

Minutes
Granite State Arts Academy Board Meeting
April 9, 2015
6:00 p.m.
16 Route 111, Building 4, Derry NH 03038

Meeting Come to Order: 6:09pm

Attendance BoT: Amy Sevigny, Kate Russell, Stephanie Libby, Mark Bograd, Scott Mullane, Don Erdbrink

Excused: Jennifer Minicucci

Teacher representation: Rene Martinez, Bill Viau, Kathleen O'Boyle, Sherri Torosian

Parents/Visitors: Claudia VanDixen, Paul Sevigny, Ed Hayes

Comments:

- Add meetings to event calendar-per parent suggestion- Amy will ask Renia to do this
- Don read the mission of the school
- Update on financials- Scott did not receive update from Wendie (was requested this am)- Wendie is not at this meeting tonight
- Per parent comment- Ms. VanDixen asked "are we in the same place and same deficit" "\$7000 in fundraising does not cover payroll for the teachers", "families need to be updated on what this means"
- Don explained fundraising piece, and possible lease renegotiation, family meeting will be announced at the conclusion of this meeting, Don is meeting with the entire staff tomorrow at 2pm. Don expressed that he was glad she is asking questions and participating.
- Ms. O'Boyle- asked if we have heard about the state response to end school year early- Response from Don: NH DOE is still researching and will get back to u. We have plenty of sitting hours d/t extended day. Final decision is up to the commissioner. Waiting for a response from federal program grant officer regarding - Friday afternoon PD day and retro pay for this.
- Mark explained 3-step process to the federal grant money. Next request is tomorrow per Mark- Kate asked what turn around time is-

depends (possible within a few hours approval and then 5 business days to receive the money)- per Mark

- Ms. O'Boyle- asked about new contracts- Kathleen was asking about retro pay. Per Ms. Martinez and Mr. Viau- are not interested in signing a new contract. Both Mr. Viau and Ms. Torosian stated they have already decided to stay until the end of the year.
- Don explained that the above questions to the state are an attempt to be honest with teaching staff. Discussed the plan to do PD days in the summer for \$ recovery (this will be covered by grant as it is necessary for the next school year planning)
- Per Ms. VanDixen- concerned about returning to sending districts if needed- Mark spoke to this: we are waiting to hear if we are able to end early and that he has been working with the school staff and state to prepare for this if necessary.
- Don discussed ongoing discussion with state in regards to this issue.
- Mark discussed he would like to answer these questions asap (he has had frequent communication with the state and board)
- Don discussed the importance of getting proper legal advice before making any final decisions- it may appear the board is moving slow- he assured all the board has been meeting 3x week- very long and productive meeting with the interested of the survival of the school- focus on staff and students. Many areas need to be explored
- Ms. O'Boyle- discussed unemployment options
- Ms. Torosian discussed new contract- she suggested that each teacher be asked individually what their intentions are/plan after May1st- she is committed to staying to help the kids
- Ms. O'Boyle- asked how if 1-2 teachers left what would this mean for the students- Mark's response was "it depends what the course is"
- Kate Russell- spoke as a parent- "I am ready to write a check"- depending on answers from the state and other parents have expressed the same.
- Ms. Vandixen- asked if we could say "this amount of money will cover per pay period"- she suggested that we put that money # out there to families.- suggested that this information be shared by email.- be very clear on \$ amount. Be black and white with requests. It is there but needs to be spelled out. Be very clear.
- Stephanie- has a draft prepared of the parent update letter that can be fined tuned to reflect this and it will be sent out asap with progress reports
- Paul Sevigny- suggested that we need to be clearer and say it black and white. Do not dance around the issue. "go for it, send a clear message" – send a family pledge and request letter asap by Email/drop off and pick up. Mr. Sevigny suggested- If you want your kid to stay here and complete the year and any chance for the future- a commitment is needed.

- Mark discussed that we are continuing work as if we are open next year- curriculum, planning, schedules
- Ms. Martinez- discussed concerns over signing new contracts, teachers are already working hard for the “kids”- they are doing that- they each have to make their own decisions- and that they want respect for what ever their decision is if it comes to the point when that decision is needed. Per a staff comment- when do we know about next year- deadline for April break has been discussed. Staff suggested that 2pm Friday time is the best time to meet with teachers for communication/feedback.
- Staff would like to know if they need to look for a new job for next year asap. (by April vacation)- if possible
- Paul Sevigny- suggested that the parents need to be more involved. Discussed by all that Looking forward- for next year parent package to encourage participation and pledge.
- Ms. Vandixen suggested more family nights- like at eat in fundraisers, more opportunities to get together.
- Plan: Make and send a family pledge letter (goal Monday morning to go home with progress reports), meeting with landlord, meet with teaching staff, communication with state and federal contacts, clear family ask pledge.
- Bill Viau expressed his confidence and thanked board for the long hours and dedication- Ms. Torosian agreed
- Motion by Kate to go into closed session- seconded by Stephanie to go into closed meeting per RSA right to know laws- 7:24 pm

Returned to public meeting- 9:07 pm

- Kate made a motion to approve minutes from April 3 and 6, 2015 – seconded by Stephanie and approved by all.

Adjournment: 9:10 pm