

TMCS Board Minutes
June 23, 2020

The June 23, 2020, 6:00 pm meeting held via Zoom conference call was called to order at 6:05 pm by Tanya Blackford.

Attending board members were Tanya Blackford, Aimie Burns, Jeannette Butterworth, Cathey Chet, Ann Lentini, Rick Prudhomme, Rebecca Schwartz, Brad Ward.

Attending staff members were Denise Pesce, Noelle McKay.

The meeting agenda was approved; motion made by Rick Prudhomme seconded by Jeannette Butterworth. All voted in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.

The May 26 and June 11, 2020 meeting minutes were approved; motion made by Aimie Burns, seconded by Brad Ward. All voted in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.

Principal's Report: Denise Pesce

Budget Report

The May budget report has not been finalized and currently shows a \$51,000 surplus. Denise anticipates the surplus will be significantly lower but does not think the budget will as negatively impacted as she had at one time anticipated. She will review the budget line by line with Acadia over the next few weeks with the goal of finalizing the budget in August. Denise is hopeful that the school will still be in the black at year end.

Regarding the Annual Campaign, the board asked if the school intended to ask parents for donations at the start of the next school year. Some people have expressed interest in giving and a suggestion was made to link fundraising asks to specific needs associated with COVID upgrades and remote learning needs. Denise explained that we had a spring ask planned but that we had put it on hold because of the crises. She was very open to approaching the school community this fall.

A motion was made to approve the TMCS May Financial Report by Jeannette Butterworth, seconded by Brad Ward. All voted in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.

Based on a recent call with Acadia, Denise does not expect the state to cut school budgets. They are anticipating a 1-2% allotment increase per student and a one-time \$350 bonus for teachers.

A portion of the \$12,000 - \$13,000 annually funded for the Jumpstart Reading Camp will be used to purchase chrome books for students who are struggling with their school work and need a chrome book at home. The balance will be used to support additional instruction outside the school day once the 2020/2021 year begins.

The school has exhausted the \$6,600 state supplemental fund for COVID-19 responses.

Communication to Community and Board

The school has a team working on the Remote Learning Plan which is due to the state by July 20th.

The task force is still working on preparing the building and developing policies and procedures. The group is breaking into smaller committees to address individual issues. The small groups are addressing the following:

- Developing video tutorials on handwashing and social distancing procedures. TMCS students will be included in the videos.
- Rick and Tricia are working on the daily drop-off and release procedures.
- Denise and Noelle are addressing learning contracts and a school handbook
- Alice and Julie are working on the screening process. Many of the guidelines are provided by NCDHHS but Julie and Alice are advising on the documentation and recording requirements

Denise has found KN95 masks for staff and she is approaching Mercy Urgent Care who will fit the masks to each teacher for a discounted cost of \$55 each.

Reopening Discussion

The state is requiring that all schools prepare for opening under any of the three following plans:

- Plan A Minimal Social Distancing
- Plan B Moderate Social Distancing (50% occupancy)
- Plan C Remote Learning Only

The Governor will announce under which plan the schools will reopen on July 1st. Individual schools and systems have the option of opening under a more restrictive plan, but are prohibited from reopening in a plan that is more relaxed than the states. After the July 1st announcement, the TMCS board with input from the staff and school community, will decide under which plan to reopen.

We don't yet know what Henderson County is planning to do. Denise has reached out to them but has not received a response. Reopening will be challenging for Henderson County because they are a large system with many schools, transportation, and food service issues. We are further along in the planning process.

A board member brought up concerns about the health and safety of the school community if we were to open in Plans A or B. Also, there is concern about having disruptions because of the off/on in-school instructional schedules, the inevitable transitioning from one plan to another, and unintentional time spent handwashing and implementing cleaning and safety procedures. The continuity of remote learning would be more effective.

Denise said she understands and agrees but that she also has to take into account the input provided by the school community through the questionnaire. Parents have expressed concerns about how successful they and their kids were with remote learning in the spring.

A question was also brought up regarding the 20 ADM days and the counting of kids for the school year. Denise does not feel that will be an issue because the Remote Learning Plan will address the school's policy for attendance.

Another board member said that making a call regarding the plans in advance of July 1st could be very politically polarizing for the school.

Denise said that after July 1st we can base our decision on the state's guidance and reach out to Henderson County about their approach.

A board member suggested that it would be important to determine a course of action as soon as possible because parents will need time to plan. Denise said she intends to send out another survey to discuss and get feedback on an A/B schedule.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee:

Investment Policies – Nothing to report at this time.

Expansion – Jeannette has tried to reach Pam Hysong on multiple occasions but has not received any response.

The Executive Committee is recommending Denise be offered the option of working remotely during the 2020/2021 school year because of health risks due to her medical issues and because her position's responsibilities can be executed remotely.

Given that her job can be performed remotely, and given the health conditions that make her high risk if she were to contract COVID-19, the Executive Committee is recommending that Denise be allowed to work remotely. Quarterly feedback will be solicited from parents, teachers, and board as to the effectiveness of this situation. The motion was made by Rick Prudhomme. All voted in favor; none opposed. Motion carried.

Denise said that she has asked staff to come forward to speak with her if they have any high risk health issues and are not able to return. None have come forward, although she acknowledges that a few are very nervous about reopening to on-site instruction. Several staff members are older or live with high risk individuals.

With no further board observations or public comment Brad Ward, with a second by Rick Prudhomme, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Noelle McKay.