

# **Madrone Trail Public Charter School**

Jackson County, Oregon

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at 5:30 pm

Madrone Trail Public Charter School – 3070 Ross Lane, Medford, OR 97502

## **I. Call to order/ Roll call**

Amy called to order the regular meeting of the Madrone Trail Public Charter School Board at 5:30pm at Madrone Trail Public Charter School 3070 Ross Ln. Central Point, OR 97502.

Sarah conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Amy Gygax, Sarah Trujillo, Monica Rathjen, Leann Tourzan, Kellee O'Shea, Brenda Stein, Jodie Arellano

Karen Bailey (Administrator)

## **II. Opening verse**

## **III. Approval of minutes and agenda adjustments**

### **a.) Work Session Minutes**

**Motion approved**

**Leann Touzan** I make a motion to approve the minutes for the Board work session

**Kellee O'Shea** I second the motion

**Aye – 5 (Gygax, Rathjen, Trujillo, Tourzan, O'Shea, Stein, Arellano)**

**No – 0**

### **b.) March Meeting Minutes**

**Motion approved**

**Monica Rathjen** I make a motion to approve the minutes for the regular March meeting. **Jodi Arellano** I second the motion.

**Aye – 5 (Gygax, Rathjen, Trujillo, Tourzan, O'Shea, Stein, Arellano)**

**No – 0**

- c.) **Agenda Adjustments- Amy Gyax** We are adding State of the School Celebration. We will take off Climate Survey discussion so that we can extend the deadline. We will add that to our May agenda.

#### IV. Discussion Items:

- a.) **Board Self-evaluation Sarah Trujillo** I know I sent this out, I'm not sure that it made sense to everyone. I really should reformat this, and there are 2 surveys that are not included. I set it up to show the average of each question and the higher the score, the more work we need in that area. The board treasurer, since we don't have one, scored as something that needs work. Question 9 is another one. It refers to us reaching out the outside community. **Amy Gyax** What is Question 16? **Sarah Trujillo** "The board has met the deadlines and goals put forth by the Strategic Plan." We are steadily working on the Strategic Plan, but we do need some work on that. Another one was Question 25. "Directors have divided responsibilities equally between all directors as much as possible, submitted reports in a timely fashion, supported and encouraged one another" Some of these we did better than others. **Amy Gyax** What was 25 E? **Sarah Trujillo** "Throughout this year, directors have come to meetings well prepared" I will resend this with clearer formatting with the minutes. **Amy Gyax** At our June meeting we can revisit this, and see where we need to make improvements.

#### b.) Strategic Plan – Fundraising and Pedagogical Objectives

- i.) **Fundraising Objectives Leann Tourzan** I know that one of the goals for fundraising was to hire a developmental director, and I think that could really help us, I know at Siskiyou School hiring someone made a huge difference, and also added a lot of life and energy to the process of fundraising. **Karen Bailey** From my perspective, that might be the biggest difference between a private and public school. It doesn't make sense to hire someone for that position if you have a poorer community. At a private school, it is just assumed that more money will be given. I don't think that we would raise much more money by having a development director. Half of our families are not paying supply fees, and since we are public, you cannot require it. **Kellee O'Shea** When it says, "someone to capitalizing on non-profit status" what does that mean? **Karen Bailey** Going for grants. **Kellee O'Shea** Looking outside of the student body. **Leann Tourzan** Which could be the role of the development director. **Karen Bailey** Lorraine got us a \$5000 grant last summer. I went with her and we asked the Carpenter

Foundation, but she took the initiative to do the research and apply.

**Amy Gygax** In the past we have had a grant writing committee, and it's been an effort to get people to do it on a volunteer basis. A big challenge has been, since they were working on a volunteer basis, they were not going out and researching grants to find what we would qualify for, but went to the faculty to find out what the needs were, and had trouble getting feedback on that. We need to make sure that there are specific requests that grants could fulfill, rather than this idea that we have people that have a lot of time to sit around researching.

**Sarah Trujillo** We have also had some success, so the incentive is there if we can find time and energy to put toward that. **Leann Tourzan** If we find a specific grant that looks like a good fit for us, we could form a temporary grant writing committee.

**Amy Gygax** It would be worthwhile to form a grant writing committee again, and have it so that once or twice a year the faculty has it on their agenda to come up with wish list, that could be ongoing. That way, if a grant pops up the grant writing committee will know if it is something that they want to go for. I'm sure that we could find people for that committee, they just need direction. **Leann Tourzan** Donors choose grants are great, my husband has gotten two for Kids Unlimited, and I know Jesse Gammon has some experience with that. Sometimes they are for smaller things. We do have the needs a lot clearer now, so if we did have a grant committee we could find one thing and focus on it. **Amy Gygax** It would be good to have all the needs on one list, and then the teachers don't have to try and figure out the grant writing process, it can just be the committee working on it. **Monica Rathjen** When I was working at a non-profit in Roseburg years ago, it was for community children in public schools. There was the Ford Family Foundation, and Cow Creek Indian Tribe, and we got 85% of our funding from those two sources, I am not as familiar with the groups that do that here. If we could find those groups it makes a huge difference.

**Karen Bailey** Something that I have heard from parents is that it better to have a fundraising strategy that where you are not getting asked for a lot all the time. I have to be the gatekeeper, and that means I have to say no to fundraisers that are for a specific class, and some parents are not happy about the cost of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. It costs as much as what we raised with the auction this year. Do we have a sense of philosophy of fundraising? What are the priorities, and where does the money go? Who makes the decisions? I would appreciate some

clarity. **Leann Tourzan** There are ongoing fundraisers, like SCRIP, is anyone doing that now? **Sarah Trujillo** It is always available. If we had a point person that took that on and made it a priority, especially around Christmas time, there are grocery stores, and the co-ops. **Leann Tourzan** Getting the word out about that would be helpful. **Sarah Trujillo** That would be a good function of Parent Council. **Leann Tourzan** It would be good if we had a day of the week that was SCRIP day, and make it part of our rhythm. We were talking today that the faculty meeting about how we have only about 50% supply fee, and maybe we could, as a board have a push for that, to make sure families are paying that. **Kellee O'Shea** I know, coming from homeschooling, \$120 is a great deal, I would be spending much more than that to get all the supplies. At a public school they require backpacks, and crayons. **Amy Gygax** The state just passed a law that schools cannot require people to buy supplies or pay for supplies. So, we would have to be very careful with our wording. **Karen Bailey** The question in my eyes is who is going to pay for it? We all pay for it. It comes from us. **Amy Gygax** It takes it away from something else in the budget. **Monica Rathjen** What if, at the beginning of the year, when the teacher is meeting the parents, if they were to have a sample of one students supplies, to see what that money covers. It helps make that connection. **Karen Bailey** At my previous school, we ended up just making a list, and it ended up being \$250, so even if everyone pays we are still running ten to twenty thousand dollars over that budget. We are subsidizing the basic supplies. **Leann Tourzan** Maybe at the State of the School, we could set up a display that has one of each class main lesson books, and all of the creations from handwork, so parents can see where that money goes. I will take that on. **Amy Gygax** Our objectives for fundraising are, reforming the Fundraising committee, and reforming the Grant Writing committee, and a part of the Fundraising committee would be to come up with a fundraising philosophy.

- c.) **Pedagogical Objectives** **Karen Bailey** The biggest one for me is teacher training, I don't want to lose sight of that. Some schools have the objective of "in five years 75% of our teachers will be fully Waldorf trained. **Kellee O'Shea** Where are we now? **Karen Bailey** We have Leann, Matt, Nancy, Hannah, and Mateo. Five out of sixteen. Our charter requires half to be state licensed teachers. We are right at half. **Amy Gygax** Are there people that are both, or not either? **Karen Bailey** Yes, Denise and Carol are neither licensed, or Waldorf certified. Hillary, Jane, Michelle, Dara, and Jesse are all licensed but not certified. We need to appreciate Mactilde

Howard as our school mentor, for what we pay her, she has done a lot of Waldorf training. Without her, I would worry if we are really delivering a Waldorf education. They all do the summer Art of Teaching, so they have professional development, it just hasn't been Waldorf training. **Amy Gygax** We are a member of the Alliance for Waldorf Charter Schools, and one of the things we are agreeing to is that we are going to have our teachers Waldorf trained. If we are going to continue to be a member, and get the benefits of being a member, we should be working towards Waldorf trained teachers. **Karen Bailey** What is going on at Rudolph Steiner College, is that they will not be offering teacher training, but they are looking at summer programs. I suggested a train the trainer program. WE can send one or two people down in the summer to learn how to train our teachers. If every school sent two people, the cost would not be that high, and when they come back, that is their job, to train the teachers in house. I think that is the trend of the future. Carol is interested in the Michael Institute, Hillary tried it last year and didn't care for it. In Vancouver, there is the West Coast Waldorf Training, they have a good reputation, and there is one in San Francisco. There is one in Eugene, but it is a full-time program and wouldn't really work for us. The Building Bridges program which I presented to this board, we didn't have the numbers to make it work. The other four Waldorf schools in the state have other ways of dealing with it. **Amy Gygax** We should get back to naming our objectives **Sarah Trujillo** I always feel there should be more effort in the way of parent education. **Amy Gygax** We had a similar objective in communication as well, it can be under this one as well. **Leann Tourzan** I can help with that for next year, and we have local resources that we could get. It would also be nice to include the assistants in some of the pedagogy, such as making it possible for them to go to conferences. **Amy Gygax** There are two pieces to the objectives, there's the expectation/requirement of the teachers and their training, and then a plan of how to get that to happen. It has been a topic of conversation a lot. But there has never been a solid decision, or anything put in place about that. So that can be one of our objectives. The objective of parent education, can be the same as the one for communication, as far as having a parent education point person.

- d.) Director Evaluation – Faculty Feedback** **Amy Gygax** Last meeting we had approved a faculty feedback component to our director's evaluation, and I have since talked to Karen about that and she is having a difficult time with it, I'll let her talk. **Karen Bailey** I do appreciate feedback, and Michelle Zindell had asked us to send out a form with questions to the faculty to find out how I'm doing. I was prepared to do that, but it is different because she is talking about something that would only be for me to see. What I am understanding from the faculty, is that they want it to be part of the boards evaluation of me, and my job performance. So, you are all my boss, and I am their boss, so having them evaluate me as part of the

boards evaluation feels very odd. There are decisions that have to be made that make people unhappy. It is very hard for me to do the job of director if I know my employees are evaluating me. What I would like to see is another vehicle to get that feedback. I do appreciate that the board would like to have that information. George Hoffecker did my evaluation at my last school, he takes all the feedback from teachers, board members, and parents and compiles it into themes and delivers it in a way that is designed to make me a better director. I would feel really good about that avenue. That is what I would prefer over having the teachers evaluate me. Especially now, we are going through mediation, which we can't talk about, because we have a confidentiality agreement but there will be a mediated agreement which you will all be able to read. It is very awkward timing, this came just as I was realizing there was conflict. **Amy Gygax** I want to clarify that the board never said that the teachers would be evaluating you, we just were going to get their feedback. **Karen Bailey** I wish Jane was here, I feel she was clear that it was an evaluation. **Leann Tourzan** I feel like that is a matter of semantics. I believe that what was meant was feedback. I can speak for the faculty. They defiantly want a direct line of contact to the board and they want to have a survey, maybe like the one that Jane had. A lot of other organizations do this. They want a way to give feedback directly to the school board, and then Amy appoint a person that would get the feedback, and there are probably some that would want to remain anonymous, and would not feel intimidated by having it not go directly to Karen. So that if it went to you, and you could consolidate it, and meet with Karen and take it from there. That is what I was told by several of the faculty members was important to them. **Amy Gygax** There is value in the board having feedback from the faculty. It is important to me that there is clarity that it is not evaluating the directors, so how we have it done, and when we have it done needs to be well thought out. I think that we should also get feedback from the rest of the staff, and that the feedback is about general performance and if there is a specific issue that it is dealt with by the grievance policy that we have in place. It is not a place to air grievances, but a way to evaluate performance overall. The questions that we are choosing and the way we ask, it is important that we really think about it. So that it doesn't become a vehicle to sidestep the grievance policy. I know that Michelle did tell the directors that doing a survey for only the directors to read and that should be taken into account, but I also don't want Karen to feel that what is going on now will be how we are evaluating her overall performance. I want to switch to having faculty feedback, because in the past, the faculty members of the board were participating in the director evaluation, and that seemed to be a conflict of interest. The question of that is rushing that though doesn't feel good, since we are about to do the evaluation, so I would like to take some time to figure that out. **Karen Bailey** It is my understanding that it took a year to come up with the current model of director evaluation, and that was my

understanding when I was hired of how I would be evaluated. **Brenda Stein** Will the faculty feedback add to the process of the goals that are set because of the board evaluation of the director? **Amy Gygax** It might. **Brenda Stein** It seems that it might muddy the process, as far as evaluation the completion of the director's goals. **Amy Gygax** We do evaluate more than the goals being met, we evaluate the job performance. The goals come out of the evaluation, but we are also looking at general job performance. Maybe we can make it very clear what questions, while looking over the one that Jane brought it, it looked very detailed, I would like to have something that is more general, since the board already does a big evaluation, but having time to decide what we want. We can figure out how to add this for the following year, instead of trying to figure out how to fit it in since we are about to do that. That way it can be clear and in place for the next round. **Karen Bailey** The other thing Mountain Phoenix did, they had a School Accountability Committee, and they would send out a schoolwide survey it was for payments, teachers, and board members. It was a culture of asking for feedback and working with it, it was school wide, rather than targeted. **Jodie Arellano** It also sounds like it was based on positivity and improvement. **Amy Gygax** We can frame it in that way, just because we are getting feedback doesn't mean it is a negative. **Leann Tourzan** I do feel that the faculty has heard that this has been approved by the board, by taking it away, it would feed a fire, rather than giving them an outlet. **Amy Gygax** I am not sure that it appropriate to undermine the grievance policy that is already in process. This is not a place for people to be getting out what they are frustrated about, we want an overall view. **Leann Tourzan** Is there a way for us to separate that. **Jodie Arellano** There is professional technical writing where you can write everything that you feel, and then eliminate everything that is an emotion, and change it to "I think" People can work on that but it seems like personal work. If someone is having really negative feelings and they don't think they can address it in a professional way, then working though it in a personal way, rather than at work. **Amy Gygax** I'm not suggesting that we say, "no we don't want faculty feedback" my only suggestion is that we take time to figure out how we get that feedback, and I don't think we can do that with the deadline of including it in the upcoming evaluation. There was an assumption that it would be included, but we have more information now, and I think we can legitimately say that we need to not rush into it. As a board we need to be able to slow down and take our time. We need some time to do it in a conscientious way. **Karen Bailey** The other part that we need to take into account, is that we are in stage three of mediation. If we don't get this resolved it will move on to a conflict resolution committee which is comprised of board members, teachers and parents. If you have already heard one side of that, you can't sit on the committee, the process has to be kept intact. My understanding is that you all define what my job is, and I believe that the faculty would like to redefine my job, and I

don't know what to do. If I need to please the faculty, I need to go along with everything they want to do. If you are my boss, I need direction from you. I need much more direction here **Amy Gyax** The way that I look at it, if you have people that are upset about things, that doesn't tell me you are doing a bad job. I don't think you need to be pleasing everybody, to me it might say that someone is upset because you did your job, and they didn't like it. Sometimes people don't like decisions that are made, but you making the decision is you doing your job. **Karen Bailey** That is why I like the idea of bringing George in, to slow the process down, and make it more objective. He can bring the positivity, he can tell you not only about my performance, but the school culture, as a whole. **Brenda Stein** We also want to avoid micromanaging, and that is why we should be looking at the overall job that is done. **Amy Gyax** I agree, and I don't think it should be the major part of our evaluation. Do we all feel like we are at an agreement? **Monica Rathjen** I think that it is a good idea, to take the time. Since everyone feels the importance of being heard, and that the components come together in a way that means improvement. I agree that not acting right away, but making sure that the faculty feels heard, and that we have a line of communication as something that we can work towards. **Leann Tourzan** For me to be able to go back to the faculty and say that we are working on finding the best way to get faculty feedback. **Jodie Arellano** It should be constructive. **Amy Gyax** Just let them know that we still have the intention of receiving feedback, and it is going to take a little longer to figure out the format and timing. At this point, we can take that up in June.

- e.) **Financial Priorities Amy Gyax** One of the priorities that keep coming up for me are trying to come up with a way to have a facilities manager, someone that is taking that off Karen's plate, and having an overview of what is going on. When we were interviewing for the director job, we had conversations about how it is not really a one-person job, and once we got a director we would look and see what ways they needed support. I see a need for facilities manager, and Karen has expressed she sees that has a need as well. Another priority is for us to build up our contingency fund. It is minimal right now, as far as what the district requires of us, and they would like to see that built up. With an older building, there will be things that come up, and we are going to need to pull money from that. Another priority is that we are going to have an increase in how much we are required to pay into PERS, as a board we will have to focus on how to get that money in the budget. **Karen Bailey** We are estimating \$35,000 for PERS next year. It's about a 5% increase. In two years, it goes up again by another 5%. **Amy Gyax** So we need to plan for that. Karen has been working on getting a finance committee together, and that will give us a better idea of what we need, so I think it would be good to have a clear idea of what the board holds as a priority. My long-term dream is to have a Waldorf remedial teacher on staff, I think it would greatly benefit students and

teachers. But I don't think there is the money for that. That would be my long-term wish/priority. **Karen Bailey** Of those two, I would prefer a bigger contingency fund. At this point we are dealing with the things that come up. I would rather have the money to fix things as that happens. **Kellee O'Shea** If there were a homeschool arm, would that bring in money? **Jodie Arellano** It would. I am doing some research right now to see how much that would bring in, how much it would cost, but there are a lot of models to look at. **Amy Gygax** Part of looking at the financial picture is looking at ways we can increase what we bring in. Some things, like increasing class size, even just one student per class would be an increase. Jesse had talked about the idea of renting out our space in the summer, to use for summer camps. We also need to look at the sabbatical, and the cost of that, and if we can really afford it. **Kellee O'Shea** Could we add a student in each class after 4<sup>th</sup> grade? Keep it smaller for the little ones? **Karen Bailey** I love the idea, especially because by 7<sup>th</sup> grade we start to lose students. So, if we pad is in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. **Jodie Arellano** Financially are we always going to have to have the double track? Maybe a home study program could offset that? **Karen Bailey** It is going to be a part of our charter renewal, but it was set up as a onetime thing. We have to decide if we want to ask for that again, or if we want to ask for a bigger early childhood program, or a homeschool program, but the board will have to decide what to ask for. **Monica Rathjen** I think that we should ask again for an increase in the percentage of funding that we get from the district. **Amy Gygax** It might be worth it if someone could connect with Cliff Beneventi, he had a detailed proposal that he took to the district, of how they could slowly increase the amount the school got. **Monica Rathjen** I can contact him. **Karen Bailey** I would like to ask for more money, not from the Medford kids, but the out of district kids. Their argument is that we are taking kids out of regular district schools so they would get that state funding anyway. But we have about half of our kids coming from out of district, they are bringing 100% of their money, and we are only getting 80%. **Amy Gygax** That might be difficult to ask for. They see us as a revenue source and that gives them incentive to have us in their district. There are groups that are working to increase the amount of funding that charter schools get, which might be another way to advocate for more funding. **Jodie Arellano** There is the National Education Association of Charter Schools, and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, these might be good places to look. **Amy Gygax** The charter schools in the state were working together working with lobbyist. **Karen Bailey** I would love to see some parents that like to get politically active take that on. **Jodie Arellano** Could some positive news coverage help? **Amy Gygax** It is hard to get them to come. **Leann Tourzan** Maybe we could get some coverage of May Faire. **Sarah Trujillo** I know in the past that news outlets have been invited. **Amy Gygax** It would be good to find ways to increase our positive community exposure. It is an

ongoing conversation about potential revenue sources that are not necessarily fundraising ideas.

- f.) **Faculty and Director reports Amy Gygax** I want to propose that we have a regular report from one of the faculty members under our informational items, to just give us an idea of what is going on with the faculty. Just a general update of new hires, or events, and have one from the director so that we are staying up to date on what is going on in the school. **Leann Tourzan** We are looking for a new teacher for Fridays in the Sprouts program, and a Spanish teacher.
- g.) **State of the School Celebration Karen Bailey** It is in the by-laws for the board to host a State of the School address. Our substituted orchestra teacher really wants to have the kids work toward something, and one of the ideas was that they could play a few songs at the State of the School. The other idea was that they could play at graduation. She put out a possible date of Wed. June 7<sup>th</sup>. **Leann Tourzan** First we should figure out what that is. I was under the understanding that it was like a business meeting, where the parents come and get a clear picture of the school financially, program wise, put the materials out. **Kellee O'Shea** Can we have an incentive to make the parents come? **Leann Tourzan** Food, and a social component. **Amy Gygax** We would need to form a committee to work on this, we can't just plan it at our next meeting. **Kellee O'Shea** WE could tie it in with the renewal forms that just went out, and even bring the incoming kindergarten families. I would be willing to be on a committee, and take that on. **Amy Gygax** We could do a small simple version this year, and work toward making it bigger next year. **Kellee O'Shea** It goes hand in hand with parent education **Karen Bailey** We can introduce new teachers, and have a slideshow. **Kellee O'Shea** I can do it. **Karen Bailey** I will volunteer to get pictures for a slide show. **Leann Tourzan** I think it should be a kid-free event, parents only. **Sarah Trujillo** It might be easier to have it be a daytime event. **Monica Rathjen** I can help. **Kellee O'Shea** We can do Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. **Jodie Arellano** I can help plan. **Amy Gygax** What information do we want to present. **Karen Bailey** We can introduce new teachers. **Leann Tourzan** We can have the first 15 minutes be social. **Amy Gygax** Maybe you can get together as a committee and figure out what we are doing, and bring it to the May meeting. **Karen Bailey** Should tell Gerry to have toe kid orchestra play? **Sarah Trujillo** My only objection to that would be that if we are going to say it is a kid free event, and then invite them to play, it might make it complicated. What would the kids do? **Karen Bailey** Maybe graduation would be a better fit. **Brenda Stein** What time would we do it? **Kellee O'Shea** 11am-12pm.
- h.) **Thank you's**

**V. Action Items**

**a.) Adopt Strategic Plan Fundraising Objectives**

**Motion Approved**

**Kellee O’Shea** I make a motion to adopt Strategic Plan Fundraising objectives.

**Leann Tourzan** I second the motion.

**Aye – 5 (Gygax, Rathjen, Trujillo, Tourzan, O’Shea, Stein, Arellano)**

**No – 0**

**b.) Adopt Strategic Plan Pedagogical Objectives**

**Motion Approved**

**Sarah Trujillo** I make a motion to adopt the Strategic Plan Pedagogical objectives.

**Monica Rathjen** I second the motion.

**Aye – 5 (Gygax, Rathjen, Trujillo, Tourzan, O’Shea, Stein, Arellano)**

**No – 0**

**VI. Informational items: Amy Gygax** Next month is our annual meeting, so we will be approving the budget calendar, and meeting dates. We will also do elections for our board members. We will also select our officers, so come thinking about what you would want to do. I am not going to be able to continue being president throughout next year, so if anyone is interested in doing that come talk to me.

**VII. Closing verse**

**VIII. Meeting adjourned**

Minutes submitted by: Sarah Trujillo

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Board President