Sarah DeArmond: wanted to let the board know that there is the possibility to amend any of the options that are being presented; discussion at our last meeting was that option 3 would be a "hybrid light" that would potentially work with COVID restrictions for the upcoming year

Principal's Report (Bath):

- Last year's board discussed a commitment to connect to other charter schools (specifically Montessori schools)

- Per Mrs Klawikowski: talked to someone from DPI/ CESA 9 - there is a grant that is funded by the government (it's free!); talked to a guy who is part of the wisconsin resource for charter schools;
 - There is a grant that is available for the upcoming year; it opens in November 2021 (until February 2022; allows schools to expand; would be available to use in June 2022 (but could be delayed to 2023 which works out well with our district's plan to move 5th grade to the middle school and Alliance's plan to expand to grades 4/5 to 4/5/6)
 - The amount is \$800-\$1,000,000 dollars
 - It cannot be used for brick and mortar, but can be used for inside the building costs (such as teacher training, materials, etc)
 - If we were to apply next year (we would have until the end of February) and don't receive the grant, they will send us a report telling us why
 - There will be a meeting with the district to verify that we will be moving forward with our expansion and see when we can move forward with this grant (such as dedicating a building specifically to Alliance that is part of or close to the high school that the rest of the district's 5th and 6th graders will be using)
 - Ms Cates agrees that it would be very helpful for our future 4/5/6 to have access to what the other 6th graders will have access to
 - And it would be nice to have access to Memorial Park
 - Per chat discussion - new teacher training and materials for new classrooms would be the largest part of the expense
 - We need to discuss with the district our plans to move forward with expansion so that we don't waste our time putting together the info for the grant if it will not happen
 - Last time around there were concerns about continued funding, where we'd be, district approval, if we want to become that large of a school - but we need to see if we will even be able to apply for (and potentially receive) the grant
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 - Per chat: Ms Bath - there will be open forums and meeting times (similar to the referendum meetings) to voice ideas/concerns for decisions moving forward (the forum date and times will be shared later on)

Teacher Report (Connor/Cates):

- Connor : the teachers took a look at the curriculum and standards and the state's common core; teachers did their best to realign the program for future years
 - The teachers have been updating their albanesi cards with this discussion in mind

Treasurer's Report (Ondresky):

- Budget committee met last week,
- Important to mention that none of this is set in stone and can be adjusted at future meetings (ie - if music program changes, we can be flexible when we know what our choice is moving forward)
- Expenses:
 - Budget includes \$19,000+ expenses
 - Miscellaneous materials, music total may change based on our decision for next year; there is a reserve that can be moved around (we would need to vote to add it where needed, if necessary),
 - Music fees (\$,2280: books are \$1,000, supplies are \$1,280)
 - *at the end of this meeting, the board approved \$3,400 to allow Mrs Allen to move forward with option 3, therefore total music supplies has been updated to \$3,400 and fall funding has increased by \$1,120
 - Checks written after June 30th are put towards next year's budget, so curriculum training and teacher training will be covered at that time (this may increase in future years if we expand)
 - Money is set aside for field trips and special events
 - Classroom supplies (\$1,500) and Montessori supplies (\$2,000) are separated
 - There is a registration fee for filing with the state
 - Funds for digital learning tools may change since our contract with IXL is done and teachers may want to move forward with a different digital learning program
 - The draft budget is an estimate of how to cover these costs
 - As with previous years, there's a significant amount we need to raise with our fundraisers (\$12,000 between fall and spring, \$2,000 comes from grants)
 - We did underspend this year so it can be applied to expenses for next year
- Mrs Cates motioned to pass the proposed budget
 - Motion seconded by Erika Gregorius
 - The motion passed with members Connor, Bradley, Gregorius, Valencic, Engelhardt, Ondresky, Cates, Desai, Patel, and Hanneman voting in favor

Music Committee (Connor):

- Review of the [three options](#):
 - First option - continue with keyboards with our main keyboards, need 24 functional keyboards, not private lessons but lessons will be differentiated,

keyboards may not be possible next year since students under 12 are not vaccinated and the district may keep COVID restrictions in place

- The Posegate family assessed the keyboards and decided that they would all need to be replaced (headphone jacks of many of the keyboards were not fully functioning, almost all of the power adapters need to be replaced). They found replacement options that were significantly cheaper on Amazon (\$6,000 versus \$23,000) but we need to check the keyboards to make sure they are a good replacement option (buy 1 keyboard and determine if it will be a good fit for our keyboarding program)
- Per Ms Bath - July district meeting will decide if music will move forward similar to precovid years
- Second option - students would learn to use at least 2 instruments; this would be covered under the waiver; instruments would include hand drums, maracas, jingle bells, wood blocks, triangles, and rhythm sticks. Ukuleles would be included for 4th and 5th graders. Providing the “bare bones” equipment is the lower price (\$4,437), getting everything on the wish list is the higher price (\$6,732). This price doesn’t include keyboards
- Third option - similar to option 2 but would not include ukuleles. The bare bones equipment price is \$1,617 and the wish list price is \$3,312
- Options 2 and 3 could be done with a keyboarding unit which would add an additional \$3,000 (if the keyboards from Amazon work out)
- Mrs Allen provided a breakdown of the [costs](#)
- We are unsure what the COVID restrictions will be for next year
 - This year, music was in the classrooms and we could not bring keyboards into the classrooms so Mrs Allen taught a general music to the students instead
- Ondresky: voting for keyboards will be an unknown until we see what the district says in July; the next 2 options should be able to work for the next school year
- Desai: Many parents are telling him that they would prefer the first option and they would like their students to continue learning keyboards
- Patel: Agrees that many parents have reached out to her as well and they would prefer to continue keyboards and feel that this decision is being made too quickly
- Allen: Option 3 will be the smallest change to the budget; the bells will need to be purchased anyway because she plans on incorporating their use for keyboard instruction, especially with the younger students.
- Gregorius: the ACEC survey results came back and the results were mixed - some wanted to keep keyboards, some were willing to try a new program, some wanted to move away from keyboards
 - Mrs Connor asked that the survey results be sent to the teachers as well
- Sarah DeArmond: several parents approached her (since they knew she is on the music committee) and they were concerned that this was coming on fast; another concern is that if option 1 is selected and keyboards are purchased, what will be planned for the semester if the district says keyboarding isn’t an option due to COVID restrictions?
- One suggestion is to pick option 3 since next year’s keyboarding program is unknown (due to potential COVID restrictions). We can start with this option and see what

answers we get in the fall - by then we will know the district's policy for music class and will have an idea of how many parents are willing to volunteer to help with the program

- Per previous survey, there were 5/6 people who volunteered to help during class time and 10 people who volunteered to help set up and put away keyboards
- Patel: it would be helpful if there was a fourth option, due to COVID: could we begin the year with option 2 or 3 and revisit in October/November to see what the volunteer situation looks like
- Jill Mach: as someone who volunteered previously during class time, it would be helpful to have volunteers who can play piano better than the students, especially at the 4th/5th grade level. Also, take down of keyboards faces a serious time crunch without enough parent volunteers because the keyboards need to be put away in a careful way so that the instruments are not ruined.
- Patel: at a previous meeting Kristi Clover mentioned that she has contacts at Lawrence University; are there music student teachers that would be willing to volunteer at our school?
 - Kristi Clover: she has not followed up on that yet because she was waiting to see what our decision will be for our music program; she can follow up with her contacts and have an answer for our meeting next October/November
- Patel: are we voting for the entire future or an interim period, and, if interim, what is the timeline?
 - These options are for the 21-22 school year only
- Desai: So after November, can all three of these options be brought up again to be voted on?
 - the November meeting will decide if we will add keyboards to the second semester music program for the 21-22 school year; we will decide the future of the keyboarding program later in the school year after we determine how this hybrid year works (or doesn't work)
- Emily: If the school decides to continue music classes like last year, what will we see?
 - Mrs Allen: the tone of the classes will change depending on whether keyboard instruction will occur - if we will continue with keyboards, Mrs Allen will tie in the general music classes with keyboarding (ex - using the bells to learn notes on the keyboard) but if keyboarding will not be taught later in the school year, the bells can be taught without incorporating that piece of information
 - Will the students be behind by going that route if we switch gears in November and decide to incorporate keyboards?
 - Playing on the keyboards doesn't usually start until October/November; either way, Mrs Allen plans to have have engaging lessons for the students
- Answering a question in the chat: Mrs Allen believes the keyboarding unit would be 12-18 weeks because she would like it to be worthwhile
- Liz Bradley motioned to: A) Move forward with funding option 3, B) A plan to revisit adding a keyboard unit in November after a detailed volunteer survey is completed and fall fundraising totals for 2021/2022, C) May vote to discuss expansion of keyboarding in future years

- Motion was seconded by Erika Gregorius
- The motion passed with members Connor, Bradley, Valencic, Ondresky, Gregorius, Hanneman, Patel, Cates, and Desai voting in favor
- Mrs Allen asked if the amount that passed was for the amount of \$3,312?
 - Gina Connor motioned to fully fund Mrs Allen's budget for this school year for \$3,400
 - Motion was seconded by Erica Cates
 - The motion was passed with members Ondresky, Bradley, Connor, Cates, Gregorius, Desai, Hanneman, Valencic, and Patel voting in favor

Events/Activity Committee (Gregorius):

- Plan is to form an events/activity committee headed by Kristi Clover
- We would like it to start soon so they can plan for the upcoming school year
- Volunteers: Jill Mach, Liz Bradley, Nicole Valencic

Future ACEC meeting will be in August, date to be determined

Motion to close by Erika, seconded by Shari

Meeting ended at 8:39pm

Summary: There is a grant available that could help with funding if ACEC moves forward with expansion but we would have to apply for it by February 2022; teachers are updating their albanesi cards to correlate with the curriculum and state's common core; the new budget was passed by the board; 3 options were presented for next year's music program and the board approved and passed option #3 with full funding knowing that it will be revisited in late fall of 2021; an events/activity committee was formed