

Madrone Trail Public Charter School

Jackson County, Oregon

Special meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, January 3, 2018 at 5:30 pm

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

I. Call to order/ Roll call

Sarah 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: Brenda Stein, Kellee O'Shea, Sarah Trujillo, Jodie Arellano, Leann Tourzan, Monica Rathjen, Michelle Gury

Karen Bailey (Administrator)

II. Opening verse

III. Public Comment

IV. Approval of Minutes and Agenda Adjustments

a.) Approval of December 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion Approved

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

Brenda Stein I second the motion.

Aye – 7 (Stein, Trujillo, Arellano, O'Shea, Tourzan, Rathjen, Gury)

No – 0

b.) **Agenda adjustments-** remove agenda item of Executive Session

V. Informational Items

a.) **Faculty Report- Leann Tourzan** At our last Faculty Meeting we discussed Charter Renewal, and the possibility of mixed age Kindergarten. We also talked about a Home School support program, and even doing both if we had the space. We also the idea of looping teachers, rather than all teachers staying with their class from first grade to eighth, depending on the desire of the teacher. The faculty is curious about if we are going to discuss Mactilds visit, and would like to hear if that is something we could put on the agenda.

b.) **Directors Report- Karen Bailey** I add that Mactild does expect some sort of response or discussion. She and I met over break, and talked about her perceptions of the school, and what would help. She feels very strongly that we need to bring in an outside consultant. She has someone in mind, and I have a few people. That will be up to the board, and Michelle has taken the lead on getting set up with that. I shared with the faculty today, that this could be the same person who does my evaluation. Mactild and I had a great conversation, and I am trying to work with her to better understand her role in the school, because she is fundamental as the teacher mentor, and I really don't quite understand it yet, so she is going to let me shadow her a bit, and go into the classroom. **Michelle Gury** Do we have a job description for her? I think that would be in order. In order to build up some better evaluation processes, and communication between the teachers, the mentors, and the administration, we should have something in writing. If the school is paying money for her to come in, then I would like to see specifics. It was nice of her to come to our last meeting and share her opinion of what the faculty atmosphere was, but I don't know that is in an appropriate description of her job. I would like to see a job description with her specific role. **Leann Tourzan** Well, what she is doing she has done well until this point and we have given her the freedom to do that. Every teacher supports her, and loves her, and is really supported by her. I would be careful how you bring that, so it does seem like you are trying to put something on her that she doesn't agree with. **Sarah Trujillo** Perhaps that could be something that could be a part of her communication with Karen. She can communicate exactly how she sees her role. **Leann Tourzan** Yes, maybe she can bring that to Karen, and have a discussion from there. **Karen Bailey** What I need to figure out is exactly what is her role, and how can I can integrate her into the whole school. Everybody needs to be serving the same vision, and goal. We pay her to work with 1st-4th grade teachers, but she also gives her time with the other teachers. I am not complaining about her job. The teachers love her, and she is clearly an asset, but I have not figured would how to integrate her in, and be able to speak to how she helps student achievement. She is a consultant, not an employee, but she does have a contract for the first time this year. **Michelle Gury** It is our responsibility to over

see this, and if we are approving financial aspects of this school but we are paying someone who we don't know the what, why or how they do their job, I think it is important for us to consider and address. **Monica Rathjen** How do we respond for their request for a response? **Michelle Gury** I am not sure that a response is necessary. When you go to a school board meeting you are there to share an opinion, you don't usually get a response, unless it is directed to a specific person. I don't think a response is necessary. **Leann Tourzan** I think it took a lot of courage for her to come, and she was trying to speak to some of the stuff going on with the faculty, I think we should give it some time at least. **Sarah Trujillo** I don't know that we have to give her a response in writing, but I think what she was asking for was for us to have some sort of action, specifically on faculty feedback, and making sure that the faculty is heard. That is what it keeps coming back to, and we do have that on our agenda. **Kellee O'Shea** Is she actually asking for a response? **Leann Tourzan** I don't know that she is, it came up at our faculty meeting today, and they were wondering if we would be discussing it. **Karen Bailey** It would be good to acknowledge it, even with just a verbal "thank you for coming, we are taking it into consideration" **Monica Rathjen** Yes, I like that. **Michelle Gury** We can send her a thank you. **Leann Tourzan** We are already going to be discussing the faculty feedback. **Sarah Trujillo** It might be helpful for you to bring to the faculty that the board minutes are public record, if they want to know what we are discussing it might be helpful. I don't want the faculty to feel like their concerns are not being heard, which was my understanding of what Mactild was saying. **Jodie Arellano** Yes, that is what I heard too. I am also wondering, as a board, what our role in that is. I still don't know specifically what that means. **Sarah Trujillo** If we are going to be discussing the option of bringing in an outside consultant, then that might also address these issues. **Michelle Gury** Am I understanding that is something that could be combined with the director evaluation? **Karen Bailey** Yes, but that would be a board decision. **Michelle Gury** It is very clear in the director's job description what that role is, and if we start impeding on that as a board we are getting into gray areas. Karen's job is to deal with the faculty, and our job is to deal with policy and financial aspects of the school. A lot of the issues I have heard, and this is my opinion, there are policies and procedures set up through the grievance policy to deal with whatever issues there are. I don't feel like it is our job as a board to try and deal with employment or relationship issues. I think that the expectation needs to be clear about our limited role with those issues. Karen is essentially the boss, and those problems need to be dealt with through this. **Monica Rathjen** I would like to revisit this at the next meeting when we are all clear on how we process through these scenarios. So that we are addressing everyone's needs, and I would like to do that as an agenda item.

VI. Action Items:

a.) **Discussion of Interim Board President- Sarah Trujillo** Brenda has offered to be our interim Board President. I think this is excellent. Her term will be through May, when we will have our Board elections. I also thought we should nominate a vice president. **Kellee O'Shea** I think that should be Michelle. **Michelle Gury** I would be happy to do that. I am very passionate about this school, and I see some opportunity for us to stand strong as a board. I would like to work with Brenda on that.

b.) **Election of Interim Board President**

Sarah Trujillo I make a motion to elect Brenda Stein as the Interim President of the Board of Directors

Michelle Gury I second the motion

Aye – 7 (Stein, Trujillo, Arellano, O'Shea, Tourzan, Rathjen, Gury)

No – 0

c.) **Election of Interim Board Vice-President**

Kellee O'Shea I make a motion to elect Michelle Gury

Jodie Arellano I second the motion

Aye – 7 (Stein, Trujillo, Arellano, O'Shea, Tourzan, Rathjen, Gury)

No – 0

d.) **Discussion of Board Membership- Brenda Stein** I have the understanding that there is an issue with the inconsistencies in the way things are run. There is the director, and it's the directors job to run the school. It is my understanding that the issue has been raised by the school district that the way we have our board set up right now is an issue as far as teachers serving on the board. I would propose that we deal with it before it gets mandated by the school district. **Monica Rathjen** Can we clarify? Is the issue voting faculty members, versus faculty attending? Those are very different. **Brenda Stein** The issue is voting faculty members. In my mind there needs to be a faculty liaison, but as far as having staff which is supposed to be under Karens supervision, but above her too is a conflict of interest. **Sarah Trujillo** In the past faculty have abstained from certain votes, but there has been a lack of clarity about which votes exactly require that. **Karen Bailey** We just got the letter today, and what it says is "MSD strongly recommends that the Madrone Trail Board reconsider the practice of having teachers as voting members of the board."

That was also confirmed with our legal advice **Monica Rathjen** The key word being “voting”, I think it is really important to continue to have the liaison or liaison continue to attend the board meetings, and again I will mention that OSBA is a great resource to contact and get input, because they can help, and I am happy to reach out and ask them how they recommend faculty participate, if they have any examples of how that happens. **Leann Tourzan** I would like to look at what other schools are doing. I know there are a lot of schools that have faculty on the board. As in our reading, we do have hierarchy, but faculty input is so important, and I think there are things they should vote on. We are the ones that are here day to day. I think if we can keep voting on things that don’t have to do with Karen, or financial things, but things that have to do with pedagogy. **Karen Bailey** The board doesn’t make decisions about pedagogy. **Leann Tourzan** I do think there might be things that come up in the future. **Jodie Arellano** I wrote down a list of my thoughts on this; clarify what the decision making process is, how and what does the faculty decide, or input on, and what does the director make decisions on, what does the board decide on, what does the district require etc. I do agree with you, but it doesn’t make sense for something that the district is requiring if the faculty is discussing it as if they are deciding it, but they don’t realize it is not really their decision. We don’t want them to spend a bunch of time on something that is not up to them. I think it would be good to clarify what they would vote on, and what is required from. **Leann Tourzan** We do have the decision-making grid. **Karen Bailey** That doesn’t include the board, but that could offer some clarity. The board knows what their decision-making responsibilities are. What are the schools you know if that have faculty as voting members? **Leann Tourzan** I believe Golden Valley does. **Karen Bailey** No **Leann Tourzan** Siskiyou School does. **Karen Bailey** Not as voting members. **Jodie Arellano** They are also a private school, and don’t have to adhere to the same rules we do. I just think it would be good to clarify. Also, there is a difference between offering input, and decision-making. **Sarah Trujillo** Also, anytime we have a subcommittee or work group faculty are encouraged to participate. **Monica Rathjen** I will read from the legal advice given by Jordan Ramis PC attorneys at law “Nothing in the Oregon Non-profit Corporation Act, Oregon Charter School law, Oregon’s Government Ethics Law, or the Internal Revenue Code prohibits faculty members of charter schools from serving on the board of directors, however, doing so creates a significant risk of conflicts of interest. When conflicts of interest arise, board members with conflicts of interest often must recuse themselves from participating in the action, which then deprives the board of input from that board member. For smaller boards, this can make it difficult to conduct business.” The rest I can summarize, he goes on to define conflict of interest. He recommends not having faculty serve as board members, due to the possibility of conflict of interest, as well as the role that the

board of directors plays in the supervision and oversight of the school's directors. If we do continue to have faculty as board members, he recommends adopting a clear policy defining conflicts of interest, and steps that should be taken when such conflicts arise, specifically about administrator evaluations and recusal by the staff members from participating in that process. If staff members are not allowed to serve as voting members, it doesn't mean that input from staff should not be solicited and encouraged. **Michelle Gury** I would like to see a staff liaison still come to meetings and do a report that could be different from the faculty report. We need to keep that position, but the conflict of interest is too important to avoid. When we are looking at the financials of the school, for instance the sabbatical issue, if we are having input from faculty, that will directly have effect on that policy, then there is an awkward imbalance that is happening. I think there should not be staff on the board as voting members. **Jodie Arellano** I agree, and I do feel as though it has been a conflict of interest for me. I do still want to help with committee work, and policy writing, I can still do that and not be on the board. **Sarah Trujillo** We are also so aware that faculty input is invaluable, and so important to what we do here. Jodie, Leann and Jane have offered so much. **Jodie Arellano** Leann and Jane are Faculty Reps, I am a board member, that was hired after joining the board. **Sarah Trujillo** It's not really only about the conflict of interest, but also is our board having enough members to vote without the faculty participation. **Monica Rathjen** There is also the point about the appearance of impropriety, which I want to bring back to the next meeting about conflict of interest and board members, in many respects, even if there is no intent of wrong doing or conflict, just the idea that it could be is enough to say "We want transparency in this process, so that there is trust there between all of us, the faculty, director and larger community. We want there to be an understanding that this is how an honest business is run. **Michelle Gury** If possible, I think we should have a vote at our next meeting on a conflict of interest policy. **Monica Rathjen** I will look in the OSBA and see what they say about faculty membership on board, and see what they recommend and what other schools do. **Karen Bailey** I did ask at the last meeting of other local charter schools, and none of them have faculty as voting members. **Michelle Gury** I do think it would be important for us to decide on this before Karen goes before the Medford School Board to discuss charter renewal, as well as conflict of interest policy, and the definition of faculty board liaison.

e.) Board Membership vote

Motion Approved

Michelle Gury I make a motion that faculty are precluded from serving on the board.

Kellee O'Shea I second the motion.

Aye – 5 (Stein, Gury, Trujillo, Rathjen, O'Shea)

No - 0

VII. Discussion Items

- a.) **Ethics Training- Sarah Trujillo** Based on the invitation I got it looked like an online event, did anyone else get that impression? If not, do you know where it is being held? **Karen Bailey** I don't think it is, but I will look into it. **Michelle Gury** It is January 30th from 7:30 pm- 10pm. Although, in the body of the email it says from 6:30pm-9pm.
- b.) **Eighth Grade Exit Interviews Sarah Trujillo** If anyone has further information about their 8th grade exit interviews, I will be taking that on from Amy. I will be compiling them, and bringing something to you at the next meeting.
- c.) **Charter Renewal Karen Bailey** – We have submitted our report and Power Point presentation to the district today. It is a template that I inherited from Joe, including Board of Directors, Staff summary, enrollment, attendance, student conduct/discipline, performance data, state report card, school improvement plan, audit results, the financial summery of the budget, climate survey, and 8th grade exit interviews. The presentation is very focused on what the letter from our site visit says. It was a great event, and they got a good impression from our school. It is clear that Madrone Trail took seriously the concerns raised last year. I feel this is huge, and sets us up for success. They do list concerns, mostly it is test results, because our scores are significantly below state averages. I am prepared to say that we did have a special circumstance in a class that had a long-term substitute, and in a school of our size, it had a disproportionate effect on our averages. If you took that one class out, we would have improved overall. The Waldorf curve is demonstrated in the graphs, that our students under perform in earlier grades, and show great improvement by 7th and 8th grade. I do also want to speak about not testing in Kindergarten and 1st grade. Opt-outs have improved, so that is good. We have a few financial issues that need to be addressed, low reserves that are improving, and financial statements arriving on time. They would like us to look that the sabbatical policy, and expensive high-quality art supplies. **Jodie Arellano** I think the sabbatical year, if looping happens, could be ended. **Karen Bailey** It is a difficult subject to bring up here, but the district has brought it up. **Brenda Stein** The board is going to have to address it. **Jodie Arellano** I think, as far as the high-quality art supplies are concerned, I think we could make the case that we don't use technology, and technology is expensive. **Karen Bailey** We could find ways to save

money, such as reusing crayons, binding our own main lesson books. They also agreed that we are in compliance with our cut off date for Kindergarten enrollment, so that is good. The preschool will be addressed during charter negotiations. What I would like to say to the board is that we are a few years behind where we should be, but we are making progress toward where we should be. I would like any of you were able to attend the presentation to the Medford School Board, as well as parents.

d.) Director Evaluation/ Faculty Feedback- Michelle Gury I have sent an email to the Alliance for Public Waldorf Schools to see who they would recommend, and I have not received anything yet, but I will follow up with them and include asking about an evaluation, and consultation, keeping in mind the Appreciative Inquiry Process. **Karen Bailey** I will get you in direct communication with George Hoffecker, and have Mactild give you her recommendation as well. **Sarah Trujillo** One of the things we talked about doing during our last years Director Evaluation, when it was requested by the faculty that they have a voice in the process, was that we would come up with a brief survey, in Febuary. I am not sure if that is something we want to try and work on for our next meeting, of if it should be part of the Appreciate Inquiry process. **Michelle Gury** I think that is something that we can go over with whoever we decide to bring in.

e.) Thank you's

VIII. Summarize Important upcoming dates/ Confirm next meeting-Brenda Stein

Monday at 5:30 is the presentation to the Medford School District. Our next board meeting is February 14th at 3:30. **Jodie Arellano** We have a work session scheduled for Friday morning at 9:30 am for Charter Renewal Committee. **Michelle Gury** Ethics Training on January 30th. **Sarah Trujillo** We have a work session for Field Trip Policy on February 14th at 1:30pm.

IX. Closing Verse

X. Meeting adjourned

Minutes submitted by: Sarah Trujillo

Minutes approved by: _____

Board President