

ACEC Board Meeting: September 28, 2020

Start time: 7:00 pm

Board Members in Attendance: Bryan Engelhardt, Erika Gregorius, Jeremy Ondresky, Dana Patel, Ashay Desai, Shari Hanneman, Ashley Bath, Gina Connor, Stephanie Markman

Meeting was called to order by Bryan Engelhardt

Bryan welcomed new parents to the meeting. He extended an invitation to parents of new kindergarteners, as well as parents of all Alliance students, to consider volunteering, either as a parent on the board and one of its committees or in the school.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Principal's Report:

- The dashboard (available on the NJSD website) informs the district on how many staff/students are out due to COVID
 - It was suggested by a parent that it would be helpful if the dashboard showed past history as well
- Currently we are at 50% capacity for subs so school closing (going virtual) may be due to staff numbers even though our school is minimally affected by COVID so far
- Question posed to Ms Bath - Winnebago County's site is telling people to stay at home; how does that site play into the district's decision to go virtual?
 - The district is looking at the number of teachers and students that are out at each school (as well as using Winnebago county's website) to make a decision for each building or even each classroom
 - Schools are working to make the transition as easy as possible for when the time comes. For example, Mrs Bardosy has set up some great stuff online to aide in the transition to virtual montessori school so that students

Teacher Report:

Mrs Connor: Thank you to Erika G and Elaine L for putting together materials for the students. Also thank you to parents who have volunteered to cut fabrics. Grades 1/2/3 will be starting personal timelines. They have also been discussing the importance of water and, specifically, how the lack of clean water affects people of Africa (current read aloud is A Long Walk to Water). The international peace day project by Ms. Cates's class turned out really well.

Mrs Markman: thanks to the virtual team for getting all of their materials prepped and out to students who are now starting their albanesi work.

The school is teaming with Heckrodt (who has loaned their picnic tables) for an onsite presentation for the in class and virtual students. For in class students, the field trip is tentatively scheduled for October 29th.

Treasurer Report:

- During a normal school year, \$14,000 of the \$18,000 raised for our school comes from the fall and spring fundraisers. The remaining \$4,000 is from music fees and grants
 - This year we need to raise at least \$12,000: There is \$8,000 underspent from last year's budget...we could apply this to this year's fundraising efforts and consider \$4,000 to be the fundraising goal
- The fundraising committee decided that in person fundraising is not a great idea this year due to safety concerns. Two questions arise:
 - 1. How should we fundraise?
 - 2. How much money do we need to raise?
- Several things that need to be considered: Sara Klawikowski will need training this summer; need to verify that part of that \$8,000 was not meant to go towards keyboards; how fundraising in the fall will affect matching corp grants for the fiscal year (such as grants from Kimberly Clark); should we keep donation goals consistent from year to year?
 - The committee considered that it would be helpful to families that are financially impacted (due to COVID pandemic) if we keep fundraising efforts manageable in the fall and reassess in the spring if our school needs more fundraising
 - The fall fundraiser may be similar to the I Heart Montessori fundraiser from last year (which used The Tomorrow Fund)
 - Teachers will discuss class incentives during their meeting on Friday, no trinkets
 - Will let parents know about the event through email, Facebook posts, etc. to keep it simple
 - If the goal is \$4,000 (low end), it breaks down to \$35/student
 - If the goal is \$12,000 (high end), it breaks down to \$96/student
 - Transparency to families is appreciated: let parents know the amount we need this year and breakdown the expense per student; also let them know a spring fundraiser may be necessary
- Jeremy will draft a letter if anyone is interested in reviewing it before it is sent out
 - He will mention that it is a fall fundraiser and that it is separate from the keyboard fundraising
 - He will follow up with Mrs Allen to see if keyboarding books (that were already purchased for this school year) were covered
 - More specifics will be discussed at the next meeting when the info can be more easily shared
- Mrs Markman: the fundraising also allows staff to do different things at the end of the year - they are given money to put toward different things for their classrooms. The teachers were not sure if they got that money at the end of the last school year. They will discuss with Jill or Jeremy at a later time
- Conferences: meals will be catered for the teachers to keep it safer
- Spring fundraising: An idea to keep in mind for the future - spirit wear (link provided in the agenda)

Elect new Education Coordinator & Parent Reps:

- Volunteer Education Coordinator: Nicole Valencic (9 ayes, 0 oppose)
- Kindergarten Rep: Liz Bradley (9 ayes, 0 oppose)
- 1/2/3 Rep: Ashay Desai (9 ayes, 0 oppose)
- 4/5 Rep: Dana Patel (9 ayes, 0 oppose)
- Congratulations and thank you to our new members!

Open Forum:

- Erika G. suggested that next time we can use the raise hand option for a vote
- Bryan E: our referendum passed last year and most of the district has grades 5/6/7/8 moving to a new school which will have ramifications for our 5th graders. There is no idea to propose but we should start to consider how our school will want to move forward in the future and to email him with any ideas or concerns
 - Erika mentioned that there was a conversation with Steve Dreger last year that decided that the move would not effect Alliance
 - Bryan and Ashley will be involved in the development of the elementary curriculum so they will have a strong voice in this planning so feel free to voice any input that you think would be beneficial to the goal and vision of the school
 - Parent input: what about adding 6th graders to our school? That way 5th graders will not transition to the 5/6th grade blocks as the “new kids”...what would the pros/cons be?
 - Teachers response:
 - Typical montessori school is set up as grades preK/K, 1/2/3, 4/5/6
 - Concerns would be space, changing the curriculum, and staffing
 - In the past, adding a 4K class was discussed because starting montessori at a younger age would make the work plans more normalized for the students but our school wouldn't be able to do an AM and PM 4K class without doubling class sizes
 - Budget would also be a concern: it was previously calculated that it would cost around \$40,000/classroom for materials and training

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm. If parents have any other questions or follow up comments, please feel free to email Bryan or their parent reps.