

Madrone Trail Public Charter School

Jackson County, Oregon

Special meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, November 1, 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 special 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, Jane Higgins, Jodie Arellano, Brenda Stein, Leann Tourzan, Monica Rathjen, Michelle Gury

Karen Bailey (Administrator)

II. Opening verse

- III. **Public Comment Brenda Stein-** I am interested in attending a Faculty meeting. Would that be something that could be arranged? **Leann Tourzan** Depending on the schedule. **Jane Higgins** Only speaking for myself, I would prefer to check in with the staff, first and I could get back to you to set up a time. **Leann Tourzan** The only part we would have you leave for would be the child study, because we talk about individual students.

IV. Approval of Minutes and Agenda Adjustments

a.) Approval of October 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion Approved

Michelle Gury I make a motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes for September 2017.

Brenda Stein I second the motion.

Aye – 8 (Gygax, Trujillo, Stein, Arellano, Higgins, Tourzan, Rathjen, Gury)

No – 0

- b.) **Agenda adjustments-** Add discussion about Michelle Coull's 8th grade trip. Add vote on approval of Michelle Coull's 8th grade trip. Add close to Executive Session

V. Discussion Items:

- a.) **Charter Renewal- Amy Gygax** We had a very productive Charter Renewal Committee meeting last week. Karen, Jessica, Jesse, Kellee and I were all there, we went through the letter from the district that we got last year point by point. I am going to go over those, so we can all hear them. In the first section of the letter, they talk about the great things about Madrone Trail. The second sections details improvements that would need to be made for the district to renew the charter. Improve student achievement on standardized measures. We talked about what Jessica is doing in trying to get kids on IEPs, and eventually, working with students that are testing below grade level to figure out if they are not knowing how to test, or if they need more help to get brought up to grade level. We also talked about working toward a positive attitude toward testing. Jessica has sent that if testing is approached in a positive way, students have a better experience of it, and perform better on tests. We don't want to teach the test, but teach skills that they need to know so they are prepared. The next item is to reduce reliance on anecdotal evidence of student achievement by clearly articulating on objective measures that students are achieving academically. Jesse knew of a paper and pencil test, Easy CBM that could be used for 4th grade and under, he brought it to the faculty and they approved it. It will mean a little more work, to enter the scores into the computer, and Jessica has offered to do that. **Karen Bailey** I have set up the data base, for 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade. **Amy Gygax** The Charter Renewal Committee will be meeting with Michelle Zundell at 9 am this Friday, November 3rd. to take to her about these ways of tracking student achievement, and get her feedback on those. The next item is to improve participation in state assessments, which we did last year. The next, provide professional development to teachers regarding Oregon state standards. **Karen Bailey** Jesse has been helping teachers individually with that, they worked on that during the in-service day at the end of October. Machtild has integrated that into her coaching of teachers, and Jessica has offered to help if there were any questions about Oregon state standards. **Amy Gygax** Next, improve financial systems and when we talked to Michelle in January, she said that our accountant had not been getting the financial statements to the district in the time that we were required to, so we told him that he needed to do that, or we would find someone new, and that has resolved the problem. Also, we needed to increase our contingency fund, and we added money this year, and Karen has a plan to increase that next year. **Karen Bailey** We need to have a minimum of two months operating expenses in case of problems at the state level, or problems that could arise. The standard they would like is for us to have six months operating expenses. We will

continue to work toward that goal. **Amy Gyax** Complete all district compliance requirements in a timely manner. Tracy and Karen are on top of that. Michelle Zundell also sends out reminders on that stuff. I went through the charter and typed up what deadlines, and make sure we don't have any loose ends. Maintain appropriate TSPC licensure of staff. We had a few problems last year with getting everyone licensed in time. We now have a Standard Operating Procedure book, and it is all lined up. **Karen Bailey** The only issue is that we need to have half our teachers licensed, and half can be registered, and we are right at that line. New hires we will have to be aware, or support teachers in getting licensed. **Jane Higgins** It would be good to consider that for budgeting, and supporting teachers, because it is expensive and takes time. **Karen Bailey** You do get paid more, if you are licensed. **Amy Gyax** Determine the legality of charging tuition for preschool, and make sure it is appropriately licensed. We spoke with attorney. **Karen Bailey** We have to make sure that we keep the funds separate. We have a private account that all the tuition goes into, and all the expenses go out of that account. **Amy Gyax** Since it is under a non-profit, we must make sure that follows non-profit rules. He gave suggestions of how we can change how we are doing it, if it were to expand. **Karen Bailey** We would have to consider director qualifications if we went to a bigger program. **Amy Gyax** Determine the legality of denying admission to kindergarten students who turn 5 between June 1st and September 1st. We did talk to the attorney, and Kate Pateson in Oregon State Education, they both said she didn't see any problem with it, if it was in our contract. What we could not do a later date. The last on the list it to provide opportunities for the Madrone Trail Board to define their role, create a Strategic Plan and improve policies, procedures and practices. We had just done our board training, and so I wasn't sure that they had caught that. I feel that the work we have done with our book studies, and the work we have done in the last few meetings looking at the board and its function within the school. So just letting them know that have spent time further developing our Strategic Plan, and been working on policies and procedures. **Karen Bailey** The other thing we talked about was what we wanted to ask for. **Amy Gyax** We need to send the letter next month, to start the renewal process. In that letter, that will have a list of what we want the district to change. The list of what we came up with from our committee meeting, and narrow it down tonight. We would like to find a way for them to look at student growth rather than achievement as far as testing goes. So that if we are not meeting or exceeding the current standards, they could look at growth from year to year. Not sure how to word that. WE will ask for more money, we need to decide how to present that. WE would like to ask the cap number for kindergarten. WE would like to have some leeway if we want to restructure the way we had kindergarten so that we have less new kids in 1st grade. WE don't have to do it, but we would like to be able to. **Jane Higgins** Would this be in lieu of doing another

double track? **Amy Gyax** We talked about it, and the feeling of the group was that it didn't make sense to do it with just one class. Tracy remembered from when it first happened that the district was not really open to us doing a double track again. But we should decide if we want to do a double track. **Jane Higgins** From my time on the budget committee, my understanding that the double track provides funding that we need to make up somewhere if we don't do it again. **Karen Bailey** The APM has gone up, so it is possible that if we tighten our belts we could get by, but what we need to decide is, if we want to ask for the option to do it. If we asked for two first grades next year, it is possible that we may not get enough students to fill those class. **Jodie Arellano** We need to consider asking for home study program. I have researched and looked at other home study programs and found that once you have 22 home school students, after that it is making money. I don't know how long it would take to establish one, it would need a classroom. It could also increase the hours we could give to specialty teachers. Many Waldorf home school students go through LOGAs, and we would be a better fit. It could also help if homeschool students could be including in our required testing. **Michelle Gury** I think it would be good for us to ask, not just for us, but for other charter schools, a MSD board liaison. So that charter schools have a voice at the table when the meet, and so that the district has a better idea of what is going on at our school. It would help overall communication. It would be them changing their bylaws to provide another space for representatives of charter schools to be in. I think if we ask for it, it plants the seed of possibility. **Amy Gyax** Are you thinking it would be a non-voting member? **Michelle Gury** The way that it was worded by Head Start was that it would be a liaison that would be a voting member. **Amy Gyax** Since the Medford School District is made up of elected members, I am not sure that they would be able to do that. **Michelle Gury** IT might mean changing the bylaws, or it might mean that they would not be a voting member, but asking for it, lets them know that we want to be heard, our school and other charter schools currently do not have a voice in the conversation. Maybe the ask would be providing an opportunity for a board liaison from each of the charter schools to be invited to the board meetings. **Amy Gyax** I think that is a great thing to work toward, I am just not sure that it is something to ask for in our contract. **Karen Bailey** Can I as you, Michelle to come to our next charter school meeting and propose that as something we can work with the other schools on. **Michelle Gury** It would be good for us to send one of our board members to the OSBA meetings. **Amy Gyax** It would be great if you wanted to do that, it is an opportunity that is offered to us. **Jane Higgins** We should ask to be listed on the Medford School District website. It could be listed as Waldorf inspired, or as a charter school. **Amy Gyax** We would like to ask the district for a behavioral specialist, that led to a conversation about having an aid for the Special Ed teacher. We talked about asking for money so that we can hire our

own Special Ed teacher, my understanding is that there has been a lot of turn over, if we were hiring our own it might be easier to find someone that is a good fit. We would have to hire someone that fulfills the requirements of the district to provide Special Ed. **Jane Higgins** Could we just ask for input on who the district hires? **Karen Bailey** I think Raina would like to stay, but if the district decides to move her, she will have to go, because she is their employee. I will say that they do try to find someone that is a good fit. **Amy Gygax** I think those are ideas and we need to figure out how to word them, and we can work more on this at the meeting on Friday. **Monica Rathjen** Jodie and I have done some work on the idea of starting a Waldorf High School, and asking for the possibility of starting that. There are not many Waldorf Charter High School, but we found that Waldorf High School Students test very well, and do very impressive work. Also, the funding of charter high schools is non-negotiable at 95% ADM, so that could help with funding. It seems like a big ask, but we can ask and not act on it. If it is not going to hurt us to ask. It doesn't have to be top priority, but it could be good to have the option **Jodie Arellano** We have other feeder schools, so getting enough students to make a high school viable is possible, I have read research that the benefits go from the top down, and it actually helps the younger kids too.

b.) Family Leave Policy- Amy Gygax Monica were you able to go over the definitions? I did change a few things in the definitions, I can go over what I did, and then you can go over what you did. One of the things I changed was the wording of returning to work, I went back to what the Medford School District said, which is saying that if the job that was left is not available, that and equivalent job will be made available. The next thing was the coverage area, I wanted to state that even though we are not bound by FMLA or state standards, we will meet or exceed them. If we do get to the point where we are required to follow FMLA and state standards we may just need to adjust the policy to reflect that. In the definitions I deleted references to state or federal, since we are not using them. I found a sentence that I removed, about if the person applying for leave was employed by a successor, and that did not apply to us. **Michelle Gury** I am curious to know why we are extending health benefits for six months, the norm is 90 days. That seems like it would have a big financial impact. **Karen Bailey** We want to support our teachers, and since we don't pay for benefits for the subs, it is already in the budget to pay for the health benefits. **Monica Rathjen** I didn't see any real issues with the definitions, and since we are exceeding what is offered by state or federal, I think they are fine. **Amy Gygax** The Family Leave fund, I added family before leave as the OSBA rep recommend. I specified that funds left over will be carried over to the next year. **Jane Higgins** Do we need to specify that funds can come from fundraising or donations. Donations are not specified, to me that is different than fundraising. **Amy Gygax** I can add that, I also added a cap to the fund, if it reaches

a certain point, we can use the funds that would be added for other things until that fund is used. Donations and fundraising could still go into that fund. We need to decide what that cap should be. \$20,000 is the number that seems reasonable to me. That would cover about 4 people. We can approve the leave policy, and save the fund policy for next meeting. **Jane Higgins** Do we have a limit to how often employees can apply? **Amy Gygax** It is not written with that, only that they can apply if they qualify for a leave. We could add a sentence that they can apply once per school year. **Jodie Arellano** Could we make it subject to board approval. **Sarah Trujillo** What if something happens, and we want to be able to give that money, and we are limited because they have already received some. If the money is there, and it is a true need, we want to be able to use it. **Michelle Gury** Maybe we could make it something that requires board approval. **Amy Gygax** We could leave it as it is, that they can apply once per leave, and it doesn't mean that they are guaranteed that money. It already requires approval from the director. **Jane Higgins** We could make it so that a second fund request in a year requires board approval. **Brenda Stein** I lean more toward letting it be the director's decision. **Amy Gygax** I agree, we can leave it as once per leave, it is not likely to come up very often. Please look over the application process and email me any feedback, and we can look at it at our next meeting.

c.) **Enrollment Policy-** tabled

d.) **Field Trip Policy-** tabled

e.) **Board Membership/Board President Position-** **Amy Gygax** Hannah, our 5th grade teacher said that her dad is interested in joining the board. I am unsure, because it seems like it could be a conflict of interest but wanted to see what thoughts you all had on that. **Monica Rathjen** We have skirted around this issue before, and don't have any clear policy. We could see if other boards have policies like that. **Amy Gygax** We should probably update our bylaws and have a conversation about faculty board members, as well. Maybe that is a conversation that needs to happen before we consider new board members with relationships to faculty. **Michelle Gury** At Head Start, if you were an employee, a family member of yours could not sit on the Policy Council or Board of Directors. **Amy Gygax** Do you have some wording on that? **Michelle Gury** Yes. **Amy Gygax** I would lean toward that, I feel it would create a conflict. That needs to be a future conversation, and the by-laws need to be updated to include those things. There needs to be some clarity around faculty on the board, the application and recruitment process, and clarity around family members of employees. **Leann Tourzan** We can also research ways that can participate on the board without being voting members. We don't want to turn people away who are willing to volunteer, and I think it would

be really healthy to get some outsiders involved, and to have a male on the board.

Amy Gygax I agree, but I think there are other people that qualify without that conflict of interest. **Leann Tourzan** If they couldn't vote though, they might be able to offer insight. **Michelle Gury** There could be other volunteer opportunities at our school, other committees he could help with, that would not be the board. **Amy Gygax** We don't need to create a non-voting position for him, if he were not a voting member, I am not sure he would want that. We will need the position of Board President to be filled by January. We will need to have a vote on that at our December meeting. I will be stepping down at that point. Is anyone interested in filling that position? **Monica Rathjen** I am administering an estate in the Seattle area, and splitting my time between here and there. Hopefully we will that that settled by the summer, but it is not a clear case. I don't feel like I would be a good candidate at this time. **Leann Tourzan** Can someone apply from the outside community? **Amy Gygax** I wouldn't recommend, I feel someone that has had some board experience would be preferable. **Leann Tourzan** What about a past board member? **Amy Gygax** Do you have someone in mind? **Leann Tourzan** No, it just seems like there is not a current serving member that will be able to do it. **Amy Gygax** There is not a rule against it, but they would need to apply and be voted on. **Michelle Gury** Will you be available to help the transition and be available to help the new president? **Amy Gygax** Yes. I did let everyone know in May that I would be likely stepping down, and hoped that a vice would step forward then. **Jane Higgins** What happens if we don't have someone when you step down? **Karen Bailey** You have to have a president **Amy Gygax** Kellee is not able to be here tonight, and I know she is moving at the end of the year, but it is possible that she could be an interim president. We don't have to decided tonight, but I wanted to start the conversation if anyone is thinking of it. **Jodie Arellano** Monica, would you be interested in being the vice president. **Monica Rathjen** Potentially. But, if the vice president steps in when the president can't be there, and the vice is not there, I am not sure what would happen. **Jodie Arellano** Sarah? My concern is that I am not the best person for the job. **Amy Gygax** It is a big job, but you have some control over how big it is. **Michelle Gury** I would be willing to co-chair, because I am so new I have some hesitancy, but I do have experience. If someone was willing to help guide the agenda process, I would be willing to step in and run the meetings. **Amy Gygax** In the past, there was a board president, and a chairperson. The president would do the behind the scenes stuff, and the chairperson would run the meetings. That is an option as well.

- f.) **Strategic Plan Committee Update- Karen Bailey** The Strategic Plan Committee has not met, the Charter Renewal Committee has taken up that time. **Amy Gygax** That is understandable.

g.) Thank you's

h.) Mrs. Coull's 8th grade trip

Open Executive Session OR192.660(2)(b)

Close Executive Session

VI. Action Items

a.) Approval of Director's 2017-18 goals

Motion Approved

Monica Rathjen I make a motion to approve the Directors goals for the 2017-18 year.

Michelle Gury I second the motion.

Aye – 8 (Gygax, Trujillo, Stein, Arellano, Higgins, Tourzan, Rathjen, Gury)

No – 0

b.) Adopt Family Leave Policy

Motion Approved

Sarah Trujillo I make a motion to approve the Family Leave Policy.

Brenda Stein I second the motion.

Aye – 8 (Gygax, Trujillo, Stein, Arellano, Higgins, Tourzan, Rathjen, Gury)

No – 0

c.) Adopt Teachers Support Fund- tabled

VII. Informational items

a.) Director's update

b.) Faculty update

VIII. Closing Verse

IX. Meeting adjourned

Minutes submitted by: Sarah Trujillo

Minutes approved by: _____

Board President